McMaster University         Sociology 4GG3  
Perspectives in Comparative Policing Studies

Fall 2016                     Instructor: Carlos Torres  
Tues 7:00-10:00 pm           Office: KTH-607  Office hours: TBA
Location: KTH-106            ext: 20423
Email: torresc@mcmaster.ca

Course Description and Learning Objectives:
This course aims to explore deviance from various systems of social control and 
regulation within Canada and abroad. The course will examine current policing 
practices and police research in relation to the study of deviance. Some prevailing issues 
that will be examined in the course include a critical evaluation of the politics of crisis 
and risk; private prisons, race relations with the the politics of the war on drugs and 
human trafficking.

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations. 
One of the objectives of the course is to encourage intellectual curiosity of students 
regarding questions of deviance, social control and policing. Students will be given 
conceptual tools to examine contemporary practices of policing, social control and 
regulation. They will also be given case studies to apply concepts learned in class. Thus, 
students will develop critical thinking skills. More generally, students will learn about the 
differential impact policing has on issues tied to race, racism, gender, patriarchy and 
community policing.

The second main goal is to acquaint students with key controversies surrounding 
policing and crime and social justice. Third, students will demonstrate complex ways in 
which neoliberalism has impacted deviance and policing. Upon completing this course, 
students should be able to interrogate the differential policing has in terms of social 
control and deviance. Students will demonstrate an appreciation of contradictions 
surrounding policing and deviance and provide a conceptual and methodological 
evaluation of various explanations on policing and deviance.

Avenue to Learn
I post my lecture notes on avenue to learn before class and post grades there too. Students 
can access me through email

Course text:
Course pack will be available at McMaster bookstore.

Grade Breakdown:
20% for Seminar participation. Students are encouraged to critically engage in 
seminars. What does the latter imply? That students are able to raise questions in the 
seminar or that they can synthesize what are the main claims in the text for an assigned 
reading. The point though, is that students explore the readings and articulate their 
reflections in a cogent manner. Students are encouraged to bring questions to class.
20% is allotted to one test. It measures students' conceptual and practical understanding of course material. The test will consist of multiple choice questions and short answers.

20% accounts for a reflection on one of the readings. The aim of this assignment is for students to critically engage with the content of a reading of their choosing. Students are highly encouraged to raise questions that show thoughtful engagement with the readings, articulate a synthesis of the main claims for assigned readings and construct critical commentaries about the topics raised.

15% accounts for essay proposal. For this assignment, students will mobilize their perspectives explored in the course and begin to outline their analysis for the final essay. Suggested topics for the essay will be provided. If students are interested in writing on a specific topic, they should consult the course director. This assignment should indicate the content of the essay in progress and should be between 2 to 4 pages. Students will be given descriptive feedback to assist in the development of their final essay. Below are guidelines as to what the proposal should contain.

It shall include:
  a) A tentative title
  b) An introduction that explains the title and gives an indication of what the paper shall discuss (a work in progress thesis that outlines the argument(s) made)
  c) A breakdown of subsections and descriptions that support the thesis
  d) A working annotated bibliography that explains how each source relates to the topic

25% is allotted to final essay. The essay will be based on some of course readings and other readings from outside the course. It should be 10 - 12 pages double spaced plus a bibliography.
Reading and Lecture Schedule

September 13, 2016 Ericson, Richard. 2007. “Rules In Policing: Five Perspectives” Theoretical Criminology; 11; (pp 367-401) This reading will be uploaded to avenue to learn.


October 11, 2016 No class

October 18, 2016 Test 1


November 1, 2016 Documentary on Human Trafficking in Canada


November 22, 2016 Paasche, Till F, et all (2014) Territorial tactics: The socio-spatial significance of private policing in strategies in Cape Town. This article will be uploaded to avenue to learn.

November 29, 2016 Documentary on Policing the Favelas in Brazil

Dec 6, 2016 Dammert, Lucia and Malone, Mary Fran (2006) Does it take a Village? Policing strategies and Fear of Crime in Latin America This article will be uploaded to avenue to learn.
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:
Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:
1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean’s Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (e.g. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme
circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.