

POLI 4113-FA
Politics of Incarceration
Fall 2017
Monday: 11:30-2:30 PM
Room: RB-3049
COURSE OUTLINE
Professor: Dr. Zahir Kolia
Office: Ryan Building 2033
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:00 pm
E-mail: zkolia@lakeheadu.ca

Course Description:

The course aims to critically examine the intersection between social-political relations and what can be termed the age of ‘mass incarceration.’ The notion of mass incarceration refers to the recent explosion of people under custodial supervision, including a disproportionate number of Black, Latino, and Indigenous peoples – particularly in the United States. In this regard, processes of mass incarceration provide a way to organize, allocate, and justify unequal power relations in society. This course will ask how do the people who enter the prison system in Canada and the United States impact our understanding of the prison as a site of political, social, cultural, and economic significance? To help answer this, we will examine various intersectional frameworks for examining how mass incarceration came about, how it maintains itself, and possibilities for change.

This course will be intersectional, meaning as political science scholars we are sensitive to the idea that the prison does not function outside of social-political relations. Rather, the prison and processes of mass incarceration are about systems of power, struggles over identity, contested histories, and diverse forms of resistance and political mobilization at multiple sites of the political spectrum.

Format:

The course is structured as a traditional seminar, led by student presentations. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to discuss them. The instructor will moderate student exchanges, yet it is expected that the weekly presenters lead the discussion and prepare themselves to take questions by both the instructor and fellow students. Additionally, if time permits, we will screen various documentaries to network the textual materials through a visual medium.

Course Materials:

All readings will be available via D2L or the library catalogue.

Course Requirements:

1. Participation (20%): Attendance and weekly contribution in seminar.
2. Presentation (20%): Information on separate document in D2L.
3. Final Term Paper (60%): 15-page research essay. Research papers should include reference to at least 10 **academic sources** (journal articles, chapters in books and books published by

reputable academic publishers). This could include readings from the assigned readings as well.

E-mail:

E-mail will be answered within two business days. Do not submit any class assignments by e-mail, unless instructed to do so. Please use e-mail only for quick queries and to set up appointments out of regularly scheduled office hours.

I welcome e-mail queries and comments. All students are required to have a valid Lakehead e-mail address. It is your responsibility to maintain your e-mail address in good working order. The University expects you to correspond with me through your official e-mail address, and not through a commercial e-mail account.

Failure to receive important class announcements and messages from me because of a faulty e-mail account (for example, an account which screens out my e-mails as junk mail; bounced messages because of overloaded caches) are not legitimate excuses.

Forwarding your Lakehead email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of e-mail account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from your Lakehead addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that e-mails from me may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Accessibility:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me, and/or Accessibility Services. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Essays:

Formatting bibliographies, references:

The written assignment will be in 12pt Times New Roman font with standard margins. Essay should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. It must include appropriate citations and complete bibliography.

Include a title page with your name, the date, the course number, and my name.

In completing the written assignment, students must cite all facts and figures that are not common knowledge and must cite all ideas that are borrowed from other authors. Students must use a recognized standard format (I suggest MLA) correctly in their bibliographies, and references. *Failure to do so will result in substantial penalty in calculating your assignment grade.*

The University takes instructional offences (including plagiarism) very seriously. Please make sure that you are familiar with the regulations regarding instructional offences. Also, it is not acceptable to submit the same assignment in two different courses.

I would suggest you use MLA citation style (below is a link for quick guidelines):
http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/documents/mlacitation_quickguide.pdf

Also, consider consulting reference books on research and writing.
Two examples:

1. Margot Northey, Lorne Tepperman and Patrizia Albanese, *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing: Social Sciences*, 4th ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2009)
2. Diane E. Schmidt, *Writing in Political Science: A Practical Guide*, 4th ed. (Boston: Longman, 2010)

***** Late Penalties**

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the course outline. Late papers will be subject to a penalty of 2% a day including weekends. Assignments will not be accepted two weeks after the due date.

No retroactive extensions will be permitted. Exceptions will be made only in those cases of special circumstances, (e.g. illness, bereavement) and where the student has verifiable documentation.

Tentative Schedule:

Subject to change

Week 1

Introduction:

Monday, September 11

No Readings Scheduled

Week 2:

Foundational Concepts: Foucault

Monday, September 18

Gerald Turkel, "Michel Foucault: Law, Power, and Knowledge", *Journal of Law and Society* 17:2 (Summer, 1990), pp. 170-193

Michel Foucault, "Panopticism" pp. 206-213; "Complete and Austere Institutions", pp. 214-224, in *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books,

Michel Foucault, "Prison Talk" in *Power/Knowledge*, Colin Gordon (eds.) (New York: Vintage, 1980): pp. 37-54

Week 3

Emergence of the Prison:

Monday, September 25

Roger Matthews, "The Emergence of the Modern Prison", in *Doing Time: An Introduction to the Sociology of Imprisonment* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009): pp. 1-24

Lorna Rhodes, "Towards an Anthropology of Prisons", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 30 (2001): pp. 65-83

(Begin Documentary: *The Farm: Life Inside Angola Prison*)

Week 4

Prisons, Carcerality, and the Neoliberal Order:

Monday, October 2

Loïc Wacquant, "Prologue", pp. xi-xxiii. "Social Insecurity and the Punitive Upsurge", pp. 1-37 in *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2009)

Genevieve LeBaron and Adrienne Roberts, "Toward a Feminist Political Economy of Capitalism and Carcerality", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 36:1 (2010): pp.74-90

(Finish Documentary: *The Farm: Life Inside Angola Prison*)

Week 5

~Reading Week~

Week 6

Historical Legacies, Race and Jim Crow: Part 1

Monday, October 16

Michele Alexander, "Introduction", pp. 1-20; "The Rebirth of Caste", pp. 20-59, in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, (New York: The New Press, 2010)

Week 7

Historical Legacies and Jim Crow: Part 2

Monday, October 16

Michele Alexander, "The Color of Justice", pp. 97-140, in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, (New York: The New Press, 2010)

(Begin Documentary: 13th)

Week 8

Beyond the New Jim Crow:

Monday, October 30

James Forman, "Racial Critiques of Mass Incarceration: Beyond the New Jim Crow", *N.Y.U. Law Review* 21 (2012): 102-146

(Finish Documentary: 13th)

Week 9

Gender and Race:

Monday, November 6

Roger Matthews, "Women and Prison", in *Doing Time: An Introduction to the Sociology of Imprisonment* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009): pp. 179-207

Kimberlé Crenshaw: "From Private Violence to Mass Incarceration: Thinking Intersectionally About Women, Race, and Social Control" *UCLA Law Review* (2012): 1420-1471

Week 10

Bio-Politics and Incarceration:

Monday, November 13

Scott Lauria Morgensen, "The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism: Right Here, Right Now", *Settler Colonial Studies* 1:1 (2011): pp. 52-76

Vicki Chartrand, "Penal and Colonial Politics Over Life: Women and Penal Release Schemes in NSW, Australia", *Settler Colonial Studies* 4:3 (2014): pp. 305-320

Patricia A. Monture, "Confronting Power: Aboriginal Women and Justice Reform", *Canadian Woman Studies* 25:3-4 (Summer-Fall 2006): p25-33

Week 11

Are Prisons Obsolete 1?

Monday, November 20

Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories Press): 9-60

(Begin Documentary: *The Visitors*)

Week 12

Are Prisons Obsolete 2?

Monday, November 27

Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories Press): 60-116

(Finish Documentary: The Visitors)

Week 13

Final Reflections:

Monday, December 4:

Final Thoughts and reflections

Student Evaluations

Final Paper Due (Upload to D2L)