

CRCJ 8040: Police & Society
Fall 2019
Tuesday 5:30 – 8:10PM
CPACS 122A

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Course Description

In this course, we will explore the function of the police in American society – all the while considering the challenges associated with balancing citizens’ procedural rights on the one hand with the goal of controlling crime on the other. I will push you to think critically about the scientific methods used to answer various research questions, as well as reflect on policing’s contributions to the larger CJ system.

Required Readings

I expect you to read critically and come prepared to discuss how the material relates to contemporary policing and society. Most of the required readings are available on Canvas. In addition, we will be reading four books throughout the semester:

1. Charles Epp, Steven Maynard-Moody, & Donald Haider-Markel. (2014). *Pulled over: How police stops define race and citizenship*. Chicago, IL: University Press.
2. Franklin Zimring. (2017). *When police kill*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. Robert Worden & Sarah McLean. (2017). *Mirage of police reform: Procedural justice and police legitimacy*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

**Save your money! This one is available as a PDF on Canvas.

4. Greg Berman & Aubrey Fox. (2010). *Trial & error in criminal justice reform: Learning from failure*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.

Writing Assignments

For each of the four assigned books, you are required to write a reaction paper. These should be 2 – 4 pages (double-spaced), and each is worth 5% of your grade. In your reaction, you should comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the methods (or arguments being made), and summarize the “big picture” takeaways given said strengths and/or weaknesses.

Research Proposal and Presentation

Each student will select a topic on which to write a research proposal and make an oral presentation to the class based upon its content. The written proposal should be 10 – 15 pages (double-spaced) and the oral presentation should be 10 – 15 minutes (or 20 including Q&A). The written proposal is due no later than **December 3rd**, and oral presentations will take place during our last two classes. We will discuss this assignment in more detail later in the semester. Topics must be approved by me, and should be submitted in writing (approx. one page) no later than **October 8th**.

Grading

Attendance & participation	35%
Writing assignments	20%
Research proposal	25%
Research presentation	20%

90 – 100	= A
80 – 89	= B
70 – 79	= C
60 – 69	= D
0 – 59	= F

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the policy on academic integrity (<https://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/student-conduct-and-community-standards/policies/academic-integrity.php>). Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable. Instances of academic dishonesty will, at a minimum, result in a failing grade for that assignment, and a record of academic dishonesty will be placed in the student's academic file that is maintained by the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Instances of academic dishonesty may also be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

Students with Special Needs

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students who are registered with Disability Services and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact Disability Services (EAB 117, Phone: 554-2872) or go to the website: www.unomaha.edu/disability.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading(s)
Week 1 8/27	Introduction and overview	Syllabus Schwartz (2008)
Week 2 9/3	The function of police	Bittner (1980) Presidential Task Force on 21 st Century Policing (2015)
Week 3 9/10	Socialization	Westley (1953) Bayley & Bittner (1984) Crank & Langworthy (1992)
Week 4 9/17	Police discretion I	Goldstein (1960) Goldstein (1963) Bittner (1967)
Week 5 9/24	Police discretion II	Klinger (1994) Worden et al. (1996) Nix et al. (2019)
Week 6 10/1	Bias and accountability	<i>Pulled over: How police stops define race and citizenship</i>
Week 7 10/8	Urban violence (topics due)	Braga et al. (2019) Cook et al. (2019) Brunson & Wade (2019)

Week 8 10/15	Body-worn cameras	White (2019) Lum et al. (2019) Malm (2019)
Week 9 10/22	Fall Break – No class	
Week 10 10/29	Use of force I	<i>When police kill</i>
Week 11 11/5	Use of force II	Johnson et al. (2019) Knox & Mummolo (2019) Johnson & Cesario (2019) Edwards et al. (2019)
Week 12 11/12	ASC Conference – No class	
Week 13 11/19	Police Reform	<i>Mirage of Police Reform</i>
Week 14 11/26	What works?	<i>Trial & Error in Criminal Justice Reform: Learning from Failure</i>
Week 15 12/3	Student presentations I (research proposals due)	—
Week 16 12/10	Student presentations II	—

Please note that I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as necessary in order to meet learning objectives, compensate for missed classes, or for similar reasons.