

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SOCIETY**

### **CRJU 201**

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Section 501, On-Line

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### **THEMES AND OBJECTIVES**

The general purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of the study of law enforcement in America with a focus on the relationship between police, society, and the political system. The course will be divided into four sections and will introduce students to the following topics:

- The history and development of policing in America
- The organization, structure, and functions of local police departments
- The nature of police work
- Problems and dilemmas relating to policing in America

We will also focus on the following general themes and questions during this course:

Policing in America, as we will see, has taken different forms and police have been assigned different duties throughout our history. What societal, political, economic, and technological factors have shaped the role, function, and organization of law enforcement, society's expectations of the police, and how police officers perform their jobs? In short, the role of police is dependent on what is going on in the overall social environment and the police are a function of the society that they serve.

Given that the police department is supposed to be a public service organization and that policing is supposed to be a service oriented occupation, we also focus on the relationship between the police and the community? What is the nature of that relationship? How has that relationship changed over time? Why is there tension between the police and the communities that they serve?

The relationship between the police and the rest of society is of profound importance, because we give the police a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. At the same time, the police are controlled and regulated by the political system. Thus, how the police use their monopoly on force and how they serve the communities that give them a mandate to protect them is of utmost importance. How much influence should citizens and politicians have on the police? How close should police be to the people they serve?

A final theme relates to how the behavior of police officers is shaped by their jobs and the institutions that they work for. Here we will consider police culture, why it develops, and how it affects policing? Every occupation and institution has a culture. The police culture is a very strong one and has a profound effect on how police do their jobs. Thus, we will consider what culture is and the factors that contribute to a culture. We will also encounter the "free-will" versus "determinism" question.

Another important question, which will be considered throughout the course, is what exactly should the police do? The roles performed by police in America have been numerous. Currently, there is a debate over how much time and resources should be spent on the "service" function. By the end of the course, you will have developed your own answer as to how the police can best serve and protect society.

## FORMAT

The content of the course will be presented online in Learning Modules, which correspond to textbook chapters. Each Learning Module will contain a wide variety of materials that will help you master the textbook chapter content, including: lecture outlines and notes, audio lectures, newspaper articles, and short videos and chapter quizzes. For each Learning Module, you will read assigned materials and complete assignments and assessments by posted due dates. There will also be a set of questions for each learning module that will guide your reading and you will submit your answers for my review. These questions will also be the bases for on-line discussions

## EVALUATION

**Exams.** (25% each) You will have 2 exams during the course. These exams will include definitions and essay questions. You will answer 5 of 7 identifications and two of three essay questions. Since you are taking the exams at home they will be open note/open book. Further

**Short Essays** (30% of total grade). You will have a four three-page essays during the course of the semester. For each essay, you will be asked to elaborate on a question given by the instructor. These essays are "thought pieces" and no research beyond the assigned reading is required or expected.

**Participation/Weekly Assignments** (15% of total grade). For each module, you will be expected to submit your answers to the discussion questions and make at least one submission to an on-line discussion questions. Unlike tests and essays, which will receive letter grades, unit assignments and discussion questions will be graded pass/fail

## TEXTBOOK AND OTHER MATERIALS

The required texts for the course, which is available for purchase in the bookstore, are: Roberg et. al. (2011, 5<sup>th</sup> edition) *Police and Society*, New York: Oxford University Press). You may also use the 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2009) if you find a used copy.

Barker, Joan (1999) *Danger, Duty, and Disillusion: The Worldview of Los Angeles Police Officers*, Prospect Heights IL: Waveland.

In addition, other readings such as newspaper, magazine, and journal articles will be placed on the course website. These materials are to be considered *required readings* and will be covered on exams