Criminology and the Policy-Making Process
CRI3020H F

Fall 2019 Wednesdays, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Ericson Seminar Room (265)
Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies

Instructor: Jean-Philippe Crete
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Office Hours: Please contact for appointment

Course Description:

How can criminological research move and shape public discourse and social conceptions of criminality, punishment, law, and crime control policy in North America? While theories of criminology are mobilized by a large network of non-academic actors such as lawyers, judges, journalists, and bureaucrats, the policy making process is often completed behind closed doors of the criminal justice system. How does the criminal justice policy process work? What are the drivers for criminal justice policy change and reform in Canada? This course is designed to introduce students to contemporary debates in the Canadian criminal justice system through various drivers of criminal justice policy.

This course will examine how criminological research, law, and social justice movements work interdependently to produce social change and/or reinforce the status quo by investigating a selection of contemporary issues, debates, and policy discussions around the Canadian criminal justice system with special focus on the courts and the correctional system.

Topics include: penal populism; the role of the criminologist; prison research; criminal record checks; pre-trial detention and bail; criminal justice oversight; prison conditions and the abolition of solitary confinement in Ontario; health and harm reduction; prisoner advocacy; sentencing reform; human rights and corrections, technology and crime policy, as well as carceral abolition.

This course considers criminological thinking as a tool mobilized through several forces on criminal justice policy reform such as the courts, human rights and oversight bodies, activism, bureaucracy, journalism and media, and independent actors (including criminologists) involved in policy engagement. Guest speakers include academics, lawyers, judges, criminologists and policy practitioners, activists, as well as current (and previously appointed) independent oversight advisors to criminal justice reform in Ontario and Canada.

Required Readings:

Readings for each week are listed below. Please come to class having read the required readings for the week and choose 1-2 related readings to skim (or read) to assist you in your preparation for class discussion. Topics are subject to change due to the availability of guest speaker(s), please check Blackboard for an updated reading list in case changes are made during the semester.
Academic Integrity:

Do not plagiarize (this includes copy, pasting, and/or rewording articles or book sections without citing). Engaging with the reading materials in creative and interesting ways are weighted more than a citation count - if you are in doubt, please do not hesitate to approach the instructor with questions or directions on how to cite and refer to source material.

Plagiarism and other academic offences will not be tolerated at the University of Toronto. Academic discipline ranges from a mark of zero on an exam or assignment to dismissal from the University. For important information see UofT’s Academic Integrity website at [http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/](http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/). See also these academic integrity websites: School of Graduate Studies at [http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/facultyandstaff/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx](http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/facultyandstaff/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx) and Faculty of Arts and Science at [http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai).

Evaluation Overview

1. Policy Reflections..................................................35%, various dates
3. Final Assignment....................................................40%, December 20
4. Participation/Reflection Questions...........................10%, weekly

***Please note: late submissions for any assignments will be penalized at 2.5% per day***

Course Overview

September 11: Introduction Class
No readings assigned
- Course overview
- Assignments Q and A

September 18: Criminologies and Policy Making

Required readings:


Related:

**September 25: Populism, Public Criminology, and the Media**

Required readings:

Related:
- Loader, I., & Sparks, R. (2010). What is to be done with public criminology. *Criminology & Public Policy, 9*, 771.
October 2: Field Research: Ethical and Policy Implications
Guest Speaker: Dr. Rochelle Larocque

Required readings:

Related:

October 9: Health, Prisoner Advocacy, and Community Engagement
Guest Speaker: Janet Rowe, Executive Director of the Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Action Network (PASAN)

Required readings:
Related:

October 16: Criminal Law, Sentencing Reform, and the Courts
*Guest Speaker: TBD*

**POLICY RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

Required readings:


Please familiarize yourself with the following cases for class discussion on their broader implications for criminal justice policy (you may search for case summaries online):

- R. v. Capay, 2019 [http://canlii.ca/t/hx7xk](http://canlii.ca/t/hx7xk)
October 23: Processing, Bail and Pretrial Detention

**Guest speaker: Honourable Justice David Cole, Ontario’s Appointed Independent Reviewer**

**Required readings:**


**Please also skim:**


October 30: Corrections, Human Rights, and Policy Making - Case Study: Solitary Confinement

**Guest speaker: Dr. Kelly Hannah Moffat, Ontario’s Appointed Independent Expert on Human Rights and Corrections**

**Required Readings:**


Related:
- Penal Reform International and Essex Human Rights Centre. Essex paper 3 Initial guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the UN Nelson Mandela Rules. University of Essex, 2016,

November 6: Reading Week
No readings

November 13: Technology and Criminal Justice Policy
Guest speaker: Fahid Diwan, CEO and Founder of SmartBail.ca

Required readings:


3) Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner, Machine Bias https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing

4) www.SmartBail.ca (please browse and familiarize)

Related

**November 20: Corrections and Policy Making: The Role of Oversight**  
*Guest Speaker: Howard Sapers, Former Correctional Investigator of Canada and Independent Advisor to Corrections Reform in Ontario*

**Required readings:**


   [https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/amcrimlr47&div=50&g_sent=1&casa_token=OWkIAf7YSswAAAAA:jlK44bJkN_hOroRvO-yU1BeV13JjNgmrTO3xyVUpuU25cHUxJPoSUHqPzRZiSNuz8GfSY&collection=journals](https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/amcrimlr47&div=50&g_sent=1&casa_token=OWkIAf7YSswAAAAA:jlK44bJkN_hOroRvO-yU1BeV13JjNgmrTO3xyVUpuU25cHUxJPoSUHqPzRZiSNuz8GfSY&collection=journals)

   [https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.ca/&httppsredirect=1&article=1752&context=plr](https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.ca/&httppsredirect=1&article=1752&context=plr)

**November 27: Criminal Justice Policy Interventions and Non-Governmental Organizations**  
*Guest speaker: Reza Ahmadi, The John Howard Society of Ontario, Research and Policy Centre*

**Required readings:**

   [https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/sociology_criminaljustice_fac_pubs/18/?utm_source=digitalcommons.odu.edu%2Fsociology_criminaljustice_fac_pubs%2F18&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/sociology_criminaljustice_fac_pubs/18/?utm_source=digitalcommons.odu.edu%2Fsociology_criminaljustice_fac_pubs%2F18&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)

   [http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/492239](http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/492239)
Case Study - Criminal Records:


December 4: Decolonizing Criminal Justice Policy
Guest speaker: TBD

Required readings:


Please also familiarize yourself with:

Related:

December 12: Abolition and Crime Policy

Readings:


Related: