Political Science 399: Democracy and Discipline

College of Charleston Department of Political Science
Fall Term 2018
MWF, 12:00pm-12:50pm
207 Maybank Hall

Instructor: Dr. Briana L. McGinnis
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Office Hours: Monday 2-4 pm, Wednesday 2-3 pm, additional hours available by appointment.
Office Location: 26 Coming Street, Room 101

Prerequisites: None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**Objectives**

This is first and foremost a political theory course; as such, its focus will be normative. In this class, we will examine the relationship between liberal democratic forms of politics and punitive social control practices. The first part of the class will raise basic issues connected to punishment, social discipline, and democratic politics. The second and third sections will closely engage influential texts in the history of social thought, familiarizing you with the core ideas related to the relationship between social organization and discipline. The fourth section will engage with current political theory scholarship on punishment and politics, including a particular focus on the injustices arising from (and inherent in) mass incarceration and mass conviction. The final section of the course will consider alternative models of discipline (including restorative justice) and the place of forgiveness in democratic politics.

All readings are required unless otherwise noted.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Demonstrate knowledge of key thinkers and concepts over time (papers)
• Compare thinkers on similar concepts (papers and essays)
• Use concepts to analyze new situations (short writing assignments, papers, essays)
• Evaluate interpretations of concepts (papers and essays)
• Explain the nature and value of normative thinking (papers and essays)

POLICIES

Academic integrity
Note that written assignments in this course will be screened by plagiarism-detecting software. Please review the College of Charleston’s academic honor code, available here: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php

Please note that it is not permissible to turn in work for this class that was produced for another class without prior approval.

Technology usage
• Devices must be set to “silent” during class
• The usage of computers and tablets is permitted with instructor permission. Computers and tablets may be used on days with readings posted on OAKS, but this policy will change if they prove to be distracting.
• I encourage you to take notes by hand for this course – we will be interacting closely with the readings and you should be making notations on the text as you read and discuss.

Attendance
There is no formal attendance requirement; however, there is a participation element of your grade. You cannot participate actively in this class if you are not present. As a guideline, you should miss no more than three class meetings.

Designated meetings will be used for class discussion of that week’s readings and themes. Everything in the class – including the content of class discussions – may appear on exams, so be certain to be in class for those discussions and be engaged. On Discussion days, come prepared with a passage from that week’s readings that you would like to discuss. I will choose students at random to read their passage aloud to the class and explain briefly why they believe it to be significant.

**Syllabus**
This syllabus is a guide and it contains vital information about the class. Please read it carefully. This syllabus is subject to change.

**GRADING AND EVALUATION**

**Grading scale**
A (93-100)  
A- (90-92)  
B+ (87-89)  
B (84-86)  
B- (80-83)  
C+ (77-79)  
C (74-76)  
C- (70-73)  
D+ (67-69)  
D (64-66)  
D- (60-63)
Note on the Readings
Because this course explores punishment in both a theoretical and a historical perspective, we will read texts that include graphic and disturbing imagery and that touch on topics that some students may find upsetting. When texts of this nature are included on the syllabus (I point especially to the opening section of Discipline and Punish), they have not been chosen carelessly. The history of punishment in liberal democratic societies encompasses a broad array of practices, many of which were extremely violent and quite grisly. Punishment is an inherently violent practice, and acknowledging that violence is necessary to understanding what we are doing when we, as citizens of societies that punish, support or oppose policies and discourses that undergird certain punitive forms.

Requirements and Evaluation
There are 1000 points to be earned in this course. The distribution of the points is listed below.

- Short writing assignment I 100 (10%)
- Short writing assignment II 100 (10%)
- Applying the ideas: Pointergate Analysis 200 (20%)
- Short story reflection: “A Jury of Her Peers” 200 (20%)
- Final research paper 300 (30%)
- Participation 100 (10%)

Papers must be turned in to OAKS by the beginning of the class period on the day they are due.

Attendance and participation is worth 10% of your final grade. This class will include a great deal of discussion and the progress of the class is dependent on active, informed student participation. Every student is expected to make high-quality contributions to class discussions on a regular basis. Quality class participation encompasses regular presence and attention, as well as contributing informed, relevant analyses and observations during class discussion. You must be present to participate, so I strongly encourage you to attend every meeting. Further, you must be current on the assigned readings to make high-quality contributions.

Accommodations

Religious Holidays
Every effort will be made to avoid conflicts between assignments and religious holidays. If, however, you encounter such a conflict, please notify me as soon as possible (and certainly within the first two weeks of class to allow time for accommodations to be made). Please review the College of Charleston’s statement here:
Disability accommodations

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsibility for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed. Please see me during office hours to discuss accommodations.

REQUIRED TEXTS


Other readings will be posted in PDF form on OAKS.

Please purchase these texts in the editions assigned, to avoid confusion arising from differing paginations or translations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. Foundational Considerations

Week 1

08/22 Intro to course, syllabus, overview of readings and assignments.

08/24 Why Punish?


Week 2

08/27 Punishment and Democracy I: Overview of Democratic Theory


Recommended: Ludvig Beckman, “Democracy and Exclusion” (OAKS)

08/29 Punishment and Democracy II: Ancient Perspectives, Protecting the Polity from Disorder, the Deity, and Pollution
Reading: Robert Parker, *Miasma* chapters 6 (191-206) and 9 (257-280), Available on OAKS

Recommended: *Miasma* chapter 4 (104-143); Sara Forsdyke *Exile, Ostracism, and Democracy* 178-181

08/31 Ancient Perspectives II: Ancient Athens and the Roots of Democratic Punishment

Reading: Danielle Allen, *The World of Prometheus*, 3-50 (OAKS)


Week 3

09/03 Discussion: Democracy and punishment

Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class

*** SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT I DUE. TURN IN TO OAKS BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ***

II. The Meaning of Punishment: Emile Durkheim

09/05 Social Functions of Discipline: Durkheim I

Reading: *The Division of Labor in Society* 31-100

09/07: Social Functions of Discipline: Durkheim II

Reading: *The Division of Labor in Society* 101-141

Recommended: Two Laws of Penal Evolution.

Week 4

09/10 Discussion of Durkheim

Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class

III. Foucault: Discipline and Punish

09/12: Introduction to Foucault

Reading: *Discipline and Punish* 1-54

*** SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT I OPTIONAL RE-WRITE DUE. TURN IN TO OAKS BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ***

09/14 Foucault on normalization and discipline

Reading: *Discipline and Punish* 54-101
***FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS**

Week 5

09/17 Foucault’s critics

   Reading Discipline and Punish: 101-149

09/21 Foucault’s influence

   Reading: Discipline and Punish 149-200

Week 6

09/24 Discussion: Foucault, Discipline and Punish

   Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class

*** SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT II DUE. TURN IN TO OAKS BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ***

09/26 Penal mechanisms and disciplinary architecture: The rise of the prison

   Reading: Discipline and Punish, 200-248

09/28 Documentary on Eastern State Penitentiary: “Let the Doors Be of Iron”

   Reading: Discipline and Punish, 248-308

Week 7

10/01 Discussion: Foucault wrap-up

   Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class

   Suggested reading: Foucault, Abnormal

IV: Punishment and Political Theory

10/03 Punishment and Political Order


*** SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT II OPTIONAL RE-WRITE DUE. TURN IN TO OAKS BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ***

10/05 Punishment and the liberal tradition I

   Reading: Selections from John Locke and Thomas Hobbes; Punishment and Political Order, “Punishment in Liberal Regimes,” 103-145.
Week 8
10/08 Punishment and the liberal tradition II
   Reading: Andrew Dilts, *Punishment and Inclusion*, “To Kill a Thief,” OAKS
10/10 Discussion: Liberal political theory and punishment
   Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class
10/12 Political Theory and the Prison
   Reading: Keally McBride, “Severing the Sanguinary Empire: Punishment and Early American Democratic Idealism,” from *Punishment and Political Order* (81-102), available on OAKS.

Week 9
**Mass Conviction, Mass Incarceration**
10/15 Mass Incarceration and Slavery
   Reading: Loic Wacquant, “Slavery to Incarceration,” OAKS
***Short story reflection: A Jury of Her Peers due. Turn in to OAKS by the beginning of class time***
10/17 Prison Abolition
   Reading: Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Chapters 1-3
10/19 Abolition Democracy
   Reading: Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Chapters 4-6

Week 10
10/22 Discussion: Mass Conviction, Mass Incarceration
   Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class
VI. Mass Incarceration, Citizenship, and Collateral Consequences

10/24 Mass Incarceration and its Aftermath I

Reading: Andrew Dilts, *Punishment and Inclusion*, “A Productive Injustice,” OAKS

*Read “Pointergate” materials on OAKS and watch the KSTP coverage.*

10/26 Mass Incarceration and its Aftermath II

Reading, Andrew Dilts, *Punishment and Inclusion*, “Fabricating Figures,” OAKS

Week 11

10/29 Mass Conviction and Belonging

Reading: Kimberley Brownlee, “Social Deprivation and Criminal Justice,” OAKS

10/31 Meet in groups to discuss “Pointergate.”

Last 15 minutes, discuss potential final paper topics.

11/02 No class meeting (Association for Political Theory)

Week 12

11/05 (Fall Break, no class meeting)

11/07 Civic Disabilities, Citizenship, and the Franchise

Reading: *Punishment and Inclusion* 110-169


***Applying the Ideas: Pointergate Analysis due. Turn in to OAKS by the beginning of class***

11/09 Collateral Consequences and Exclusion

Reading: Briana L. McGinnis, “Beyond Disenfranchisement: Collateral Consequences and Equal Citizenship,” OAKS

*Formulate a provisional thesis for your final research paper. You will discuss them in groups on 11/14.*

Week 13

11/12 Discussion: Collateral Consequences and Democratic Equality
Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class

11/14 Thesis statement workshop

In class: Evaluate each other’s thesis statements and help refine. Discuss sources and paper organization (for instance, what will your section titles be and what will they cover?)

VII. Challenges to Restoration: Rage, Vengeance, and What comes after

11/16 Punitive Affect

Reading: Martha Nussbaum, *Anger and Forgiveness* 1-56 (OAKS)

Reminder: Rough draft of research paper due 11/19 for group critique.

Week 14

11/19 Varieties of Forgiveness

No reading; introductory lecture on Nussbaum and punitive affect.

*In-Class: Group Critique of Research Paper*

11/21 (Thanksgiving Break) *Please read Nussbaum, 57-90, 211-250 over break for 11/26.*

11/23 (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 15

11/26 Discussion: Anger and Forgiveness

Prepare to discuss your chosen passage in class

11/28 Alternatives: Restorative Justice

Reading: Nils Christie, “Conflicts as Property,” OAKS

11/30 Critique of Restorative Justice

Reading: Selections from *Compulsory Compassion* by Annalise Acorn

*Presentation on Restorative Justice on Campus*

Week 16
12/03 Concluding discussion

12/07 Scheduled final exam time – there will be no final exam in this course. Final papers due via OAKS at 11:59 pm.