

**Carleton University**  
**Institute of Criminology & Criminal Justice**

**CRCJ 2200-E**  
Contemporary Issues in Criminology

**Course Outline**  
Winter 2022

**Professor:** Dr. Natasha Stirrett

**Office:** Virtual (over zoom)

**Office Hours:** By appointment via email

**Email:** [natashastirrett@carleton.ca](mailto:natashastirrett@carleton.ca)

**Classroom Location:** Please check Carleton Central for current room

**Class Time:** Mondays 11:35am-2:25pm

**Prerequisites:** CRCJ 1000 and Second Year Standing

**Method of Delivery:** This course is in-person on campus

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**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class or Faculty of Public Affairs 20 Teaching Regulations 2020-21 as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520- 6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

**Survivors of Sexual Violence:** As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

**Accommodation for Student Activities:** Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any

requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will address some of the most pertinent issues facing Canadian society today and in the field of Critical Criminology. Students will examine various topics on media and popular culture, carceral colonialism, racial profiling, right-wing extremism, homelessness, the “War on Drugs” which has produced a drug poisoning crisis and the movement for racial justice and mutual aid practices. It will also cover debates over the use of surveillance and technology by borders, police, and the criminal justice system.

The course will be oriented around the concept of *criminalization*, a focal organizing principle in contemporary western society. Talking about contemporary criminological issues using the frame of criminalization moves discussions about crime in society away from an understanding that crime is inherent or natural in certain people or communities. Rather, the notion of criminalization acknowledges that what comes to be understood as *against the law* is constructed by social, political, cultural, and economic forces.

Throughout the course, students will learn to engage with critical criminological approaches, including intersectional, abolitionist and transformative justice frameworks and will apply these ideas to examining ongoing issues, debates, and movements. Informed by Indigenous, Black, anti-racist, queer and feminist readings, this course will critically examine criminalization, racial and colonial injustice, policing and punitive practices. In addition, students will learn about abolitionist praxis, collective care, and community mobilization.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, students will have demonstrated their ability to:

- Identify, compare, and contrast an array of important contemporary criminological issues and appraise different theoretical frameworks and approaches
- Define and explain the concept of criminalization and its application to contemporary socio-legal issues in Canadian society, debates, and movements
- Employ close, critical reading of course texts and content, and identify both central and supporting ideas
- Critically examine racial and colonial injustice and punitive practices through analyzing real-world problems and apply this knowledge through individual writing exercises.

## **Brightspace, Readings and Course Materials**

This in-person course uses Brightspace to provide the required readings on ARES, access to the assignment submission dropbox and other links to course materials and resources. This course will cover a range of contemporary criminological topics and emergent issues relevant to the themes of the course.

There is no one simple textbook or a (couple of texts) that can address the many complex and current issues this course will address, and therefore the course content will include a range of articles, book chapters, interview-style videos, and other sources. Two other instructors collaboratively influence this course, and conversely significant parts of the course materials appear in the other course sections of CRCJ 2200. The collaborative approach of CRCJ 2200 aims to obtain pedagogical consistency across the different course sections taught by instructors.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

The assignments in this course are designed to build upon each other and ensure students do a close and critical reading of all the course content and are thus able to realize the learning objectives. In addition, the assignments are intended to support student success, develop critical thinking skills and engagement with current criminological issues.

**30% Critical reading responses (2 at 15% each)**

**20% Media analysis (1 at 20%)**

**50% Take home exams (2 at 25% each)**

**Critical Reading Responses 30% (2 at 15% each)** *Due January 31<sup>st</sup> and March 28<sup>th</sup>*

You are asked to submit 2 (2-page) double-spaced reading response papers. The first response paper will be based on 1 reading covered during weeks 1-3 of the course (**due January 31<sup>st</sup>**). The second response paper will be based on 1 reading based on weeks 9-11 (**due March 28<sup>th</sup>**). You will do a close reading of a text. Do not only summarize the reading. Instead, you want to take an analytical approach to the text. Responses should reflect upon, engage, and evaluate the readings' ideas and arguments, comment on their implications, articulate new insights you have acquired, or questions the reading raises that you would like to discuss. To demonstrate engagement with the reading, students are asked to develop 3 interesting or surprising things you learned, 2 critical questions you would like to pose to the author, along with a short description of the argument. You may write in the first person. Please avoid colloquial language and maintain an academic tone. This assignment must be based solely on a reading, not other course content.

### **Media Analysis Paper 20% (1 at 20%) Due March 7<sup>th</sup>**

You are asked to submit a (4-5 page) double-spaced media analysis paper (**due March 7th**). Think about how you might integrate a critical criminological critique into your paper. Please incorporate at least 1 course reading and refer to content from at least 2 lectures. Choose a media content that can be used to both demonstrate and apply the concept of criminalization and 1 other concept of your choice covered in the course (i.e., carding, migration, mental health issues). Examples of media content include: a newspaper article, podcast, music video, Tv show or film. Your paper should include a summary of your chosen media example and include details and explanation to support your analysis. Use proper in-text citations and include references. Additional information will be posted on Brightspace.

### **Take Home Exams 50% (2 at 25% each)**

The midterm (25%) will take place during the week of **February 14th**. The mid-term exam will cover the course materials of weeks 1-6. The final exam (25%) will be held during the **formal exam period**. The final exam will cover the course materials of weeks 7-12. Please use in-text citations and references when appropriate. Additional information will be posted on Brightspace.

***How to submit assignments:** Please submit assignments using the dropbox feature located on Brightspace. Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the due date. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade.*

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

**Expectations Regarding Due Dates:** All assignments are due on the specified date on Brightspace by 11:59pm. If an assignment is handed in after the due date (up until seven days after), for any reason, it will be accepted, but the mark will be reduced by 3% for each late day. Sometimes life sucks, and things fall apart a little, especially during a pandemic. A late assignment for any serious reason must be justified in writing to the professor or teaching assistant within three business days after the assignment was due (at the latest). Every effort should be made to make prior arrangements for an extension with the professor or teaching assistant in advance of assignment due dates. The professor reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Please see university policies on exam deferrals <https://carleton.ca/registrar/deferral>.

**Email policy:** Please engage with the Professor and course TAs in a formal and respectful fashion when communicating via email. Please indicate the course name and number (CRCJ 2200-E) in the subject heading if an email is required. In addition, ensure that you include your full name and student number and indicate your message's objective(s). If you do not have all these things, it will be difficult for the professor and/or course TAs to assist you.

During the week, it may take up to 48-hours for the professor to respond to your email. The course professors and TAs do not respond to emails over the weekend. Please plan accordingly. If you send the professor and/or TAs more than one message about the same thing in one span of 48-hours, they will likely find this highly annoying (you would probably agree if you were in their shoes).

**Writing Policy and Format:** Students will also be assessed on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take appropriate measures to avoid spelling, syntax and punctuation errors, inappropriate use of terms, etc.

#### Format for all written assignments

- Double spaced text (be sure there is no 'extra' space between paragraphs)
- Font should be Times New Roman
- Font size 12
- Font colour for all text should be black
- 1-inch/ 2.54 cm margins
- Include page numbers (preferably on the bottom right) starting on the first page of text (the title page should not be numbered)
- Include a title page with your name, student number, name of assignment, and title of paper
- Start references on a new page, APA referencing style is preferred but not required. Be sure whatever referencing style you use to be consistent throughout. To learn more about this format, see the Library reference page: <https://library.carleton.ca/help/apa-citation-style>

**Did you know there is a dedicated librarian to legal studies and criminology? Find our more here:**

<https://library.carleton.ca/research/subject-guides/criminology-and-criminal-justice-detailed-guide>

#### **STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source.
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else.

- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment.
- using another's data or research findings.
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks.
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1: January 10<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Introduction**

##### Readings:

- Merry, Sally. 1998. "The Criminalization of Everyday Life" in Austin Sarat, ed. *Everyday Practices and Trouble Cases*. Northwestern University Press. Pp 14-40.
- Murdocca, Carmela. 2014. "Racialization, Criminalization, Representation" in *Criminalization, Representation, Regulation: Thinking Differently About Crime*. Pp 107-132.

### **Week 2: January 17<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Media and Popular Culture**

- Chan, Wendy; Chunn, Dorothy. 2014. Chapter 4. "Media Representations of Race, Crime, And Criminal Justice" in *Racialization, Crime and Criminal Justice in Canada*. Pp 55-67.

### **Week 3: January 24<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Indigenous Peoples, Carceral Colonialism, and Resistance**

- King, Hayden; Pasternak, Shiri. 2019. "Yellow Institute. Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper". Pp 1-44 <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/red-paper-report-final.pdf>

### **Week 4: January 31<sup>st</sup> Critical Reading Response 1# due**

#### **Anti-Black Racism, Racial Profiling and Carding**

- Sui, Bobby. 2018. Chapter 1. "Defining Racial Profiling" in *Racial Profiling and Human Rights in Canada* by Lorne Foster, Jacobs, Lesley A and Bobby Sui.
- Samuels-Wortley, Kanika. 2021. "To Serve and Protect Whom? Using Composite Counter-Storytelling to Explore Black and Indigenous Youth Experiences and Perceptions of the Police in Canada" *Crime & Delinquency*, 67(8), 1137–1164.

### **Week 5: February 7<sup>th</sup>**

#### **The "War on Drugs" and the Overdose Crisis**

- Tyndall, Mark, & Dodd, Zoë. 2020. "How Structural Violence, Prohibition, and Stigma Have Paralyzed North American Responses to Opioid Overdose" *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics* 22(8): 723-728.
- Levine, Sarah, Medley, Andrea, Norton, Alexa. 2021. "Putting Indigenous Harm Reduction to Work: Developing and Evaluating "Not Just Naloxone". *International Journal of Indigenous Health*.

### **Week 6: February 14<sup>th</sup> Mid Term Exam**

#### **The Criminalization of the Poor: Homelessness, Poverty and Eviction**

- Galabuzi, Grace-Edward. 2010. Chapter 5. “The Intersecting Experience of Racialized Poverty and the Criminalization of the Poor”. *Poverty, Regulation and Social Justice: Readings on the Criminalization of Poverty*. Eds: Crocker, Diane; Johnston, Val Marie.
- Thistle, Adrian Jesse. 2017. “Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada”. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.  
<https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHIndigenousHomelessnessDefinition.pdf>

\*\*\*\*\*WINTER BREAK (February 22-25<sup>th</sup>) \*\*\*\*\*

### **Week 7: February 28<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Borders, Technology and Surveillance**

- Atak, Idil; Hudson, Graham and Nakache, Delphine. 2019. “Policing Canada’s Refugee System: A Critical Analysis of the Canada Border Services Agency”. *International Journal of Refugee Law*. Pp 464-491.

### **Week 8: March 7<sup>th</sup> Media Analysis due**

#### **#Black Lives Matter: The Movement for Racial Justice**

- Hudson, Sandy, Diverlus. 2020. “The Origin Story of Black Lives Matter Canada” in *Until We Are Free: Reflections on Black Lives Matter in Canada*. Pg 1-5. University of Regina Press: Saskatchewan, CA.
- Hooks, Bell. 2014. “Loving Blackness as Political Resistance” in *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Taylor & Francis: UK.
- Walcott, Rinaldo. 2021. Chapter 1. “Moving Toward Black Freedom”. *The Long Emancipation: Moving Toward Black Freedom*. Pp 1-7.

### **Week 9: March 14<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Restorative Practices: Transformational Justice and Mutual Aid Initiatives**

- Maree Brown, Adrienne. 2020. Chapter 23. “What is/Isn’t Transformational Justice?” in *Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement*. Edited by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Ejeris Dixon. Chico, CA: AK Press.
- Spade, David. 2020. “Solidarity Not Charity: Mutual Aid for Mobilization and Survival”. Duke University Press. *Social Text*. Vol.38 (1): Pp.131-151.

### **Week 10: March 21<sup>st</sup>**

#### **Right-Wing Extremism, Incels and the “Proud Boys” in the Media**

- Perry, Barbara and Scrivens, Ryan. 2019. “Thinking About Right-Wing Extremism in Canada” in *Right-Wing Extremism in Canada*. Pp. 1-22.

### **Week 11: March 28<sup>th</sup> Critical Reading Response Paper #2 due**

#### **Green Criminology and Environmental Justice**

- Mc Gregor, Deborah. 2018. “Mino-Mnaamodzawin: Achieving Indigenous Environmental Justice in Canada”. *Environment and Society*. Vol 9 (1). Pp 7-24.

**Week 12: April 4<sup>th</sup>**

**The Criminalization of Mental Health Issues**

- John Howard Society. 2021. Broken Record: The Continued Criminalization of Mental Health Issues Report. <https://johnhoward.on.ca/research-topic/mental-health-disabilities-and-the-criminal-justice-system>. Pp 1-26.

**Week 13: April 11<sup>th</sup> \*\*\*\*\*Take Home Exam Prep Class\*\*\*\*\***