

Midstate College  
411 West Northmoor Road  
Peoria, Illinois 61614  
(309) 692.4092 800.251.4299  
Spring Term 2019

**Course Number and Name:** LSJ 354 – Politics of Punishment: Analyzing Prisons and Jails

**Credit hours:** 4 Quarter Hours

**Method of Delivery:** Flex Class.

**Course Description:** This course explores, from a global perspective, the history, development, and philosophies of punishment and the debate within the United States over the purpose of correctional institutions. This course will study the historic development of prisons focusing on current practice and emphasizing consequences of expanding the prison population and community based alternatives to incarceration.

**Prerequisite:** Successful completion of LSJ 110 (Introduction to Social Justice) or Permission from Department Director

**Texts:**

Gates of Injustice: The Crisis in America's Prisons

Author: Alan Elsner (Listed as Elsner in Course Outline)

ISBN: 0131881795

When the State Kills

Author: Austin Sarat (Listed as Sarat in Course Outline)

ISBN: 0691102619

Inside This Place, Not Of It

Compiled and Edited by Robin Levi & Ayelet Waldman (Listed as Levi in Course Outline)

ISBN: 9781936365494

Private Prisons in America: A Critical Race Perspective

Author: Michael A. Hallett (Listed as Hallett in Course Outline)

ISBN: 9780252073083

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

Author: Michelle Alexander (Listed as Alexander in Course Outline)

ISBN: 9781595586438

**Other Readings:** Other readings as assigned and available on Open LMS

**Materials needed for this course:** The minimum system requirements to complete an eLearning course at Midstate College.

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**Topics:** The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. The history and development of prisons and jails in the United States
2. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
3. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment
4. Race, class and gender differences in criminal behavior and incarceration rates and policies

**Objectives:** Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Know the history of the development of incarceration in the U.S.
2. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
3. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
4. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration
5. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Midstate Grading Scale:**

A = 100% to 90%

B = 89% to 80%

C = 79% to 70%

D = 69% to 60%

F = 59% to 0%

All students must have a 70% or better to pass this course.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is a basic principle of the College's function. Midstate College students are expected to maintain a high level of academic honesty. Contrary actions may result in penalties such as failure of the assignment(s), a lesser grade on assignment(s), failure of the course and/or suspension from the College. The course instructor will review all submitted documents and supporting evidence in connection to the infraction. The course instructor will also review the student's personal file for other notifications of academic dishonesty before determining the level of action to be applied. The course instructor will complete the Academic Dishonesty Report form to document and describe the incident and actions taken, then kept on file. The student may appeal the decision to administration, whose decision will be final.

The following (**plagiarism, cheating, deception, sabotage, computer misuse and copyright infringement**) are included in the actions Midstate College considers behavior contrary to the

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academic integrity policy; however, the policy is not limited to these examples. Further discussion of consequences regarding academic dishonesty are addressed in the Student Handbook.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is using another person's words, either by paraphrase or direct quotation, without giving credit to the author(s). Plagiarism can also consist of cutting and pasting material from electronic sources by submitting all or a portion of work for assignment credit. This includes papers, computer programs, music, sculptures, paintings, photographs, etc. authored by another person without explicitly citing the original source(s). These actions violate the trust and honesty expected in academic work. Plagiarism is strictly against the academic policy of Midstate College. Its seriousness requires a measured, forceful response which includes consequences for inappropriate and/or no citation.

In courses containing writing assignments, the College promotes the use of Turnitin which compares the student's writing against previously submitted papers, journals, periodicals, books, and web pages. Students and instructors can use this service to reduce the incidence of plagiarism. This electronic resource has been found to conform to legal requirements for fair use and student confidentiality. It is able to provide a report to the student indicating the parts of the assignment that match.

### **Student Success and Tutoring:**

Contact Student Success: Room 110; (309) 692-4092, ext. 1100; [studentsuccess@midstate.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@midstate.edu);

The Office of Student Success offers help in the following areas:

- Tutoring: Tutoring is encouraged for students who are doing their best to complete assignments yet still are experiencing difficulty in this course. Tutoring may be provided by the instructor outside of scheduled class times or through the office of Student Success.
- Writing assignment assistance: This may include learning how to conduct research; using proofreading tools such as Turnitin; outlining a topic; and applying MLA/APA standards.
- Math, accounting, and computer skills (including file management).
- Test-taking techniques.
- Note-taking skills development.
- Study skills development.

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Time management

**Assessment Portfolio Reminder:** Students (depending on your program major) may be required to prepare an assessment portfolio for graduation. Keep a copy of this syllabus in the portfolio. Use the “Evidence for Success” list from your program portfolio (or consult your Program Director) and instructions from the instructor to determine the assignment(s) that should be placed in the assessment portfolio.

**Instructor Information:**

**Instructor:** Scott Michalec, Adjunct Associate Professor, Legal Studies  
Assistant Attorney General  
Email: [smichalec@midstate.edu](mailto:smichalec@midstate.edu)

Office Hours: Weekly online office hours are not scheduled, but instructor will work with student’s schedules to arrange on campus/online meetings when needed, at student’s request. Instructor will be on campus each Tuesday evening from 530 PM until 600 PM.

**Assistant Instructor:** Mark Wiltse, Legal Studies Director  
Email: [mwiltse@midstate.edu](mailto:mwiltse@midstate.edu)

Legal Studies Department  
Office: 219  
Phone: (309) 692-4092, Extension 2190  
Fax: (309) 692-3893

**Participation Requirements:** You are expected to participate **at least two** days a week in several conference discussions / homework assignments relating to the subject materials for the week. Discussions will take place in the online discussion forum as assigned by the faculty member in the course syllabus. You will read, analyze, and respond to questions and comments from the instructor and fellow students. When applicable, include page numbers from assigned readings or other sources to cite supporting documentation. All posts should advance the discussion and deepen academic inquiry.

**Please Note:** Substantive participation requires original thought and application to the threads and student posts. Congratulatory, (I agree and/or praising sentences) while encouraged, do not constitute substantive participation. **You must make TWO substantive posts weekly in the forum. The first by Thursday of the week and then a second by the close of that week. You may, of course, make more! I will usually start the discussion on Tuesday to get you started. You will lose points for posting (on the rubric) if you do not post as above.**

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**Methods of evaluating student performance:** Please see “Instructor Final Grade Determination” below for more information.

**Attendance Policy:** eLearning students must login and participate at least once a week to be counted present for the week (participation is strongly recommended and essential for passing this course). You must post a gradable assignment each week to be counted as “Present” for the week.

**Instructors Grading Scale:** The following assignments and activities are outlined in a week-by-week format. All assignments (unless specified otherwise) are due by either day 5 or day 7 and they need to be posted to the location specified by the faculty member in the syllabus. The following schedule indicates the days of the week to be followed in this module:

Day 1 = Monday  
Day 2 = Tuesday  
Day 3 = Wednesday  
Day 4 = Thursday  
Day 5 = Friday  
Day 6 = Saturday  
Day 7 = Sunday

**Instructor Final Grade Determination:** Your final grade in this course will be based on 940 points: There will be five Response Papers due during the semester as indicated on the class schedule. Students will also be required to complete one in-depth Research Project. Guidelines and details for all assignments will be posted on Moodle as they become due. Additionally, students will be expected to participate in group discussions having demonstrated they have read the material assigned. Points will be earned each week for group discussion participation and contributions. We will be engaging in group discussions over our reading material for the week along with any special readings and any documentaries that we view. Grading points are as follows:

1. 500 points: Response Paper (100 points each times 5 papers)
2. 200 points: Research project
3. 240 points: Group participation (20 points each week times 12 weeks)
4. 940 Total Points

All students must have a 70% or better to pass this course.

**Course Policies and Procedures:**

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1. eLearning Sessions: In accordance with Midstate College policies, class material will be made available on Monday at 12:00 p.m. of that week (see dates in the Course Outline below) and will remain available until the following Monday until 8:00 a.m. You will be required to participate in the group discussion forum at least two times on or before Day 7 of each week (see details above under Participation Requirements).
2. This course is focused on a student-centered approach that emphasizes focused reading and group discussion.
3. Research Project: The instructions for this assignment and a grading rubric are posted in Open LMS.
4. Response Papers: These assignments will supplement the assigned readings and online lectures to further your understanding and application of the politics of punishment. Assignments will be turned in online via Turnitin links on Open LMS available the week they are due. Late submissions will not be accepted and will get a zero. While this is not a composition course, I will be counting off for grammar and spelling errors, run-on sentences, and other writing errors. I expect good quality written assignments!
5. All work must be completed by Friday, May 17, 2019 (11:59 PM.)
6. Academic dishonesty (cheating / plagiarism) in any form will not be tolerated in this course and may result in the dismissal/suspension from the course/program/college. Do your own work! I cannot emphasize this enough! Not knowing the rules of plagiarism is not a valid defense. Check with me if you are not clear on what constitutes plagiarism.
7. This is a tentative syllabus and outline and is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students will receive timely notice of all such changes via announcements made online in Open LMS and via email.

## **Politics of Punishment: Analyzing Prisons and Jails (LSJ 354)**

**Spring Term 2019**

### **Course Outline**

This Outline is a guideline that may change as necessary as the quarter/term progresses.

#### **Week 1:**

1. Syllabus Review/Course Goals
2. Chapter 2 (Elsner). Becoming a Prison Nation
3. Chapter 3 (Elsner). Entering the Gates
4. Special Reading

#### Topics Covered in Week 1:

1. The history and development of prisons and jails in the United States
2. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy

Objectives Covered in Week 1:

1. Know the history of the development of incarceration in the U.S.
2. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.

**Week 2:**

1. Chapter 4 (Elsner). The Vulnerable
2. Chapter 5 (Elsner). The Sanity of the System
3. Chapter 6 (Elsner). An Unhealthy Situation

Topics Covered in Week 2:

1. The history and development of prisons and jails in the United States
2. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
3. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

Objectives Covered in Week 2:

1. Know the history of the development of incarceration in the U.S.
2. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
3. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society

**Week 3:**

1. Chapter 7 (Elsner). Women Behind Bars
2. Introduction (Levi)
3. Olivia Hamilton (Levi)
4. Sheri Dwight (Levi)
5. **Response Paper #1 Due**

Topics Covered in Week 3:

1. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment
2. Race, class and gender differences in criminal behavior and incarceration rates and policies

Objectives Covered in Week 3:

1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration

**Week 4:**

1. Maria Taylor (Levi)
2. Sarah Chase (Levi)
3. Teri Hancock (Levi)
4. Emily Madison (Levi)
5. Special Reading

Topics Covered in Week 4:

1. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment
2. Race, class and gender differences in criminal behavior and incarceration rates and policies

Objectives Covered in Week 4:

1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration

**Week 5:**

1. Chapter 1 (Sarat). Introduction
2. Chapter 2 (Sarat). The Return of Revenge
3. Chapter 3 (Sarat). Killing Me Softly
4. Special Reading
5. **Response Paper #2 Due**

Topics Covered in Week 5:

1. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
2. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

Objectives Covered in Week 5:

1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 6:**

1. Chapter 4 (Sarat). Capital Trials and the Ordinary World of State Killing
2. Chapter 5 (Sarat). The Role of the Jury in the Killing State

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3. Chapter 6 (Sarat). Narrative Strategy and Death Penalty Advocacy

Topics Covered in Week 6:

1. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
2. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

Objectives Covered in Week 6:

1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 7:**

1. Chapter 7 (Sarat). To See or Not To See
2. Chapter 8 (Sarat). State Killing in Popular Culture
3. Chapter 9 (Sarat). Conclusion

Topics Covered in Week 7:

1. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
2. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

Objectives Covered in Week 7:

1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 8:**

1. Chapter 10 (Elsner). Money, Money, Money
2. Chapter 1 (Hallett). Race, Crime, and For-Profit Imprisonment
3. Chapter 2 (Hallett). For-Profit Imprisonment in American History
4. Special Reading
5. **Response Paper #3 Due**

Topics Covered in Week 8:

1. The history and development of prisons and jails in the United States
2. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy

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3. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

**Objectives Covered in Week 8:**

1. Know the history of the development of incarceration in the U.S.
2. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
3. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
4. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration
5. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 9:**

1. Chapter 3 (Hallett). Capitalist Crime Control
2. Chapter 4 (Hallett). Money and Power
3. Chapter 5 (Hallett). Bad Faith

**Topics Covered in Week 9:**

1. The history and development of prisons and jails in the United States
2. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
3. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

**Objectives Covered in Week 9:**

1. Know the history of the development of incarceration in the U.S.
2. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
3. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
4. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration  
Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 10:**

1. Chapter 6 (Hallett). The Easy Inmate Market
2. Chapter 7 (Hallett). Commerce with Criminals
3. Special Reading
4. **Research Project due**

**Topics Covered in Week 10:**

1. The history and development of prisons and jails in the United States
2. The interaction between American electoral politics, public opinions about crime, and criminal justice policy
3. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment

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Objectives Covered in Week 10:

1. Know the history of the development of incarceration in the U.S.
2. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
3. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
4. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration
5. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 11:**

1. Chapter 1 (Alexander). The Rebirth of Caste
2. Chapter 2 (Alexander). The Lockdown
3. Chapter 3 (Alexander). The Color of Justice
4. **Response Paper #4 Due**

Topics Covered in Week 11:

1. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment
2. Race, class and gender differences in criminal behavior and incarceration rates and policies

Objectives Covered in Week 11:

1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration
4. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment

**Week 12:**

1. Chapter 4 (Alexander). The Cruel Hand
2. Chapter 5 (Alexander). The New Jim Crow
3. Chapter 6 (Alexander). The Fire This Time
4. **Response Paper #5 Due**

Topics Covered in Week 12:

1. The prevailing modern approaches to understanding punishment
2. Race, class and gender differences in criminal behavior and incarceration rates and policies

Objectives Covered in Week 12:

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1. Explain the structures and functions of government and private penal institutions in the U.S.
2. Consider the politicalization of crime and punishment in American society
3. Identify various alternative approaches to incarceration
4. Analyze and evaluate various criminal justice policies and modalities of punishment