



Université d'Ottawa | University of Ottawa

Département de criminologie | Department of Criminology

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**Abolitionism and the Criminal Justice System
CRM 4302 C**

**Justin Piché, PhD
Winter 2018**

Course Schedule: Wednesday, 8:30am – 11:30am
Vanier Hall, Room 3075

Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00pm – 2:30pm
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Contacting the Professor and Teaching Assistant: We will normally reply to emails or phone messages within 24 hours between Monday and Friday. Messages sent on the weekend and holidays will normally be replied to during the morning of the next business day.

Professor Office Hours: Please drop by if you have any questions regarding course content and learning assessments prior to their submission, as well as the grading of your journal entries and final presentation. If you would like to meet with the professor, but are unable to attend office hours, please send an email to setup an appointment.

Teaching Assistant Office Hours: The teaching assistant is the first point of contact for all queries related to the grading of the mid-term exams. Please email the teaching assistant to setup an appointment.

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OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Abolitionist theory, and abolitionist alternatives to criminalization and incarceration (e.g. decriminalization, peace-making and compensation). Prerequisites: CRM3301 and 24 credits in criminology. Reserved for students registered in the Major, Joint Honours and in the Honours with specialization programs in criminology. Previously: CRM3302.

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

In recent history, a number of institutions deeply embedded in the structures of western democratic societies have been the target of campaigns aimed at abolishing their existence. Often characterized by reformers as misguided efforts because proposed alternatives were not perceived to be desirable or feasible, practices such as slavery and the death penalty have been eradicated in many jurisdictions. As new institutions have come to take their place – including prisons, penal systems and other forms of state repression – new abolitionist campaigns have emerged. This course provides an overview of prison and penal abolitionist thought including the justifications for their struggles, the strategies mobilized to achieve their objectives, and their visions for a world without prisons, penalty and carcerality.

Part I of the course will examine some of the targets of abolitionist thought and action in recent decades. Beginning with works focused on prison abolition, we will explore the aspects of incarceration that have led individuals and groups to call for its elimination, including its failure to meet its own objectives – rehabilitation, deterrence, incapacitation and justice – which legitimate its existence, along with the collateral consequences of imprisonment. With the introduction of alternatives to incarceration in Canada and other jurisdictions, observers began to note that such measures often did not reduce prison populations and diverted more individuals into the penal system (also known as the criminal justice system) who were previously managed informally in the community. This, along with the conclusion that criminalization and punishment maintains inequality in the world, prompted some abolitionists to expand the scope of their critiques and actions. In our examination of penal abolition and work aimed at dismantling the prison-industrial-complex, we will examine intersectional works that challenge dominant structures in society, including colonialism, racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and capitalism. In recent years, particularly in the aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001, the proliferation of imprisonment and other forms of carceral control like surveillance operating alongside the penal system received additional attention. In light of these developments, we will review carceral abolitionist work that challenges the deprivation of liberty, which occurs as part of national (in)security campaigns that take the form of political imprisonment, as well as immigration and (in)security detention.

While abolitionism is a stance against apparatuses of state repression and the hegemonic ideas that sustain them, it also involves strategic work aimed at bringing into being the conditions and material practices necessary to build abolitionist futures. In *Part II* of the course we will explore some of the more prominent alternatives to criminalization, punishment and exclusion, including the attrition model, restorative justice and transformative justice. The course concludes by critically reflecting upon the limits of abolitionist thought in contemporary times.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES

➤ Knowledge Development

- To develop comprehensive knowledge of the aspects of imprisonment, the penal system and other forms of state repression that have led abolitionists to reconsider what is to be abolished.
- To develop comprehensive knowledge of the strategies mobilized by abolitionists to achieve their objectives.
- To become familiar with some of the more prominent abolitionist alternatives to incarceration and punishment.

➤ Analytical Skills Development

- To further develop one's ability to organize and critically examine the ideas discussed during lectures.
- To further develop one's ability to relate course materials to contemporary experiences and events.
- To further develop one's ability to engage with course materials and make original contributions that demonstrate creativity and independent thought.

➤ Communication Skills Development

- To further develop writing skills to communicate ideas to readers with clarity and depth.
- To further develop the ability to communicate ideas with peers and others in a clear, concise, and respectful manner in small and large group settings.
- To further develop team-building skills that deepen collective thought and actions.

COURSE READINGS

A preliminary schedule of assigned and supplemental readings is included in the table below. To enhance in-class participation and the comprehension of course content, you are expected to, at minimum, complete the assigned readings ahead of the lecture for which the book chapters and/or journal articles are to be discussed.

1. Some of the assigned book chapters are available in [CR1] Davis, Angela Y. (2003) *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, New York: Seven Stories Press and [CR2] Mathiesen, Thomas (2006) *Prison on Trial* (third edition), Portland: Waterside Press. Both of these course readers can be purchased at Benjamin Books located at 122 Osgoode Street.
2. Additional assigned book chapters and journal articles are available in a third course reader [CR3] available for purchase at the docUcentre located in UCU 0024.
3. Links to book chapters and articles, including recommended readings, that are available electronically through the University of Ottawa library can be accessed through the course website [CW].

COURSE SCHEDULE

Dates and Topics	Assigned Readings	Learning Assessments
<p>January 10 (Lecture 1)</p> <p>Problematizing Reform, Defining Abolitionism</p>	<p>[CR1] Davis, Angela Y. (2003) “Imprisonment and Reform”, in <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>, New York: Seven Stories Press, pp. 40-59.</p> <p>[CW] Mathiesen, Thomas (2008) “The Abolitionist Stance”, <i>Journal of Prisoners on Prisons</i>, 17(2): 58-63.</p> <p>[CR3] Ben-Moshe, Liat (2013) “The Tension between Abolition and Reform”, in Mecke Nagel and Anthony J. Nocella III (eds.), <i>The End of Prisons: Reflections from the Decarceration Movement</i>, Rodopi Press, pp. 83-92.</p>	
<p>PART I: TARGETS OF ABOLITIONISM</p>		
<p>January 17 (Lecture 2)</p> <p>Prison on Trial</p>	<p>[CR2] Mathiesen, Thomas (2006) “Rehabilitation”, in <i>Prison on Trial</i>, Hampshire (UK): Waterside Press, pp. 27-54.</p> <p>[CR2] Mathiesen, Thomas (2006) “Justice”, in <i>Prison on Trial</i>, Hampshire (UK): Waterside Press, pp. 108-140.</p>	
<p>January 24 (Lecture 3)</p> <p>Prison on Trial (cont.)</p>	<p>[CR2] Mathiesen, Thomas (2006) “General Prevention”, in <i>Prison on Trial</i>, Hampshire (UK): Waterside Press, pp. 55-84.</p> <p>[CR2] Mathiesen, Thomas (2006) “Other Theories of Social Defence”, in <i>Prison on Trial</i>, Hampshire (UK): Waterside Press, pp. 85-107.</p>	
<p>January 31 (Lecture 4)</p> <p>The PIC,</p>	<p>[CR1] Davis, Angela Y. (2003) “Slavery, Civil Rights, and Abolitionist Perspectives Toward Prison”, in <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>, New York: Seven Stories Press, pp. 22-39.</p>	<p>Journal Entry 1: Initial Insights and Questions About Prison</p>

<p>Intersectionality and Abolition</p>	<p>[CR1] Davis, Angela Y. (2003) “How Gender Structures the Prison System”, in <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>, New York: Seven Stories Press, pp. 60-83.</p> <p>[CR1] Davis, Angela Y. (2003) “The Prison Industrial Complex”, in <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>, New York: Seven Stories Press, pp. 84-104.</p>	<p>Abolition (due)</p>
<p>February 7 (Lecture 5)</p> <p>Collateral Consequences of Incarceration</p>	<p>[CR3] Clear, Todd (2002) “The Problem with “Addition by Subtraction”: The Prison-Crime Relationship in Low-Income Communities”, in Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind (eds.), <i>Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment</i>, New York: The New Press, pp. 181-193.</p> <p>[CW] Dyches, Richard (2009) “Prisoners’ Families: The Forgotten Victims”, <i>Journal of Prisoners on Prisons</i>, 18(1&2): 72-80.</p>	
<p>February 14 (Lecture 6)</p> <p>Beyond Prison Abolition</p>	<p>[CR3] Cohen, Stanley (1985) “The Master Patterns”, in <i>Visions of Social Control</i>, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 13-39, 283-287.</p> <p>[CW] Piché, Justin and Mike Larsen (2010) “The Moving Targets of Penal Abolitionism: ICOPA, Past, Present and Future”, <i>Contemporary Justice Review</i>, 13(4): 391-410.</p>	<p>Journal Entry 2: The Prison in Everyday Life (due)</p> <hr/> <p>Distribution of Mid-term I</p>
<p>February 21 (no class)</p> <p>Reading Week</p>		
<p>PART II:</p> <p>WORKING TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT PRISONS AND PUNISHMENT</p>		
<p>February 28 (Lecture 7)</p> <p>The Attrition Model</p>	<p>[CW] Knopp, Fay Honey (1994) “On Radical Feminism and Abolition”, <i>Peace Review</i>, 6(2): 203-208.</p> <p>[CW] Prison Research Education Action Project</p>	<p>Mid-term I (due)</p>

	<p>(2005[1976]) “Decarcerate”, in <i>Instead of Prisons: A Handbook for Abolitionists</i>, Oakland: Critical Resistance.</p> <p>[CW] Prison Research Education Action Project (2005[1976]) “Excarcerate”, in <i>Instead of Prisons: A Handbook for Abolitionists</i>, Oakland: Critical Resistance.</p>	
<p>March 7 (Lecture 8)</p> <p>Restorative and Transformative Justice</p>	<p>[CW] Christie, Nils (1977) “Conflicts as Property”, <i>British Journal of Criminology</i>, 17(1): 1-15.</p> <p>[CW] Hulsman, Louk (1986) “Critical Criminology and the Concept of Crime”, <i>Contemporary Crisis (now Crime, Law and Social Change)</i>, 10(1): 63-80.</p> <p>[CR3] Elliott, Elizabeth M. (2011) “Restorative Justice: A Vision of the Good”, in <i>Security with Care: Restorative Justice & Healthy Societies</i>, Halifax: Fernwood Press, pp. 63-79.</p> <p>[CW] Morris, Ruth (2000) “What is Transformative Justice?”, in <i>Stories of Transformative Justice</i>, Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, pp. 3-22.</p>	
<p>March 14 (Lecture 9)</p> <p>The ‘Unfinished’</p>	<p>[CR3] Mathiesen, Thomas (1974) “The Unfinished”, in <i>The Politics of Abolition</i>, London: Martin Robertson & Company, pp. 13-28.</p>	<p>Journal Entry 3: Initial Insights and Questions About Alternatives to Incarceration and Punishment</p> <hr/> <p>Distribution of Mid-term II</p>
<p>March 21 (Lecture 10)</p> <p>Critical Reflections on Abolitionism</p>	<p>[CW] Carrier, Nicolas and Justin Piché (2015) “The State of Abolitionism”, <i>Penal Field</i>, XII.</p> <p>[CW] Carrier, Nicolas and Justin Piché (2015) “Blind Spots of Abolitionist Thought in Academia: On</p>	<p>Mid-term II (due)</p>

	Longstanding and Emerging Challenges”, <i>Penal Field</i> , XII.	
March 28 (Lecture 11) In-class Preparation		Journal Entry 4: Contributions and Limitations of Abolitionist Thought and Praxis
April 4 (Lecture 12) Perspectives on Carceral Expansion and Alternatives to Imprisonment		Presentation of Public Education Materials (due)

LEARNING COMMUNITY

Attendance

- As per University of Ottawa policy and given the complex nature of the course material and readings, class attendance is necessary to satisfactorily complete this course.

Inclusion, Equity and A Constructive Learning Environment

- This course brings together students from a variety of academic, professional and volunteer experiences, as well as ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Learning from our diversity of experience, values and worldviews is a cornerstone of the university experience. In order for all students to get the most from this course, dialogue should be respectful across differences. To this end, everyone in the learning community needs to also be mindful of how the use of technology (e.g. cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) and how speaking while the professor and / or their colleagues are engaging with course material affects their ability to learn during lectures.
- The University of Ottawa does not tolerate any form of sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to any act of a sexual nature committed without consent, such as rape, sexual harassment or online harassment. The University, as well as student and employee associations, offers a full range of resources and services allowing members of our community to receive information and confidential assistance and providing for a procedure to report an incident or make a complaint. For more information, visit www.uOttawa.ca/sexual-violence-support-andprevention

Students with Disabilities

- Students who require physical or academic accommodations are encouraged to speak privately to the professor so that appropriate accommodations can be made in order to participate fully in the course. All conversations will remain confidential.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Components of Final Mark

Evaluation format	Weight	Date
Journal Entry 1	5%	31 January 2018
Journal Entry 2	5%	14 February 2018
Mid-term Exam 1	30%	28 February 2018
Journal Entry 3	5%	14 March 2018
Mid-term Exam 2	30%	21 March 2018
Journal Entry 4	5%	28 March 2018
Group Presentation	20%	4 April 2018

Journal Entries (20%)

- Assignment Description
 - During the course of the semester, students will complete four journal entries each worth 5 marks that respond to guiding questions to be presented in class.
- Format
 - Page Length = .5-1 double-spaced page
 - Page Margins = 2.54 centimetres
 - Font = 12 point Times New Roman
 - Grammar, Punctuation, Sentence and Paragraph Structure = -.1 marks per mistake
 - Referencing = APA
- Assessment Criteria (also see detailed grading rubric)
 - Pertinence and clarity of content (3 mark)
 - Ability to draw on relevant sources to substantiate claims (2 mark)
- Due Dates
 - Journal Entry 1: January 31
 - Journal Entry 2: February 14
 - Journal Entry 3: March 14
 - Journal Entry 4: March 28

Mid-term Take-home Exam 1 (30%)

- Assignment Description
 - At the end of lecture 6, a handout for the first mid-term take-home exam will be distributed in class. Students will answer 1 essay question (20 marks) and then produce material educating the public about the potential pitfalls of building a new and larger jail in Ottawa based on their essay content (10 marks) drawing on lecture materials, along with course readings and external peer-reviewed sources.

- Formatting (marks will be deducted where not followed)
 - To be specified in the mid-term take-home exam handout
- Assessment Criteria (also see detailed grading rubric)
 - To be specified in the mid-term take-home exam handout
- Due Date: February 28

Mid-term Take-home Exam 2 (30%)

- Assignment Description
 - At the end of lecture 9, a handout for the second mid-term take-home exam will be distributed in class. Students will have the choice to answer 1 of 3 essay questions (20 marks each) and then produce material educating the public about an alternative to building a new and larger jail in Ottawa based on their essay content (10 marks) drawing on lecture materials, along with course readings and external peer-reviewed sources.
- Formatting (marks will be deducted where not followed)
 - To be specified in the mid-term take-home exam handout
- Assessment Criteria (also see detailed grading rubric)
 - To be specified in the mid-term take-home exam handout
- Due Date: March 21

Group Presentation of Public Education Materials (20%)

- Assignment Description
 - During both mid-term take home exams, students were required to produce public education materials. In groups of four, students will select one of their public education materials from mid-term 1 and another from mid-term 2. Based on the feedback provided on these assessments, students will revise their two public education material projects and present them during an event open to the community entitled [Perspectives on Carceral Expansion and Alternatives to Imprisonment](#), while also being prepared to speak to the promise and limitations of the abolitionist perspective in relation to the works they have produced during the course of the semester.
- Formatting (marks will be deducted where not followed)
 - Public education materials: see the handouts for the two mid-term take-home exams
 - Promise and limitations of abolitionism: responses during Q&A
- Assessment Criteria (also see detailed grading rubric)
 - Incorporation of earlier feedback on the public education materials (10 marks)
 - Ability to discuss the promise and limitations of abolitionism with clarity, while engaging with relevant lecture materials, course readings and external peer-reviewed sources (10 marks)
- Due Date: April 4

Language Quality

For the journal entries, mid-term take-home exams and public education materials you will be judged on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes such as spelling, syntax, punctuation, inappropriate use of terms, and the like. You may be deducted up to 15% for such errors.

Grading

Assignments will be graded on insight, accuracy, detail, use of supporting examples and evidence, proper referencing and general writing quality. Each letter grade is based on the following percentage scores.

A+ = 90 – 100%	B+ = 75 – 79%	C+ = 65 – 69%	D+ = 55 – 59%	E = 40 – 49%
A = 85 – 89%	B = 70 – 74%	C = 60 – 64%	D = 50 – 54%	F = 0 – 39%
A- = 80 – 84%				

Extensions, Make-ups and Late Assignments

Extensions or make-ups will not be granted other than for medical reasons, accompanied with official medical certification or for a religious holiday or event with sufficient notice. Absence for any other serious reason must be justified in writing to the academic assistants of the Faculty of Social Sciences within *five business days* following the date of the exam or submission of an assignment. *The Faculty of Social Sciences reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason.* For final exams / assignments, students must inform the professor directly no later than *five working days* after the examination date or the assignment deadline and present a medical certificate bearing the seal of the Faculty of Social Sciences and the form entitled “Request for deferred grade”. Should the medical certificate not bear the seal of the Faculty of Social Sciences, the instructor will refer the student to the undergraduate secretariat of the Faculty.

Reasons such as lack of preparation, travel, employment, and misreading the course syllabus or examination schedule are not accepted as reasons for extensions or absenteeism. Students must seek extensions or make-ups prior to the submission date, unless prevented from doing so by exceptional circumstances. For unauthorized late assignments, each day late leads to a *deduction of 5%* for each subsequent day following the due date (weekends not included).

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

Be Aware of Academic Fraud! Academic fraud and plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without specific acknowledgement and is not tolerated by the University of Ottawa. This includes to plagiarize or cheat in any way, present falsified research data, submission of an assignment that, in part or in its entirety, you are not the author of, as well as the presentation of, without the written permission of the professor(s) concerned, the same work from another course. The rules against plagiarism apply equally to the work of published authors, internet sources and of other students. Plagiarism is an academic offence. It also subverts learning as it undermines the generic research and skills that are developed through the process of doing one’s own work. For more information on fraud and how to avoid it, you can refer to the Faculty of Social Sciences web page, which offers tips to help you with your studies and the writing process for university-level projects at the following address:

http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/ugrad_tips.asp.

You can also refer to the Faculty of Social Sciences web page for information on plagiarism and university assignments: <http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/ethics.asp>.

Any type of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero on the assignment. According to University of Ottawa policies and regulations, this could carry even more severe penalties such as additional requirements added to the program of study (3 to 30 credits), suspension or expulsion from the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Students are responsible that they understand and are familiar with the University of Ottawa's policies and regulations on plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Important information on this matter can also be found at the following links:

http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/newsletter/fraud_e.html

<http://www.uottawa.ca/plagiarism.pdf>

<http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/academicintegrity/regulation.php>

If you are still unsure about what amounts to academic misconduct, please speak to the course convenor.

Appealing Grades

➤ Process

- Should you disagree with your grade or marking for any of the learning assessments, you may request a review by scheduling an appointment with the teaching assistant (for the two take-home mid-term exams) or the professor (for the group in-class exercises and presentation of public education materials assignment). During the meeting, you will be asked to provide a completed marking appeal form (available for download on the course website) that includes a written argument and evidence of where a higher grade or mark is deserved. In the case where you meet with the teaching assistant and disagree with the grade given you may contact the professor for a subsequent review.

➤ Timeframe

- Please note that you cannot initiate the review process with the teaching assistant or professor until 24 hours after the learning assessment in question has been returned to you in order to ensure that you have taken the time to reflect upon the feedback received. This process cannot be initiated once one week after you have received the feedback on your learning assessment has passed.

➤ Possible Outcomes

- The reassessment of a grade has three possible outcomes: 1) no change in the grade, as the initial grade is deemed to be fair; 2) an increase in the grade, resulting from aspects of the learning assessment that may have been overlooked; or 3) a decrease in the grade, as the quality of the learning assessment is deemed to have been overestimated.

➤ Etiquette

- While it is understandable that feedback from learning assessments can generate a range of emotions, it is expected that all related communications with the teaching assistant and/or professor – whether in writing or in person – be measured and respectful in tone. The use of any harassing language will result, at minimum, in a meeting with the Chair of the Department of Criminology to discuss the matter.

Resources for you

FACULTY MENTORING CENTRE - <http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/mentoring>

The goal of the Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well-being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the Mentoring Centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the Mentoring Centre for very different reasons. Younger students may wish to talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older student may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills or learn about programs and services for students nearing the end of their degree.

In all, the Mentoring Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. While students are able to voice their concerns and problems without fear of judgment, mentors can garner further insight in issues unique to students and find a more practical solution to better improve the services that the Faculty of Social Sciences offers, as well as the services offered by the University of Ottawa.

ACADEMIC WRITING HELP CENTRE - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/>

At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer. In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:

- **Master the written language of your choice**
- **Expand your critical thinking abilities**
- **Develop your argumentation skills**
- **Learn what the expectations are for academic writing**

CAREER SERVICES - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/>

Career Services offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today's world of work.

COUNSELLING SERVICE - <http://sass.uottawa.ca/en/counselling>

There are many reasons to take advantage of the Counselling Service. We offer:

- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Study skills counselling

ACCESS SERVICE - <http://sass.uottawa.ca/en/access>

The University has always strived to meet the needs of individuals with learning disabilities or with other temporary or permanent functional disabilities (hearing/visual

impairments, sustained health issues, mental health problems), and the campus community works collaboratively so that you can develop and maintain your autonomy, as well as reach your full potential throughout your studies. You can call on a wide range of services and resources, all provided with expertise, professionalism and confidentiality.

If barriers are preventing you from integrating into university life and you need adaptive measures to progress (physical setting, arrangements for exams, learning strategies, etc.), contact the Access Service right away:

- in person at the University Centre, Room 339
- online
- by phone at 613-562-5976

Deadlines for submitting requests for adaptive measures during exams

- midterms, tests, deferred exams: seven business days before the exam, test or other written evaluation (excluding the day of the exam itself)
- final exams:
 - November 15 for the fall session
 - March 15 for the winter session
 - Seven business days before the date of the exam for the spring/summer session (excluding the day of the exam itself).

STUDENT RESOURCES CENTRES -

<http://www.communitylife.uottawa.ca/en/resources.php>

The Student Resources Centres aim to fulfill all sorts of student needs.

* Disclaimer: While we will stick to this syllabus as closely as possible, the professor may make changes in response to unforeseen events *