Course Description

In a system of discipline, the child is more individualized than the adult, the patient more than the healthy man, the madman and the delinquent more than the normal and the non-delinquent. In each case, it is towards the first of these pairs that all the individualizing mechanisms are turned in our civilization; and when one wishes to individualize the healthy, normal and law-abiding adult, it is always by asking him how much of the child he has in him, what secret madness lies within him, what fundamental crime he has dreamt of committing.

-- Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

Who qualifies as a criminal? What function does prison serve? The passage quoted above, from one of the most prominent historians and philosophers of power and the prison, describes the way our ideas of criminality tend to apply to under-developed or ‘abnormal’ classes of people like children, the sick, and the ‘mentally ill’. By contrast, the healthy and sane adult is identified as the ‘normal’ and therefore lawful person. But how (or better yet: why?) do we decide that certain groups of people are normal, and others ought to be placed in an institutional site of control, discipline, and rehabilitation such as the school, the clinic, the asylum, and the prison? Prison, we shall see, is not the only form of imprisonment. In this course, we will be introduced to the idea of the prison – its conceptual and historical origins, and debates over its function as an institution of both justice and injustice. We will also explore how the prison is connected to other sites of power and coercion. Through a series of interdisciplinary and intersectional readings, students will be introduced to the ways in which structures of power related to class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and ability play a role in our conceptions of criminality. Students will engage with recent debates over the disproportionate levels of incarceration among black and Indigenous peoples, the treatment of peoples with cognitive disabilities, the ideas of the ‘school to prison pipeline’, the criminalization of migrants, the ‘prison industrial complex’, and arguments for the abolition of prisons.

1. Required Texts

There are no required texts in this course. All materials will be available through the Lakehead library system and/or have been uploaded to D2L/courselink under “Content”.
2. Course Requirements

1. **Participation and Attendance** (30%): Participants who attend and participate have an opportunity to earn up to 30% for their time and effort. (With 14 classes, this ends up being roughly 2% per class.)

2. **Presentation** (30%): Participants will give a presentation 15 to 20-minute presentation for one or two of the weekly readings. Presenters should summarize the main points of the work(s) they choose and provide their critical interpretation of the arguments and evidence offered in the work(s). Presenter should also prepare three questions for the class to discuss.

   You choose to do a deep dive into one reading, or a more general reading of two or more of the readings.

   Please email you presentation slides and/or material to me so that I may disturb the to the class prior to your presentation.

   Presentation sign-up will be conducted in our first class on January 11th.

3. **Short Paper I** (20%): 5 to 6-page essay (approx. 1,500 words). You can choose whatever topic you like so long as it deals with the themes covered in the course. Please email me with your topic idea. I will provide some guidance and a marking rubric to help students write a great paper. This paper is **due on February 12, 2021.**

4. **Short Paper II** (20%): 5 to 6-page essay (approx. 1,500 words). You can choose whatever topic you like so long as it is not the same as the first paper and deals with the themes covered in the course. Please email me with your topic idea. I will provide some guidance and a marking rubric to help students write a great paper. This paper is **due on April 12, 2021.**

3. E-mail

E-mail will be answered within two business days.

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.
4. 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.

5. Essays
You are to complete two essays, one in first section, and one in the second. The goal of each essay is to provide a clear, concise response (argument) to the research question backed by rational consideration of the evidence.

Summarize your response (argument) in a sentence or two – the thesis statement – and appear in the first paragraph of your essay. Be explicit. The reader should be clear on what you are arguing. Assume an educated reader. Do not spend more than a few paragraphs providing background information. Focus on providing information that advances your argument. While the balance of the paper will defend your argument, you should also acknowledge counterarguments and seek to demonstrate that your argument is superior.

6. Formatting bibliographies, references
You can use whatever citation style you prefer in your paper and presentation.

The written assignments should all be double-spaced in 12pt Times New Roman font with standard margins. Essays should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. They 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 assignments, 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 correctly in their bibliographies, references, and footnotes. Failure to do so will result in a 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.

7. 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. If you require an extension or accommodation, please email me.
8. Course Schedule

1. Numbered readings are required readings.

- Bullet pointed readings are only recommended readings for your own interest. You may wish to consult these when doing your written assignments.

**Week 1 (January 11) – Introductions**

  Introductions  
  Course syllabus  
  Question and Answer

**Week 2 (January 18) – The Birth of the Prison**


**Week 3 (January 25) The Carceral State**


Week 4 (February 1) – Race


Week 5 (February 8) Immigration and Refugees


Friday, February 12th: First Paper Due

Week 6 (February 15) Break/Reading Week - No Classes

Week 7 (February 22) – Class and Poverty
**Week 8 (March 1) – The Neoliberal Prison**


**Week 9 (March 8) – Gender and Carceral Feminism**


**Week 10 (March 15) – LGBTQ**


**MARCH 12: FINAL DAY TO WITHDRAW**

**Week 11 (March 22) – Disability**


**Week 12 (March 29) Children and Juvenile Justice**


**Week 13 (April 5) – Easter Monday – NO CLASS**

**Week 14 (April 12): Decolonization and Abolition**


*Second Paper Due*