

COURSE OUTLINE

Introduction to Corrections

Course Description

AJ 109. Introduction to Corrections. 3 hours credit. This course will enable the student to understand the correctional field as a function of the administration of justice. The student will explore historical and contemporary trends within the various agencies involved with corrections work

Course Relevance

The individual worker in the correctional system needs an understanding of the institutionalized system through which society incarcerates or punishes certain individuals deemed "criminal." In this course the student will examine issues related to the correctional system and make connections between social forces that both affect and are affected by the operation of corrections.

Required Materials

Clear, T. and Cole, G. (2009). *American corrections*, (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Group

Learning Outcomes

The intention is for the student to be able to:

1. Discuss the origins and history of American corrections.
2. Understand the major purpose of corrections.
3. Explain the function of jails, prisons, probation and parole.
4. Understand the social and political context that shapes the American correctional system.

Learning PACT Skills that will be DEVELOPED and/or documented in this course

Through the student's involvement in this course, he/she will develop his/her ability in the following PACT skill areas:

Analytical Thinking Skills

1. Critical thinking
 - The student will develop critical thinking and analytical skills through written assignments and other activities conducted in class.

Major Summative Assessment Task(s)

These learning outcomes and the Learning PACT skills will be demonstrated by

1. Using critical thinking skills to describe in writing the considerations and procedures appropriate for dealing with a series of correction scenarios.

Course Content

- I. Themes – Key recurring concepts that run throughout this course:

- A. Issues related to the correctional system and connections between social forces that both affect and are affected by the operation of corrections.
 - B. Trends in incarceration rates (including race/ethnicity, sex, and type of offense).
 - C. Ethical issues surrounding correction systems such as the death penalty, race, and poverty.
- II. Issues – Key areas of conflict that must be understood in order to achieve the intended outcome:
- A. Operation of prisons and other correctional departments.
 - B. Areas of interest such as race/ethnicity, discrimination, incarceration of women.
 - C. The nature of inmate behavior and the management of that behavior.
- III. Concepts – Key concepts that must be understood to address the issues:
- A. How trends in incarceration and crime might be related
 - B. The history and development of laws affecting correctional institutions and their applicability to inmates.
- IV. Skills/Competencies – Actions that are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
- A. Writing
 - B. Reading
 - C. Computer literacy
 - D. Analytical thinking
 - E. Ability to compare and contrast
 - F. Memorization of terms
 - G. Application of concepts

Learning Units

- I. Describe the corrections system
- A. Explain the purpose of corrections
 - B. Discuss the meaning and usefulness of a systems framework
 - C. Describe what the corrections system looks like today
 - D. Identify the key issues in corrections
- II. Explain the early history of correctional thought and practice
- A. Describe the major forms of punishment from the Middle Ages to the American Revolution
 - B. Discuss the age of reason and how it affected corrections
 - C. Identify the contributions of Jeremy Bentham and Unitarianism
 - D. Discuss the work of John Howard and how it influenced correctional reform
 - E. Identify the methods and philosophy of punishment during the middle ages
 - F. Describe the contributions of Cesare Beccaria and the Classical School
- III. Discuss the history of corrections in America
- A. Explain the basic goals and practices of the Pennsylvania system and the New York system
 - B. Discuss the influence of the reformatory
 - C. Describe the nature of the medical model
 - D. Explain the elements of the Positivist School

- E. Discuss what led to the shift from the community model to the crime control model of corrections
- IV. Describe the punishment of offenders
 - A. Explain the philosophy and goals of retribution, deterrence, incapacitation and rehabilitation
 - B. Distinguish between determinate, indeterminate, mandatory and presumptive sentences
 - C. Identify the types of intermediate sanctions
 - D. Describe the types of sentences judges may impose
 - E. Discuss whether the system treats wrongdoers equally
- V. Explain the law of corrections
 - A. Identify the four foundations that support legal rights of those under correctional supervision
 - B. Discuss the role of the U.S. Supreme Court in interpreting correctional law
 - C. Describe the various constitutional rights of prisoners
 - D. Identify the alternatives to litigation that are available to prisoners
 - E. Explain how law affects correctional personnel
- VI. Describe the correctional clients
 - A. Identify which factors influence the offender selection system
 - B. Describe the characteristics of the offenders who are under correctional supervision
 - C. Explain the purpose of offender classification
 - D. Describe how offenders are classified
- VII. Explain the nature and purpose of jails and short-term incarceration
 - A. Describe the nature of the contemporary jail
 - B. Discuss the purpose of pretrial detention and what problems it poses
 - C. Identify the problems sentenced inmates present to jail managers
 - D. Discuss the available alternatives to incarceration
 - E. Identify jail management issues
 - F. Discuss the future of the jail
- VIII. Describe the nature and purpose of probation
 - A. Explain the history and development of probation
 - B. Discuss the current organization of probation
 - C. Distinguish between the dual roles of probation
 - D. Describe how supervision of probationers can be more effective
 - E. Explain the procedure for revoking probation
- IX. Explain intermediate sanctions and community corrections
 - A. Describe the rationale for intermediate sanctions
 - B. Discuss the continuum-of-sanctions concept
 - C. Identify the problems the various types of intermediate sanctions

- D. Describe strategies that can make intermediate sanctions work
 - E. Discuss the future of intermediate sanctions and community corrections
- X. Discuss the nature and purpose of incarceration
- A. Explain how today's prisons are linked to the past
 - B. Describe the goals of incarceration
 - C. Discuss the organization of incarceration
 - D. Identify the major factors influencing the design and classification of
 - E. Prisons
- XI. Describe the prison experience
- A. Discuss what it like to be in prison
 - B. Describe how prisoners adapt to "life in the joint"
 - C. Explain the prison economy, how extensive it is and how it works
 - D. Discuss what can be done about prison violence
 - E. Identify the changes taking place in prison today
- XII. Discuss the incarceration of women
- A. Explain why women are called the "forgotten offender"
 - B. Discuss the history of the incarceration of women
 - C. Describe what it's like to be incarcerated in a prison for women
 - D. Identify the major policy issues regarding the incarceration of women
 - E. Discuss the problems women face when they are released into the community
- XIII. Describe the process of institutional management
- A. Identify the characteristics of the formal prison organization
 - B. Explain how prisons are governed
 - C. Describe the various roles correctional officers play
 - D. Discuss the limits of an officer's use of power
- XIV. Explain the role of institutional programs
- A. Discuss the importance of managing time for both prisoners and inmates
 - B. Describe the classification process and how it is used
 - C. Identify the types of rehabilitative programs available in most prisons
 - D. Explain why prison industries are important and how they operate
 - E. Discuss why administrators believe recreation programs are important
- XV. Discuss the process of release from incarceration
- A. Explain how parole operates
 - B. Describe the origins of parole
 - C. Discuss how the parole decision is made
 - D. Identify the steps that are taken to ease the offender's reentry into the community
- XVI. Describe the nature of community supervision
- A. Explain how community supervision is structured

- B. Describe residential programs and how they help parolees
- C. Identify the problems that confront parolees
- D. Discuss why some parolees are viewed as dangerous and how society handles the problem
- E. Describe the effectiveness of post release supervision

XVII. Discuss incarceration trends

- A. Describe the changes in prison populations and current trends
- B. Discuss the hardening public attitude toward criminals and the results there of
- C. Explain the prison population crisis and attempts to deal with it
- D. Describe the impact of prison crowding

XVIII. Discuss issues associated with the death penalty

- A. Describe the contrasting issues in the debate over capital punishment
- B. Explain the history of the death penalty
- C. Identify the legal issues surrounding the death penalty
- D. Discuss what the future holds for the continuation of capital punishment

Learning Activities

Lecture, instructor-led class discussion, group study, field trips, library research, audio/visual aids, case studies, guest speakers and student presentations, and the examination of professional journals.

Grade Determination

The student will be graded on assessment tasks, research papers, tests daily work, class participation, out-of-class assignment and other methods of evaluation at the discretion of the instructor