

San José State University
School/Department
JS189, Senior Seminar, Section 07, Spring 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor(s):	Judith Randle, J.D. Ph.D.
Office and Classroom:	https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/6570524029
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Email:	judith.randle@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	M/W 11am – 12pm
Class Days/Time:	M/W 12 – 1:15pm
Course Website:	https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1417513
Prerequisites:	Senior standing in final semester; Justice Studies or Forensic Science major; JS 100W and JS 114 with a "C or better"; Department Consent

Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for Justice Studies majors.

Course Description

Identification, discussion and analysis of selected problems in justice studies. A major term paper on a selected topic is required.

Course Format

The mode of instruction for this course is online-synchronous, with scheduled twice weekly meetings at the above times that you are expected to attend. All written assignments will be submitted via Canvas, and must be in Microsoft Word (*.doc or *.docx). If you do not currently own Microsoft Word, the software (both PC and Mac) is available for free to students: <http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/microsoft-students/index.html>. Copies of course materials will be posted on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking your e-mail and Canvas regarding announcements, reminders, and any additional course materials.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to [CLO1-5] :

1. Demonstrate their ability to complete a formal research paper that (a) synthesizes relevant scholarly sources; (b) reflects professional formatting and writing standards (APA format); (c) addresses relevant policy needs (such as necessary reforms) to solving tangible social problems; (d) somehow contributes to our collective understanding of concepts and approaches to "justice," however defined (social justice, criminal justice, community justice, and so forth).

2. Demonstrate their ability to present scholarly work to an audience of their peers.
3. Demonstrate a working understanding of "evidence-based" approaches to social problems and public policy. As a culminating skill set in our program, students should demonstrate their ability to apply social scientific (and otherwise rational) forms of reasoning, argumentation, research, and support in forming any particular worldview or position in the pursuit of "justice" and addressing social problems in our communities/societies.
4. Demonstrate their ability to undertake a critical analysis of a contemporary problems relevant to justice studies.
5. Students should read, write, and contribute to discussion at a skilled and capable level that appropriately reflects the cumulating experience of their justice studies major.

Required Texts/Readings

Readings Posted on CANVAS

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, you will be assigned weekly readings by the instructor and by your fellow students.

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

Reliable access to a computer and the internet will be required. The majority of course materials will be posted in Adobe PDF format; if you choose to download them, you will need Adobe Reader to view the documents. There is no cost to download Adobe Reader (<http://get.adobe.com/reader/otherversions/>). Some course materials may need to be accessed via the internet (i.e., web sites).

Library Liaison

LiaisonNyle.Monday@sjsu.edu

<http://libguides.sjsu.edu/justicestudies>

Department of Justice Studies Reading and Writing Philosophy

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

Course Requirements and Assignments

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

Presentations – 30%

Each student will be responsible for “running class” with three other students for four class periods. On the CANVAS Calendar, you must select four presentation dates from at least three different units. Please do so by **Feb 8**. Each presentation date is assigned a policy to debate. The four students will work in pairs, with each pair assuming different (usually opposing) stances on the policy. The four students are responsible for coordinating a presentation on their policy that informs the class on the different stances on that policy, supported by independent research using materials not already assigned. The group must inform the instructor of the planned issues discussed and resources used at least one week before the presentation date. Although the policies have been assigned in advanced, with prior approval, there is some flexibility on the presentation content. [CLO 2-5]

Policy Paper – 33%

Each student will write a 10 – 12 page policy paper (not including the cover or references page) analyzing a justice-related topic as a requirement for this course. Students can choose their topic based on their own research interests, but the topic must be approved with the instructor. The purpose of the paper is not just to specifically test knowledge, but to also force critical thinking about an aspect of a chosen topic.

Students may not write on a topic that has been used for previous course or currently being used for another course. Any attempt to violate this requirement will result in an automatic “F” for the paper, which ultimately will result in failing the course. Such an attempt would constitute a violation of the Academic Integrity policy. This paper will include a review of scholarly literature on an approved topic. Students will be required to not only analyze and critique existing policies, but also propose new or amended policies. The research reviewed must come from high quality justice-related journals, which establish and examine relationships between and among variables, concepts, theories, and policies. Based on the evidence reviewed, policy implications will be drawn.

The paper must include the following:

1. Introduction: Description of the specific topic, importance of the topic, and thesis
2. Literature Review: Relatively concise coverage of prior research on your topic
3. Policy Critique and Implications: A critique of current policies, based upon the literature, in terms of the implications of their effectiveness/ineffectiveness, and suggestions about alternative policies. This critique should pull upon findings in the literature to support the presenter’s point of view.

In preparation for the policy paper, students will submit a proposal, a revised proposal with 5 sources, and an annotated bibliography with ten sources. A handout detailing the expectations, content, formatting, and submission requirements of all policy paper assignments will be provided in a timely manner. [CLO 1, 3-5]

Presentation Workshops – 10%

To prepare for the presentations, in the month of February we will watch a series of videos on each topic and conduct workshops during class. On each day you will submit a one-page written reaction to the assigned videos and the policy question posed (below, Video Responses), which you will share with the class. You will also discuss your reactions to the videos in class (below, In-Class Brainstorms).

Audience Exercises – 27%

You will observe 16 presentations. For 8 of these, you must submit a 500-word reaction to the presentation that highlights and responds to the presentation's most salient points (below, [Presentation Summaries](#)). For the other 8, you must participate in the live discussion during class (below, [Live Participation](#)). Live participation must include more than simple attendance and praise. It must include multiple independent insights, questions, or other responses that further the conversation. Per CLO 2, oral comments are preferred. However, written comments in the group chat may be acceptable forms of participation, and please be aware that you may be called upon to orally explain or expand on your written comments.

Grading Information

Scoring Systems and Values

Assignment	Grading Scale*	Weighted Percent**
Presentations (4)	0 – 100	30
Paper Proposal	0 – 3	1
Revised Proposal + Sources	0 – 10	2
Annotated Bibliography	0 – 10	3
Final Paper	0 – 100	27
Video Responses (5)	0 – 10	7
In-Class Brainstorms (5)	0 – 3	3
Live Participation (8)	0 – 3	10
Presentation Summaries (8)	0 – 10	17
Total		100

*see **Grading Scale, Explained**, on the next page

**after assignments are assigned points on the grading scale, their values will be weighted accordingly

Letter Grades

Grade	Percent
A plus	98 to 100%
A	93 to 97%
A minus	90 to 92%
B plus	87 to 89 %
B	83 to 86%
B minus	80 to 82%
C plus	77 to 79%
C	73 to 76%
C minus	70 to 72%
D plus	67 to 69%
D	63 to 66%
D minus	60 to 62%

Grading Scale, Explained

Scale (Score Range)	Performance	Examples
0 – 3 (0) 0 – 10 (0) 0 – 100 (0)	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absent from class • Silent in class • No submission
0 – 3 (1) 0 – 10 (1 - 6) 0 – 100 (1 - 69)	Completed with minimal effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • live comments lacked insight • left class early • presentation under 20 minutes • large chunks of missing or inappropriate content • does not demonstrate that materials have been watched or read • does not demonstrate that student paid attention to presentation • consistently poor organization/grammar so as to interfere with comprehension • instructor unable to provide useful feedback
0 – 3 (2) 0 – 10 (7 - 8) 0 – 100 (70 – 89)	Completed with acceptable effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two insightful live comments • presentation 20-30 minutes • covers most topics in some detail, but key content is missing or incomplete • some references to assigned materials with some insightful connections • writing is comprehensible, but contains noticeable deficit(s) in grammar/organization • Instructor is able to provide feedback but may need clarification
0 – 3 (3) 0 – 10 (9 - 10) 0 – 100 (90 – 100)	Completed with full effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three or more insightful live comments • attended entire class period • presentation over 30 minutes • multiple references to assigned materials with insightful connections drawn • covers all topics in sufficient detail; missing content is rare and/or of minor significance • writing is well-organized with few to no grammar errors • Instructor can provide detailed feedback

Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to: attend all class meetings, arrive on time, stay for the duration of the class period, complete all readings and assignments in accordance with the dates on the course schedule.

Students are responsible for all missed notes, materials and announcements due to absence. You are encouraged to exchange contact information with someone in class just in case.

As neither a laptop nor tablet is required for the course, use of them is strictly limited to note taking or accommodation purposes. Students caught using such items for other non-class purposes may be prohibited from bringing them back to class, and will likely be dismissed from class for the day. At the instructor's discretion, students may be dismissed from class for cell phone use of any kind during class time, unless expressly permitted by the instructor.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

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Course Schedule

Week 1	Jan 27	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE</u></p> <p>Welcome: Defining and Achieving “Justice” Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus </p>
2	Feb 1	<p>Issues in Policy Formation & Evaluation Textbook Ch. 1 Reading: Government Contract</p>
	Feb 3	<p>Issues in Policy Formation & Evaluation <i>Watch <u>all</u> of the assigned videos in Unit 1: Policymaking (98 mins)</i> Due: Video response 1 + In-class brainstorm 1</p>
3	Feb 8	<p>Presentation Workshop: Policymaking Due: Paper Topic Proposal</p>
	Feb 10	<p>Presentation Workshop: (In)equality <i>Watch <u>all</u> of the assigned videos in Unit 2: (In)equality (256 mins)</i> Due: Video response 2 + In-class brainstorm 2</p>
4	Feb 15	<p>Presentation Workshop: (Expanding) Police Powers <i>Watch <u>all</u> of the assigned videos in Unit 3: (Expanding) Police Powers (156 mins)</i> Due: Video response 3 + In-class brainstorm 3</p>
	Feb 17	<p>Presentation Workshop: Courts <i>Watch <u>all</u> of the assigned videos in Unit 4: Courts (152 mins)</i> Due: Video response 4 + In-class brainstorm 4</p>
5	Feb 22	<p>Presentation Workshop: Law & Human Behavior <i>Watch <u>all</u> of the assigned videos in Unit 5: Law & Human Behavior (139 mins)</i> Due: Video response 5 + In-class brainstorm 5</p>
	Feb 24	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>UNIT 1: POLICYMAKING</u></p> <p>Representative Democracy <i>Are elected officials the ideal policymakers?</i> Videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm Just a Bill (Schoolhouse Rock) – 3 mins • How a Bill Becomes a Law (PBS) – 7 mins • How a Bill Becomes a Law (Khan Academy) – 11 mins • Congressional Committees (PBS) – 8 mins • How a Bill Really Becomes a Law - What Schoolhouse Rock Missed – 2 mins • I'm Just a Bill Parody – 2 mins • Stephen Talks to a Bill (Yes, the Healthcare One) – 6 mins Due: Live Participation 1 + Revised Proposal </p>
6	Mar 1	<p>Populism <i>The pros and cons of direct democracy.</i> Textbook: Ch. 7 Reading: Is it Time to Reconsider California's Initiative System? Videos:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm Just a Lie (Jimmy Kimmel) – 3 mins • Three Strikes and You're Out – 11 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 1 or Live Participation 2</p>
	Mar 3	<p>Disenfranchisement <i>Should some people be banned from policymaking?</i> Websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felony Disenfranchisement (The Sentencing Project) • CA Prop 17 (Ballotpedia) • Voting Rights: Persons with a Criminal History • Voting Rights: Persons Subject to a Conservatorship <p>Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting Rights for Felons on Parole in California – 2 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 2 or Live Participation 3</p>
7	Mar 8	<p>Executive Action, Nonelected Officials <i>How much policymaking power should executives and non-elected officials have?</i> Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Do Executive Orders Work? – 5 mins • Why Executive Orders Can't Save the US Economy – 12 mins • Trump Signs Social Media Executive Order – 6 mins • How a Bill Does Not Become Law – 4 mins • How Presidential Pardons Work – 3 mins • Can the President Grant Preemptive Pardons to His Children? – 2 mins • Governor George Ryan's Clemency Speech – 3 mins • Governor Ends Death Penalty in California – 3 mins • Gov Newsom Orders a Statewide Shelter-at-Home Order Amid Coronavirus Outbreak – 2 mins • Battle Over Wearing Face Masks as Pandemic Rages on – 3 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 3 or Live Participation 4</p>
	Mar 10	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>UNIT 2: (IN)EQUALITY</u></p> <p>Law Enforcement <i>Is police reform possible?</i> Textbook: Ch. 2 Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing the Police – 54 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 4 or Live Participation 5</p>
8	Mar 15	<p>The Social Safety Net <i>What is the government's obligation to provide basic necessities?</i> Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare and the Politics of Poverty – 14 mins • Senate Remains at a Standstill Over Increased Covid Relief Checks – 4 mins • Massive Unemployment Fraud Found In California's Prison System – 3 mins • Why It's So Hard to Get Off Welfare – 8 mins • SNAP: Can You Feed Your Family on \$7 a Day? – 4 mins • Question on Social Security and Medicare at Third Presidential Debate – 4 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 5 or Live Participation 6</p>

	Mar 17	<p>Access to Education <i>Is education the ultimate equalizer?</i> Video: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor Kids – 53 mins Due: Presentation Summary 6 or Live Participation 7</p>
9	Mar 22 & Mar 24	<p style="text-align: center;">**NO Lecture**</p> Due: Presentation Summary 7 Due: Annotated Bibliography
10	Mar 29 & Mar 31	<p style="text-align: center;">**Spring Recess – NO Lecture or Assignments**</p>
11	Apr 5	<p>Equal Protection <i>How well does the Constitution promote equality?</i> Videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th – 100 mins • Supreme Court Strikes Down Gay Marriage Ban – 3 mins • SCOTUS Same-Sex Wedding Cake Decision – 9 mins Due: Live Participation 8</p>
	Apr 7	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>UNIT 3: (EXPANDING) POLICE POWERS</u></p> <p>In Schools Textbook: Ch. 4 <i>SROs: Necessary in the age of school shootings, or inevitable funnels in the school-to-prison pipeline?</i> Videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School-to-Prison Pipeline Debate – 16 mins • Sandy Hook Promise School Shooting PSA – 1 min Due: Presentation Summary 8 or Live Participation 9</p>
12	Apr 12	<p>Technology <i>How do we balance technological innovations with privacy rights?</i> Textbook: Ch. 12 Videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Tracked Down "Golden State Killer" Suspect By Matching DNA With Public Database – 6 mins Due: Presentation Summary 9 or Live Participation 10</p>
	Apr 14	<p>Foreign Threats <i>What is the best approach to maintaining national security?</i> Textbook: Chs. 10 & 11 Video: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torture and Interrogation – 9 mins • Six Charged in "Birth Tourism" Scheme for American Citizenship – 5 mins Due: Presentation Summary 10 or Live Participation 11</p>
13	Apr 19	<p>Interrogation <i>The pros and cons of interrogation tactics.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Burns: The Central Park Five – 119 mins Due: Presentation Summary 11 or Live Participation 12</p>
	Apr 21	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>UNIT 4: COURTS</u></p>

		<p>Judicial Selection (Wars) <i>What is the best model for selecting judges and justices?</i> Reading: What am I, a Potted Plant?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Key Moments: The Blasey-Kavanaugh Hearing – 6 mins • Kavanaugh Hearing Cold Open - SNL – 13 mins • Supreme Revenge: Battle for the Supreme Court – 53 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 12 or Live Participation 13</p>
14	Apr 26	<p>As Policymakers <i>Are courts (good) policymakers?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calif. Faces Tough Choices on Overcrowded Prisons – 9 mins • How the 2000 Election Results Were Fought in the Courts – 6 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 13 or Live Participation 14</p>
	Apr 28	<p>As Problem-Solvers <i>Can courts be effective social service providers?</i> Textbook: Ch. 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macklemore Helps Celebrate Drug Court's 20th Anniversary – 13 mins • Domestic Violence – 26 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 14 or Live Participation 15</p>
15	May 3	<p>Tort Reform <i>Should some industries or injuries be immune from liability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman Burned by McDonald's Hot Coffee – 12 mins • Why You Can't Sue Gun Companies! – 10 mins • Efforts to Repeal the PLCAA – 2 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 15 or Live Participation 16</p>
	May 5	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>UNIT 5: LAW & HUMAN BEHAVIOR</u></p> <p>Prison (Abolition) & Crime Prevention <i>Can prisons “work”?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Surprising Reason Our Correctional System Doesn't Work – 15 mins • 5 Incredible Prison Rehabilitation Programs – 16 mins • What Can We Learn From the World's Most "Humane" Prison? – 10 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 16 or Live Participation 17</p>
16	May 10	<p>Public Health <i>How far should government regulations go to restrict consumer health choices?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McDonald's Happy Meal in Legal Trouble – 8 mins • Would a Soda Ban Help? – 3 mins • Tracing the Roots of the Anti-Mask Movement – 7 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 17 or Live Participation 18</p>
	May 12	<p>Gun Control <i>Does restricting access to firearms reduce gun violence?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Americans Play True or False: Gun Control Edition – 7 mins • Gun Nation – 30 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 18 or Live Participation 19</p>
17	May 17	<p>Environmentalism <i>What is the proper balance between the demands of industry and the environment?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Can Business Survive Climate Change? – 21 mins

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Green New Deal, Explained – 7 mins • Green New Deal - Fact versus Fiction – 8 mins • Is the Paris Accord Unfair to the US? – 7 mins <p>Due: Presentation Summary 19 or Live Participation 20</p>
FINAL	May 20	<p>Due: Presentation Summary 20</p> <p>Policy Paper Due by 12pm</p>