

**St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology**

Sociology 451.20
Winter, 2023

Dr. David Lynes
Nicholson Tower, Rm. 616

Selected Topics in Criminal and Social Justice

Incarceration and Social Control

This course examines how the practices of incarceration of people convicted of criminal offenses can be read as an important expression of any society's value system. In the process of embodying this expression, incarceration's significance extends well beyond its role as a signifier by actually influencing what it signifies – the value and justification of the collective exercising authority over its members in specifically punitive ways.

The objective of the course is to understand incarceration as a signifier in this sense by examining the ideological and practical development and history of incarceration in both Europe and North America as formulated by Michel Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punish*. In conjunction with this examination (and to some extent, in contrast to it), we will also look at the roots of the present crisis related to continually increasing incarceration rates around the world but in the United States in particular.

Texts

There are two required texts for this course:

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Toronto: Vintage, 1995).

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2012).

The readings from *Discipline and Punish* are assigned according to the listed dates below. Portions of *The New Jim Crow* will be assigned in class. Both books should be available in the university book store, but can also be found in any of the larger bookstores in most cities and can be ordered on line. Used copies may also be available. Most recent (soft cover) reprints of Foucault's book all maintain the original pagination. Any additional material will be made available on line via the Moodle site.

Evaluation

The course grade will be based on a combination of tests and assignments designed to promote the critical analysis of various forms of culturally available information, conceptions and representations of punishment, incarceration and prisons.

Mid-Term test.....	25%
Essay assignment.....	25%
Final Exam.....	35%
In-class exercises.....	5%
Participation.....	10%

Class Format

The class format and the speed at which the material is covered will be open for revision as the course develops and depending on the class' progress and facility with the material. However, the aim will always be to pursue the work within the context of open discussions and exercises, in addition to lectures and presentations. **Please Note:** Attendance for this course is very important. The in-class discussions are designed to enhance the appreciation of the text and are essential to the spirit of the course objectives. However, attendance is considered a prerequisite for, and not the substance of, the class participation component of the course. If you are unable to attend class for any length of time, please let me know and we can attempt to find a remedy. Any absences should be explained.

Office Hours

My office is in Nicholson Tower, Room 616. Office hours are on **Tuesday, 2:00 to 3:00; Wednesdays, 12:30 to 3:30; and Thursdays, 12:30 to 1:30.** Contact me by email or after class to arrange an appointment to discuss any aspect of the class, the material being covered, or the Sociology program more generally. There may be times when I am unable to be in the office during the posted office hours due to committee and department meetings or unforeseen circumstances. If this happens, please send an email message and I will get back to you to arrange an alternate time. Also, other times and other days can be arranged by appointment. Feel free to contact me any time through e-mail to arrange a meeting or to ask any questions.

E-mail: <dlynes@stfx.ca>
Phone: 902 867-3802

Additional Notes and Reminders

Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity". Please feel free to contact the Human Rights and Equity Advisor Megan Fogarty if you have questions or concerns about equity in any class or in the StFX Community in general. Megan can be contacted by email at mfogarty@stfx.ca or by telephone at 902-867-5306.

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Important Dates

The Mid-Term test will be held in class on **Thursday, February 16th, 2023**. **The last day to drop second-term half courses is Friday, March 10th, 2023**. The Due Date for the Term Essay Assignment is **Thursday, March 16th, 2023**. Students choosing to drop a course should do so online (Banner) in order for the course grade-to-date to be omitted from your official university transcript. The final examination will be held during the regular exam period in April, on the day assigned by the Registrar's Office. This date will be available early in the term.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

Note: Page references listed below refer to Michel Foucault's ***Discipline and Punish***. Readings from Michelle Alexander's ***The New Jim Crow*** will be assigned in class.

Readings

January 5th : Introduction

January 10th & 12th : Part One: Torture: "The Body of the Condemned" p. 3 – 31.

January 17th & 19th : The Spectacle of the Scaffold" p. 32 – 69.

January 24th & 26th : Part Two: Punishment: "Generalized Punishment" p. 73 – 103.

January 31st & Feb. 2nd : “The Gentle way of Punishment” p. 104 – 131.

February 7th & 9th : Part Three: Discipline: “Docile Bodies” p. 135 – 169.

February 14th & 16th : “Docile Bodies” (continued), **February 16th : Mid-Term Test**

February 21st & 23rd **Reading Week**

February 28th & March 2nd : “The Means of Correct Training” p. 170 – 194.

March 7th & 9th : “Panopticism” p. 195 – 228.

March 14th & 16th : Part Four: Prison: “Complete and Austere Institutions” p.231 – 256.
Thursday, March 23rd: Essay Assignment Due

March 21st & 23rd : “Illegalities and Delinquency” p. 257 – 292.

March 28th & 30th : “The Carceral” p. 293 – 308

April 4th : Conclusion, Exam Overview