Policing in U.S. Society

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Course Content

The objective of this course is to explore law enforcement. The course is divided into four major sections: a foundation of law enforcement, introduction to police work, officers and organizations, and issues in policing. Specifically, students will be introduced to the nature of policing, a history of policing in the United States, different types of law enforcement agencies, different roles/functions of police in our society, how police respond to crime, experiences of police officers, and current issues and problems in policing. Attention will be directed at including issues relating to race, class, gender due to the historical exclusion of these issues in criminological discussion.

Course Goal

Students, after completing this course, should be able to recognize, understand, and think critically about the major issues in policing. Additionally, students should be able to apply concepts covered in the course to their encounters with crime and policing (via the media, through personal experience, and so on).

Course Requirements and Grading

Students will be required to complete the following: four exams, a final paper, and in-class reaction papers. Given that this is a large, lecture course attendance will not be taken. However, a considerable portion of each exam will be devoted to in class lectures and the in-class reaction papers can only be done in class on the day they are assigned.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS OR ASSIGNMENTS.

Exams: Each exam will cover readings, lectures, videos, and presentations from one of the four specific sections of the class (e.g., Foundation, Police Work, Police Problems, Officers and Organizations). The exams will not be cumulative. Exams will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. Students will be tested on how well they comprehend and are able to apply the concepts covered in the course. Illegible handwriting on exams will result in zero points for that particular question. Exams are worth 25% each. The lowest of the four exam scores will be dropped.

Final Paper: The term paper will be due on December 7th. Students will be expected to complete a well-written, well-researched 5 to 10 page research paper on a topic to be assigned. Students should use at least five recent academic journal articles or books to research the assigned topic. Papers should be double-spaced and typed in 12 point font or less with 1” margins on all sides. Students will be graded on how well they researched the topic, answered the given question(s), and technical aspects of the paper (grammar, punctuation, citations, writing, etc…). More information regarding the term paper will be discussed in class. The paper is worth 15%.

In-Class Reaction Papers: Periodically, students will be asked to write in-class reaction papers to issues discussed in class on that particular day. The purpose of these assignments is to think critically and thoughtfully about issues in policing. These assignments can only be completed in class on the day they are assigned. No make-up assignments will be accepted. In-class reactions papers are worth a total of 10%.

KEEP ALL RETURNED EXAMS AND PAPERS IN CASE OF A GRADE DISPUTE.
STUDENTS AGREE TO FOLLOW STUDENT CODE. IF VIOLATED, THE STUDENT IS SUBJECT TO CONSEQUENCES AS DISCUSSED IN THE STUDENT CODE/HANDBOOK.

WebCT

A modified version of each day's lecture notes will be available on WebCT. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to either get the notes from WebCT and fill them out on your own or get the notes from a fellow classmate. To access WebCT, please go to http://webct.utah.edu and follow the instructions.

Required Readings

TBA

Articles on reserve

Course Calendar and Readings

Introduction to the course and syllabus

Part 1: Foundation in Policing

Introduction to Policing

History of Policing

Contemporary Policing

Federal and Other Law Enforcement Agencies

Police and the Rule of Law

FIRST EXAM

Part 2: Police Work

Police Patrol

Peacekeeping and Order Maintenance

Example: Policing Domestic Violence

Reading: Article on reserve--Melton, Heather (1999) Police Response to Domestic Violence

The Police and Crime

Example: Policing Gangs

Community/Problem Oriented Policing

SECOND EXAM

Discussion of Final Paper

Part 3: Officers and Organizations

Entering Police Work

On the Job
Example: Female Police Officers

Police Organizations

Discussion of supplemental text

THIRD EXAM

Part 4: Issues in Policing

Ethical Issues in Policing
  Special Topic: Police Discretion

Police Brutality and Use of Force

Police-Community Relations
  Special Topic: Racial Profiling

Police Corruption

Police Accountability

FOURTH EXAM

*Note: The schedule is subject to change. Students will be notified.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD) to make arrangements for accommodations.

All printed information for this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services."