

**THE WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM IN
JUSTICE
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

SPRING 2007

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**SEMINAR SYLLABUS
JLS492002T**

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:

The seminar portion of the Washington Semester Program is designed to broaden your knowledge of criminal justice issues and policies. It will provide opportunities to meet criminal justice practitioners, administrators, special interest groups influencing justice research, and evaluation communities examining the effectiveness and efficiency of providing justice services. Each seminar will afford the chance to critically analyze a specific topic, to inquire about theoretical and pragmatic choices, and to explore competing views of law, justice and responsibility in our society.

GENERAL FORMAT:

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of each week will be devoted to classroom discussion, lectures and seminars with selected guest speakers. Over this semester you will hear from over forty different legal and criminal justice professionals. Your schedule of seminars will be your “guidebook” providing times, dates and locations, and when necessary, directions to off-campus seminar locations. However, transportation to these seminars is your responsibility. You must be prepared to arrive at least ten minutes ahead of all seminars that are off-campus. Metro is our usual mode of transportation. You will have received a metro map in your student packet. You can purchase metro passes at Metro Center Ticket Office. Our campus is located adjacent to the Tenleytown Metro stop on the Red Line. Bus trips are paid for by the program.

While contacts have already been made with all of our speakers, please be prepared for some unavoidable disruptions to accommodate speakers’ needs and conflicts. Many of the speakers carry heavy trial and other schedules and must meet time deadlines which may require reshuffling our seminar schedule. Punctual attendance at all classes and site visits is required. Poor attendance may result in the loss of up to 10

points (a full letter grade). If you cannot attend a session, please contact me via phone or e-mail, and designate one of your classmates to take notes and gather announcements or schedule updates.

Please dress appropriately for outside seminars which are court-related. I will inform you of the dress code in advance.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

Over the semester, a variety of topics and issues will be introduced to you. We will usually begin each new area (e.g. law enforcement, corrections, etc.) with an introductory lecture where I provide you with the background information and a context within which to place the specific speaker's comments. We will conclude each area with an informal seminar review during which you will offer to the class your own personal observations about the material that has been presented. The entire semester is designed to stimulate your thinking about various criminal justice issues. You must be prepared to ask probing questions of the speakers and participate fully in the seminar experience. We will address the following in the semester ahead:

1. Fundamental concepts: use of sanctions for social control, the role of discretion in the civil and criminal justice systems, the nature of crime, criminology and police science, crime measurement and shortcoming of current policies and measures, security versus civil liberties in light of 9/11, the political process as it applies to criminal justice policy formulation, and civil rights and liberties issues.
2. Institutions of civil and criminal justice systems: law enforcement, courts, prosecution, defense, probation, parole, corrections, and juvenile justice agencies. We will examine local, state and federal agencies in these systems.
3. Selected topics: terrorism and homeland security, capital punishment issues, juveniles as victims and offenders, women as victims and offenders, human trafficking, drug and alcohol abuse issues and a variety of first and second amendment civil rights and liberties issues.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE SEMINARS:

As you are aware, you will receive grades for two separate seminars. The following section will explain the requirements to be met in each of the seminars, and the grading system.

Seminar 1 Assignments:

A. Abstracts:

You will be required to write four abstracts (critical summaries) relating to the assigned readings and seminars. Each abstract will address a different topic in the seminar syllabus, and will be distributed well in advance of its due date. These papers must be 5-8 pages in length, typed, double-spaced and properly cited. Abstracts turned in late will be given a point reduction. Specific citations to readings and seminars must be used in these assignments.

B. Class Participation:

You will be required to participate ACTIVELY in all seminars. Your grade for this segment will include: punctual attendance at all seminars, asking questions of the guest speakers, and participating with fellow students in roundtable discussions. Please note that class participation is as significant as writing well. Make an effort to participate in questions and class discussions. It will affect your grade for the seminar.

Grading for Seminar 1 Assignments:

Abstract #1	20%
Abstract #2	20%
Abstract #3	20%
Abstract #4	20%
Class Participation	20%

For due dates, please check the weekly schedule.

Seminar II Assignments:

A. Survey:

Preparing the survey instrument and conducting a survey will also be required. The class, which will be divided into groups, will select a topic. The following topics have been chosen in the past: abortion, gun control, substance abuse, corrections and capital punishment, use of force by law enforcement, racial and ethnic profiling, among others. You may certainly

select any additional topic of interest. Due to time constraints, and sample size, this survey will not be a truly representative one. However, it will result in many interesting findings. It will provide you with a “taste” of popular opinion concerning some of the most salient issues in the area of criminal justice. Since this is a participatory learning experience, all students must participate in some manner within their group. The students design the survey questions, and conduct the survey. Toward the end of the semester, a day will be selected during which each group will present their findings to the class. The grade earned will apply to each member of the group.

B. Mid-Term Examination:

An examination will be given approximately halfway through the semester which will assess your understanding of the issues to that point. It will be an essay exam.

C. Final Examination

An examination will be given at the end of the semester which will address the issues we have covered since the mid-term. The final is also an essay exam.

GRADING FOR SEMINAR II ASSIGNMENTS:

Survey	20%
Mid-term Exam	40%
Final Exam	40%

Grading:

A	96-100
A-	90-95
B+	85-89
B-	80-84
C+	75-79

Required assignment dates will be noted in the weekly schedule.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Adler, Freda, Gerhard Mueller, William Laufer. CRIMINAL JUSTICE: An Introduction, McGraw Hill, latest edition.

Lazarus, EDWARD. CLOSED CHAMBERS, latest edition.

Mauer, Marc and Meda Chesney-Lind, eds. INVISIBLE PUNISHMENT: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment. The New Press, 2002.

Mauriello, Thomas. DOLL HOUSE MURDERS. Prentice-Hall.

Reiman, Jeffery. THE DEATH PENALTY. Rowman and Littlefield.

Shugg, Wallace. A MONUMENT TO GOOD INTENTIONS. Maryland Historical Society.

Walker, Samuel. SENSE AND NONSENSE ABOUT CRIME AND DRUGS, latest edition.

RECOMMENDED:

Connelly, Michael. THE POET

Johnson, Robert. DEATH WORK

Kidder, Tracy. HOMETOWN

There will also be a number of class handouts.

