

**San José State University**  
**Department of Justice Studies**  
**JS 128: Punishment, Culture, & Society**  
**Fall 2022**

**COURSE AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

Instructor: D. Jackson Sargent, MA, MPA  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Office Location: Virtual  
Email: jackson.sargent@sjsu.edu  
Class Day & Time: N/A  
Classroom: Online  
Prerequisites: JS 100W (or equivalent)

**COURSE FORMAT**

Online: The Canvas Learning Management System will be used as a means for distributing course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, lecture slides, assignment instructions, and communications about changes to the course. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of updates.

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Critical analysis of the cultural, political, and economic dimensions of penal politics in contemporary American society, with particular reference to the relationships between criminal justice and social justice. Emphasis on issues of racial, economic, and gender inequality.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the historical development of the American correctional system and the administration of local, state, and federal corrections programs, including jails, probation, community corrections, and prisons through the lens of the aforementioned cultural, political, economic, and historic dimensions. The course also examines various alternatives within the scope of the criminal justice system's methods of correctional implementation, including punishment rationales, policies, and possibilities for reform.

**COURSE GOALS**

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- ✓ Understand and explain the historical development of corrections and identify the purposes of punishment.
- ✓ Describe trends in sentencing and corrections.
- ✓ Understand the development and types of prisoners' legal rights.
- ✓ Compare and contrast the different functions and operations of jails, prisons, probation, parole, and intermediate sanctions.
- ✓ Demonstrate knowledge of the core controversies surrounding capital punishment.
- ✓ Identify the major challenges in contemporary corrections, including the rise in mentally disordered offenders, private prisons, soaring costs, and wrongful convictions.
- ✓ Articulate course concepts in both written and verbal form.

## REQUIRED TEXTS / READINGS

### *Textbook*

Siegel, L. & Bartollas, C. (2018). *Corrections Today* (4th Edition). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. ISBN: 9781337092845.

### *Other Readings*

Supplied electronically via Canvas

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

*Online Discussions (20%)*: Active participation in discussions is a necessary and integral part of the course. Each week there will be online discussions, through Canvas, on specific readings and key issues or current events related to that week's topic. Online discussions are intended to be interactive. Therefore, for this course we will be using Packback to facilitate the online discussion assignments. Packback is an add-on within Canvas, and allows students to submit an original response to a prompt and then ask questions for their peers to answer to create a rolling, or evolving, discussion feed to replicate an in-person academic interaction.

*Assignment 1 – Story Analysis (10%)*: This assignment will require students to read a corrections-themed story, view a video, and then write a short analysis. Detailed instructions pertaining to this assignment are available on Canvas. **This assignment is due Sunday September 25<sup>th</sup>.**

*Assignment 2 – Topic Paper (20%)*: This assignment will require students to select a topic relevant to this course, locate a minimum of five scholarly articles identifying an issue associated with the selected topic, and prepare an assessment of this issue inclusive of recommended policy initiatives. Detailed instructions pertaining to this assignment are available on Canvas. **This assignment is due Sunday November 13<sup>th</sup>.**

*Midterm and Final Examinations (50%)*: Students will be administered a Midterm and a Final Examination, each worth 25% of their final grade. Each timed exam will occur online and will cover material from lectures (including all media presented) and assigned readings. Each exam will be non-cumulative and comprised of multiple choice, true/false, and short-answer questions.

## GRADING INFORMATION

To receive a grade for this course, all course requirements must be met, and every assignment must be completed. *At the discretion of the course instructor, late assignments/papers may be subject to a deduction of 10 percent for every calendar day that they are late, including weekend days.*

### Grade Scale

A	=	94-100%	A-	=	90-93%
B+	=	87-89%	B	=	83-86%
B-	=	80-82%	C+	=	77-79%
C	=	73-76%	C-	=	70-72%
D+	=	67-69%	D	=	63-66%
D-	=	60-62%	F	=	Below 60%

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

*Course topics are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.*

### **Week 1: Introduction and Course Foundations (08/19 – 08/21)**

Introduction to the course  
Course expectations and outcomes  
Readings provided on Canvas

### **Week 2: History of Corrections / Corrections in Context (08/22 – 08/28)**

(Siegel, Chapter 1)

### **Week 3: Sentencing (08/29 – 09/04)**

(Siegel, Chapter 2)  
Additional readings provided on Canvas

### **Week 4: Probation / Community Corrections (09/05 – 09/11)**

(Siegel, Chapter 3)  
Additional readings provided on Canvas

### **Week 5: Intermediate Sanctions (09/12 – 09/18)**

(Siegel, Chapter 4)

### **Week 6: Jails and Houses of Corrections (09/19 – 09/25)**

(Siegel, Chapter 5)  
**Assignment 1 due Sunday September 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Week 7: Prisons** (09/26 – 10/02)

(Siegel, Chapter 6)

**Week 8: Midterm Exam** (10/03 – 10/09)

*Midterm Exam opens October 3<sup>rd</sup> and closes **FRIDAY** October 7<sup>th</sup>*

**Week 9: The Prison Experience** (10/10 – 10/16)

(Siegel, Chapter 7)

Additional readings provided on Canvas

Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UrEW9sTi41s>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjWVzsT\\_l8k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjWVzsT_l8k)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWmfrpd-ohs>

**Week 10: Prisoners' Rights / Correctional Programs** (10/17 – 10/23)

(Siegel, Chapters 8 and 9)

**Week 11: Parole** (10/24 – 10/30)

(Siegel, Chapter 10)

**Week 12: Special Prison Populations / Juvenile Offenders** (10/31 – 11/06)

(Siegel, Chapters 11 and 13)

**Week 13: Death Row / Topic Paper** (11/07 – 11/13)

(Siegel, Chapter 12)

**Assignment 2 due Sunday November 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Week 14: Prison Staff** (11/14 – 11/20)

Readings provided on Canvas

**Week 15: Holiday** (11/21 – 11/27)

**THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 16: Course Review** (11/28 – 12/04)

Course in review

Final Exam review

**Week 17: Final Exam** (12/05 – 12/08)

**Final Exam takes place Thursday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5.15 – 7.30pm ONLY**