A. Description of Course Content

This course develops a broad critique of the US criminal justice system and will take the student from international comparisons to critical social work and social science research that explores the inequities of mass incarceration. This course will focus on human rights theory, and major mental health and substance use issues within carceral settings. Diverse populations including juveniles, adults, people accused of crimes, and people at risk for criminal justice involvement, will be included and special attention paid to gender and racial/ethnic inequities among these diverse groups. Innovative approaches to smart decarceration including specialty courts and restorative justice will be explored. Prerequisites: none.

B. Student Learning Outcomes

The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs follow the CSWE Educational Policy and Standards that comprises nine competencies as follows:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities Competency
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Specifically, while this course addresses competencies 1 and 2, the main focus is competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Advanced practitioners working with mental health clients practice active self-reflection and continue to address personal bias and affective responses to stereotypes to build knowledge, critical thinking skills and dispel myths regarding diverse mental health/substance abuse issues.

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse develop an action plan for continued growth including use of continuing education, supervision, and consultation.

Advanced practitioners in mental health/substance abuse implement an effective decision making strategy using cognitive and affective processes and judgment for deciphering ethical dilemmas in mental health/substance abuse treatment.

**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse can analyze, using cognitive processes, the relevant cultural, class, gender, race, age, disability, and other diversity issues that influence the prognosis and treatment of populations treated by mental health/substance abuse social workers.

**Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse use cognitive and affective processes to understand the range of physical and mental health/substance abuse disease course and recovery issues associated with social stigma and marginalization of persons with mental health/substance abuse diagnoses and psychiatric disabilities, and incorporate them in their assessment and intervention.

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse describe the distribution and determinants of mental health/substance abuse and identify health disparities.

**C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials**

All required readings, videos, podcasts, and other course materials are available online and accessible remotely through the UTA libraries website.

**D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials**

There are no additional recommended textbooks and other course materials. All materials or links to materials will be provided in the Modules.

**E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Name</th>
<th>Points Per Assignment (x number)</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>5 (x1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Introductions</td>
<td>5 (x1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Reflections</td>
<td>5 (x5)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1, 6, 7, 9, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
<td>5 (x4)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2, 4, 8, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Module 3</td>
<td>5 (x1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infographic Assignments</td>
<td>7.5 (x4)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5, 10, 11, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Decarceration Word Cloud Assignment</td>
<td>10 (x1)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Total Points** | 100
---|---

**Syllabus Quiz**

This is a set of 10 questions about the syllabus to help you get to know the class, how we shall communicate with one another, some of the expectations and flexibility, and some of the policies that shape our semester. Each correct answer will earn 0.5 points for a total of 5 points.

**Course Introductions**

This is a discussion assignment that will allow you to introduce yourself and get to know your classmates. The prompt is this: If you knew you would be stranded on a desert island for 1 year, which 5 objects would you bring with you? Keep in mind there is NO electricity on the island! Choose your objects carefully then explain your choices in a short paragraph. Once you have completed your selections and posted your explanation, read and respond to at least 3 peers. Have fun! Your original post and responses to the posts of 3 classmates is worth 5 points.

**Guided Reflections**

There are 5 guided reflection assignments scattered through the semester. Each reflection should be a minimum of 300 word reflection of your personal responses to the specific topics in the prompt directly related to the materials posted for that module. This is a personal reflection of your experience of the class materials and will only be read by me. Each reflection will earn up to 5 points for a total of 25 points over the semester.

**Reading Responses**

There are 4 mandatory reading responses. Each response should consist of 2 things: 1) a 400-500 word summary of the major points of the assigned readings for that module, and 2) your academic response (an additional 300-400 words) to it (how well you think the arguments were made, what you think might be missing or downplayed, etc.). Each reading response will earn up to 5 points for a total of 20 points.

**Discussion Module 3**

In this discussion you will post an original response to a prompt about the U.S. criminal justice system in historical context and then you will respond to the posts of at least 2 classmates. This assignment is worth 5 points.

**Infographic Assignments**

There are 4 mandatory infographic assignments that will ask you to produce a creative, visual, summary and synthesis of module materials. These are fun alternatives to writing that help you engage with materials in different ways. Assignment instructions will guide you to free online infographic tools to produce these documents. Each infographic assignment may earn up to 7.5 points for a total of 30 points over the semester.

**Smart Decarceration Word Cloud Assignment**

This is a creative way to identify social work's official response to mass incarceration, the grand challenge of smart decarceration. For up to 10 points, I will guide you through the process of creating and analyzing a word cloud based on module 14 readings and video.

**F. Attendance**

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT
Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or engagement online via Canvas. This data is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

Information specific to modality and meeting times for this course are provided in the section below.

This is an online asynchronous class. This means that we will not meet as a class at any specific time. It is recommended that you check the canvas shell at least weekly to stay on track. Feel free to print the course map or this syllabus to help you manage your time. Also, I will use the announcements function to touch base with you weekly.

G. Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Name</th>
<th>Maximum Points Per Assignment (x number)</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>5 (x1)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Introductions</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</table>

All assignments are due the last day of the module (always a Monday) at 11:59pm via canvas. That means, for example, that in Module 2, your Reading Response is due by 11:59pm on Feb. 1st. Please note that the Module 1 assignments are due Jan. 25th at 11:59pm.

| 90-100 points (or %) | A         |
| 80-89 points (or %)  | B         |
| 70-79 points (or %)  | C         |
| 60-69 points (or %)  | D         |
| 59 or less points (or %) | F         |

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see “Student Support Services,” below.
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H. Make-Up Exams
There are no exams (beyond an introductory syllabus quiz) and therefore no make-up exams. I am fully aware of the many responsibilities and stresses that students may face and will have recommended but flexible due dates for all assessments.

I. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module # &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Module Objective</th>
<th>Materials (articles, video, etc.)</th>
<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1:</td>
<td>01/19-01/25</td>
<td>1. Identify course policies and important assignment information</td>
<td>Reading: Syllabus</td>
<td>Syllabus Quiz (5 points)</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Reflect, through writing, on the United States Criminal Justice (CJ) system in an international context.</td>
<td>Podcast: “Deconstructed Anthems” by Ekene Ijeoma</td>
<td>Module 1 Guided Reflection (5 points)</td>
<td>Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequities of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Powerpoint Presentation: US Mass Incarceration in Global Context</td>
<td>Introductions Assignment (5 points)</td>
<td>Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the CJ system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listen</td>
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<tr>
<td>in the US</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Create</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2:</td>
<td>01/26-02/01</td>
<td>1. Identify connections the welfare system and prison in the United States</td>
<td>Reading: Wacquant, L. (2010). Class, race &amp; hyperincarceration in revanchist America. Daedalus (Cambridge, Mass.), 139(3), 74-90. doi:10.1162/DAED_a_00024</td>
<td>Module 2 Reading Response (5 points)</td>
<td>Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module # &amp; Topic</td>
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</table>
| Module 3: The U.S. criminal Justice System in Historical Context | 02/02-02/08 | 1. Summarize the history of racial discrimination through time periods that included slavery, Jim Crow laws, Civil Rights movement, and the War on Drugs.  
2. Describe the birth of mass incarceration.  
**Optional Watch:** 13th, Ava DuVernay, Director available for free on YouTube | Discussion Module 3 (5 points) | Read  
Watch (optional) |
**NPR:** “The Drug Laws That Changed How We Punish” | Module 4 Reading Response (5 points) | Read  
Watch |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module # &amp; Topic</th>
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<th>Materials (articles, video, etc.)</th>
<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**TedTalk:** Alice Goffman, “How we're priming some kids for college — and others for prison”  
**Video:** American Kids and the School to Prison Pipeline | Infographic Assignment #1 (7.5 points) |                    |

**Activity:** Read  
Watch  
Create  
Synthesize
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module # &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Module Objective</th>
<th>Materials (articles, video, etc.)</th>
<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Module 6: Policing** | 02/23-03/01 | 1. Analyze minority youth experiences with police officers.  
2. Describe how the knowledge of minority youth experiences with police officers can inform social work practice.  
3. Summarize the history of policing, including the history of interactions between police and African American communities.  
4. Explain the theory of broken windows. | **Reading:**  
**Podcast:** NPR's History Podcast 'Throughline' Explores Policing in America  
**TedTalk:** Renee Mitchell, “Policing in America needs to change. Trust me, I'm a cop”  
**Powerpoint:** Policing History and Broken Windows | ✅ Guided Reflection Module 6 (5 points) | Read  
Watch  
Listen |
| **Module 7: Life Inside Jails and Prisons** | 03/02-03/08 | 1. Reflect, through writing, on the experiences of and stories about people who have lived in jails and prisons | **Reading:**  
**Reading:** Explore articles archived by the Marshall Project’s “Life Inside” Project | ✅ Guided Reflection Module 7 (5 points) | Read |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module # &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Module Objective</th>
<th>Materials (articles, video, etc.)</th>
<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Module 8: Race & Class Disparities in  | 03/09-03/15 | 1. Evaluate the data of racial disparities of the CJ system  
2. Evaluate the data of class disparities of the CJ system  
**TedTalk:** Bryan Stevenson, "We need to talk about an injustice"  
**TedTalk:** Salil Dudani, "How jails extort the poor" | Reading Response Module 8 (5 points)                                                                                                                        | Read Watch                                                                   |
| the CJ System                           |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                   |                     |
| Module 9: Justice-Involved Women        | 03/16-03/22 | 1. Reflect, through writing, on the data related to women in the CJ system  
**Reading:** Explore The Sentencing Project: Women  
**TedTalk:** The Lady Lifers "A moving song from women in prison for life" | Guided Reflection Module 9 (5 points)                                                                                                                    | Read Watch                                                                   |
<table>
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<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Video:** Vice News, “Institutional mental health”  
**Powerpoint Presentation:** Mental Health | Infographic Assignment #2 (7.5 points) | Read  
Watch  
Create |
<table>
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<th>Module # &amp; Topic</th>
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<th>Module Objective</th>
<th>Materials (articles, video, etc.)</th>
<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 11: Infectious Diseases</td>
<td>03/30-04/05</td>
<td>1. Analyze data related COVID-19 inside jails and prisons.</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Marshall Project, “A state-by-state look at coronavirus in prisons”</td>
<td>Infographic Assignment #3 (7.5 points)</td>
<td>Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module # &amp; Topic</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Module Objective</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Module 13: Specialty Courts and Restorative Justice | 04/13-04/19 | 1. Reflect, through writing, on the variations and potential of restorative justice efforts  
**TedTalk**: John Zottola, "Specialty Courts"  
**Powerpoint Presentation**: Specialty Courts  
**Powerpoint Presentation**: Restorative Justice | Guided Reflection Module 13 (5 points) | Read  
Watch |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Module Objective</th>
<th>Materials (articles, video, etc.)</th>
<th>Assessment (Graded)</th>
<th>Activity (Ungraded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Module 14: Social Reform, Mass Incarceration, and Social Work’s Grand Challenge | 04/20-04/26 | 1. To identify the major points of social work’s grand challenge of smart decarceration  
2. Critique various ways to reform the CJ system | **Reading:** Pettus-Davis, C., & Epperson, M. W. (2016). *From mass incarceration to effective and sustainable decarceration: Conference report* Washington University in St. Louis. doi:10.7936/k70g3  
**TedTalk:** Marlon Peterson, “Am I Not Human? A Call for Criminal Justice Reform” | Smart Decarceration Word Cloud Assignment (10 points)                             | Read  
Watch  
Create  
Synthesize |
| Module 15: Current Trends in CJ Reform | 04/27-05/03  | 1. To identify current trends in CJ reform                                                                 | **TedTalk:** Adam Foss, “Prosecutor’s Vision for a Better Justice System”  
**TedTalk:** Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, “An Interview with the Founders of Black Lives Matter”  
**TedTalk:** Robin Steinberg, “What if we ended the injustice of bail?”  
**TedTalk:** Anthony D. Romero, “The ACLU’s Call to Defund the Police” | Infographic Assignment #4 (7.5 points)                                           | Watch  
Create  
Synthesize                           |
As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

**J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

**K. Librarian to Contact**

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is Brooke Troutman. Her office is in the campus Central Library. She may also be contacted via E-mail: brooke.troutman@uta.edu or by phone: (817)272-5352.

The following is a list of commonly used library resources:

- Library Home Page
- Library Services
- Subject Guides
- Subject Librarians
- Course Reserves
- Library Tutorials
- Connecting from Off-Campus
- Ask a Librarian

**L. Grade Grievances**

For more information on the grade grievance process please see the BSW Program Manual or the MSW Program Manual. Grade grievance can be submitted through the BSW Grade Grievance form or the MSW Grade Grievance form located on the Forms and Resources website.

**M. Institutional Policies**

UTA students are encouraged to review these institutional policies and informational sections and reach out to the specific office with any questions. The following policies can be found on the UTA Syllabus Institutional Policies page:

- Drop Policy
- Observance of Religious Holy Days
- Disability Accommodations
- Non-Discrimination Policy
- Title IX Policy
- Academic Integrity
- Electronic Communication
- Campus Carry
- Final Review Week
- Student Feedback Survey
- Active Shooter
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Student Support Services

**N. Mandatory Face Covering Policy**

All students and instructional staff are required to wear facial coverings while they are on campus, inside
buildings, and in classrooms. Students that fail to comply with the facial covering requirement will be asked to leave the class session. If students need masks, they may obtain them at the Central Library, the E.H. Hereford University Center's front desk, or in their department. Students who refuse to wear a facial covering in class will be asked to leave the session by the instructor, and, if the student refuses to leave, they may be reported to UTA's Office of Student Conduct.