Community Justice and Public Safety

This course surveys some of the key topics in public safety, focusing on new approaches to crime, punishment and justice that involve the community. The course will begin by analyzing how community dynamics and structural factors affect the ability of residents to manage public safety problems. The course will then consider the rapid growth in criminal justice initiatives that involve the community over the course of the 1990s and continuing today. This movement towards community justice is based on the following principles: (1) the criminal justice system is intended to serve communities and thus should have some power over its operation, (2) through partnerships, the system should be transparent and accountable to the community, (3) community-based justice is an effective and legitimate response to crime, and (4) crime prevention efforts should ameliorate the social conditions that cause crime in addition to responding to individual behavior.

As the concept of community justice is considered over the course of the semester, we will critically examine the practical implementation of these ideas in neighborhoods and its effect on public safety. Our focus on urban communities of concentrated disadvantage is intended to challenge students to think about policy solutions to complex problems. How do we respond to underperforming schools, violence, drop-outs, joblessness, drug addiction, poverty and incarceration? The last three weeks of the semester will be reserved for students to present model programs designed to address the problems discussed in class.

Questions for consideration: What neighborhood characteristics lead to high rates of crime and punishment? How do local, state and federal policies not directly concerned with crime policy nonetheless bear on public safety? How do we make better use of a community's individual and institutional resources in dealing with crime and punishment? What kinds of practices lead to public safety? What does it mean for members of a community to feel safe? What is community justice?

Goals

While this course aims to survey innovative research and practices on the topics of community justice and public safety, our unique setting – at MCI Norfolk with BU and Harvard students – affords a special opportunity to examine these issues. Though social science research will guide our work, we're also hopeful that the great variety of social experiences among the students can help contribute to new discussions, ideas, and discoveries. To this end, teams of students will work on joint projects with the aim of making new proposals for improving community justice and public safety, guided by both our seminar discussion and course reading.

Reading Materials

Reading materials will be available either electronically or in hardcopy in a course reader. For Harvard students, the electronic materials will be available online on the course web site. Students should print these materials and bring them to class. For BU students, course readers will be supplied. In addition to required texts, we will occasionally provide handouts for additional reading or class discussion.

Procedure

Each course session will meet on Tuesday mornings. We will begin with silence followed by a brief check-in. Our time each week will be divided into several parts. There will usually be a presentation/lecture to help set the seminar's agenda that will be followed by open discussion. We will often have in-class writing, student presentations, guest lecturers, and group work to help prepare the program proposals. Questions may be asked at any time. There will be an opportunity for a one-on-one mid-term evaluation for students to present enduring questions, challenges and ideas to influence the progress of the course. The guidelines for engagement are simple: we voice all relevant questions, respect all opinions, allow others to speak, and agree to disagree.

Grading: The final grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation	20%
Response Papers (5)	20%
Individual Thesis Draft	20%
Group Presentation	20%
Final Project	20%

Requirements

Class participation includes reading preparation/comprehension/integration and in-class writing.. Students are expected to complete all reading assignments with serious reflective attention before class, take careful notes, participate in class discussion and complete all assignments on time. Most weeks, students will prepare a 1-2 page reading response, which will be due at the beginning of class. These must be submitted on time, and the page limit is to be strictly followed. Part of the exercise involves explaining your ideas as sharply and succinctly as possible. Remember, these are *reading responses*; you are expected to rely closely on the assigned readings in developing your answers.

Students will be evaluated on their use of the readings and their ability to move our conversations forward in class and section discussion. Participation that indicates lack of awareness of the assigned material will not be viewed positively. Likewise, comments that do not move the discussion forward will not be viewed positively. Please note that attendance will be taken every class. Class participation is essential for the success of the course; *absences impact final grade.*

The individual thesis draft (five pages in length) will be based on a topic of your own choosing as it relates to the final group project. (We will discuss specific requirements as the course progresses.) At least two of the course required texts and one additional written source must be utilized to support your argument, which must take into account the goals of the course. You will present the subject of your thesis to the class (Week 8, March 23).

Each group presentation will be approximately thirty minutes and integrate at least one creative source, such as music, images or stories. Students will prepare group presentations, 30 minutes each, on model programs in the following policy areas: (1) education, (2) poverty, (3) violence and crime, (4) civic reintegration for people with criminal records, and (5) employment. The proposals should detail the program (its scale, its intended recipients), describe its cost, how it will be funded, and its likely benefits. The program might operate at any of the three levels of government. Students will break into teams of three to five to prepare their program proposals.

The written proposals will be no more than 15 double-spaced pages, plus a bibliography, due on the last day of class.

If any aspect of the above information remains unclear to you, we request that you communicate with us before committing to the course. We will interpret your continued enrollment as your understanding of and agreement with these goals and requirements. ***Please, to the best of your ability, be on time.***

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1, Introduction, January 26

In-Class Writing Exercise
How do you understand community justice and public safety?

Week 2, Communities Dynamics and Crime, February 2

Response Paper 1: Are communities safe because of the persons who reside in them or because of community properties themselves?

Readings
Chapter 1 in William Julius Wilson. 1996. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Knopf.

Jeffrey Kling, Jeffrey Liebman, and Lawrence Katz. 2004. "Bullets Don't Got No Name: Consequences of Fear in the Ghetto." In *Discovering Successful Pathways in Children's Development: New Methods in the Study of Childhood and Family Life,* edited by Thomas S. Weisner. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Robert Sampson and Lydia Bean. 2006. "Cultural Mechanisms and Killing Fields: A Revised Theory of Community-Level Racial Inequality." In *The Many Colors of Crime: Inequalities of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America*, edited by Ruth Peterson, Lauren Krivo, and John Hagan. New York: New York University Press.

Alec MacGillis. 2009. "Neighborhoods Key to Future Income, Study Finds." *The Washington Post*, July 27. www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/26/AR2009072602347.html

Week 3, Mass Incarceration, February 9 (Guest speaker – Professor Bruce Western)

Response Paper 2: What policies can reverse mass incarceration?

Readings

Loic Wacquant. 2000. "The New 'Peculiar' Institution: On the Prison as Surrogate Ghetto." *Theoretical Criminology*, 4: 377 – 389.

Pages 49 – 80 in Michael Tonry. 1995. *Malign Neglect: Race, Crime, and Punishment in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

"Conclusion" in Bruce Western. 2006. *Punishment and Inequality in America.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Bruce Western. 2008. "Reentry: Reversing Massing Incarceration." *Boston Review*, July/August: 7 – 12.

Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Mary Lyndon Shanley. 2008. "No Further Harm: What We Owe to Incarcerated Fathers?" *Boston Review*, July/August, 13 – 17.

Week 4, Community Courts and Restorative Justice, February 16

Response Paper 3: Is it possible to develop a legal system that works more efficiently and fairly with a morally decent approach to community problems?

Readings

David Marble and John Worrall. 2009. "Problem-Solving Courts." In *21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook*, edited by J. Mitchell Miller. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Chapter 2 – "The Core Components of Restorative Justice." In Dennis Sullivan and Larry Tift. 2001. *Restorative Justice: Healing the Foundations of our Everyday Lives*. Monsey, NY: Willow Tree Press.

David Karp. 2002. "The Offender/Community Encounter: Stakeholder Involvement in the Vermont Reparative Boards." In *What is Community Justice? Case Studies of Restorative Justice and Community Supervision*, edited by David Karp and Todd Clear. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Chapter 3 – "Does Restorative Justice Work?" In John Braithwaite. 2002. *Restorative Justice and Responsive Regulation.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 5, Community Policing and Problem Solving, February 23 (Guest discussant – Deputy Superintendent Nora Baston, Boston Police Department)

Response Paper 4: How can the police address crime and disorder problems in a way that is legitimate to the community?

Readings

Chapter 4 in Malcolm Gladwell. 2000. *The Tipping Point How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. New York: Little, Brown.

James Q. Wilson and George Kelling. 1982. "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety." *Atlantic Monthly* (March): 29 – 38.
www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/_atlantic_monthly-broken_windows.pdf

Mark H. Moore. 1992. "Problem-Solving and Community Policing." In *Modern Policing*, edited by Michael Tonry and Norval Morris. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

David Weisburd and John Eck. 2004. "What Can Police Do to Reduce Crime, Disorder, and Fear?" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 593: 42 – 65.

Chapter 8 – "Police Fairness: Legitimacy as the Consent of the Public." In National Research Council. 2004. *Fairness and Effectiveness in Policing: The Evidence*. Committee to Review Police Policy and Practices. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

Week 6, Street Gangs and Violence, March 2

Response Paper 5: How can the community be mobilized to address gang violence? Who are the community's key partners in addressing gang violence problems?

Readings

Introduction and Chapter 3 in Elijah Anderson. 1999. *The Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. New York: Norton.

Chapter 5 – "The Neighborhood Context of Gang Behavior." In Robert J. Bursik and Harold Grasmick. 1993. *Neighborhoods and Crime: The Dimensions of Effective Community Control*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Chapter 2 – "Gang Crime Patterns." In Malcolm Klein and Cheryl Maxson. 2006. *Street Gang Patterns and Policies.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Anthony A. Braga., David Hureau, and Christopher Winship. 2008. "Losing Faith? Police, Black

Churches, and the Resurgence of Youth Violence in Boston." *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law*, 6 (1): 141 – 172.

Week 7, Families and Community Justice, March 9 (Guest speaker – Julie Wilson)

<u>Readings</u>

Malcolm Gladwell. 2006. "Million Dollar Murray." *The New Yorker*, February.

Suniya S. Luthar and Adam Goldstein. 2004. "Children's Exposure to Community Violence: Implications for Understanding Risk and Reslience." *Journal of Clinical and Adolescent Psychology.* 33: 499-505.

Douglas Davies. 2004. "Introduction to Part I: Perspectives on Development," and "Risk and Protective Factors: The Child, Family, and Community Contexts." In *Child Development*: *A Practitioner's Guide*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Week 8, March 23ʳᵈ—Individual Thesis Drafts Due

Week 9, SUBJECT TBA, March 30 (Guest speaker – Professor Glenn Loury)

<u>Readings</u>

Glenn Loury. 2008. *Race, Incarceration and American Values.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Week 10, "Reentry" and Community Corrections, April 6 (Guest speaker – Professor Bruce Western)

<u>Readings</u>

Joan Petersilia. 2005. "From Cell to Society: Who is Returning Home?" In *Prisoner Reentry and Crime in America,* edited by Jeremy Travis and Christy Visher. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dina Rose and Todd Clear. 2003. "Incarceration, Reentry, and Social Capital: Social Networks in the Balance." In *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities*, edited by Jeremy Travis and Michelle Waul. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Shelli Balter Rossman. 2003. "Building Partnerships to Strengthen Offenders, Families, and Communities." In *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities*, edited by Jeremy Travis and Michelle Waul. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Ronald Corbett, Bernard Fitzgerald, and James Jordan. 1998. "Boston's Operation Night Light: An

Emerging Model for Police-Probation Partnerships." In *Community Corrections: Probation, Parole, and Intermediate Sanctions*, edited by Joan Petersilia. New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 11, Student presentations, April 13

Week 12, Student Presentations Cont'd, April 20 …. Final Papers Due

Week 13, Final Class, April 27 (Guests include Massachusetts Department of Corrections Commissioner, Harold Clarke and Director of the Boston University Prison Education Program, Bob Cadigan.)

Grading Rubric for Written Work:

Response Papers

Reaction papers will be graded "check plus" (meaning "you have mastered the material and provided very interesting commentary"), "check" (meaning "you understood the material and provided relevant commentary"), or "check minus" (meaning "you missed the point on the material and/or did not provide relevant commentary"). Late reaction papers will be automatically assessed a check minus. Papers will not be accepted more than one class meeting late.

Individual Thesis Draft and Final Project

All papers should be double-spaced, 12 point font. You can use endnotes or footnotes according to whatever style suits you: Chicago Manual of Style, MLA, etc. Plagiarism is serious and can result in failure of the course. Papers will be graded according to the following:

A—The concept responds incisively to a particular question with adequate analysis and is relevant. Work is guided by a controlling thesis that clearly delineates the argument and research method; it will have a sense of 'inevitability' and will be supported by substantial well-chosen evidence, with an appropriate sequence of paragraphs and clear transitions between sentences and paragraphs. Paper is sophisticated, original, and well argued, accompanied by counter-argument & refutation. It contains appropriate syntax/diction, and is free from grammatical/spelling errors.

B—The concept responds well to the question and its analysis goes beyond the obvious. The central thesis is clear and determines the paper's structure. Work is

supported by adequate and appropriate evidence with distinct units of thought in paragraphs coherently arranged, using some transitions between sentences and paragraphs. Such a paper usually contains some mechanical difficulties, occasional problematic word choices or awkward syntax errors, grammar errors, and wordiness.

C—The concept responds adequately to the question but may have some factual, interpretive, or conceptual errors. It has an overly general thesis and gives no indication of organization to follow; it provides some evidence but is not always relevant, sufficient, or integrated into the paper. Paper has uneven paragraphs and some brief, weakly unified, or undeveloped areas. It has awkward or missing transitions, occasional major grammar errors, (e.g., agreement, verb tense) frequent minor grammar errors (e.g., prepositions, articles), occasional imprecise diction, awkward syntax, and is wordy.

D—The paper confuses some significant concepts, including those in the problem itself. It has a vague or irrelevant thesis and the evidence is usually narrative, anecdotal, awkward, or incorrectly incorporated. The work's organization is repetitive and wanders with frequent major and minor grammar problems.

F—The paper misunderstands the problem and/or course concepts. It has no discernible thesis and little evidence that is simply listed or not cited at all. The organization is arbitrary with weak paragraph structure and illogical or no transitions. Work contains numerous grammatical errors and stylistic problems and is overwhelmingly non-standard with errors in practically the entire paper.