

CRIME, CLASS AND CAPITALISM: THE ECONOMICS OF JUSTICE ECO 170

Community Chest

**GET OUT
OF JAIL
FREE**



THIS CARD MAY BE KEPT UNTIL NEEDED, OR SOLD

Mondays & Wednesdays

HH 231

9:25 – 10:40pm

12:15 – 1:30

Instructor: Taryn Fivek

tfivek@jjay.cuny.edu

Office hours: Mondays, 1:45-2:45pm -- NB 9.63.08

Consider this document as “Terms of Service” for this course. All the information you need about assignments, grades, policies, objectives and more is contained in this document. You are responsible for knowing this information. If you have any questions about the course, review this document before asking the instructor.

COVID DISCLAIMER:

If the wealthy and powerful worry about it, why wouldn't you?

[Forbes: World Economic Forum: Here Are All The Covid-19 Precautions At Davos 2023](#)

I ask all of you to wear masks while taking my course. We are still in the middle of a pandemic. If you have even the slightest hint of sickness, or have been close to someone with Covid-19, please do not attend my until we're sure you're negative. If you test positive for Covid-19, please do not return to class unless you have tested negative twice in two days. **If you show up to class coughing or sneezing, I will ask you to leave.** Likewise, if I am ill, I will not come to class and we will switch to asynchronous material until I'm well.

Following good Covid-19 protocol (including masks) is our best bet at making sure we are able to meet in person this semester. It is also the best bet we have at protecting ourselves, each other, and our families.

Course description: This course examines the connections between capitalism and the criminal justice system in the United States. It investigates the relationships among economic injustice, poverty, wealth, anti-social behavior, crime and the criminal justice system. The course studies how the criminal justice system shapes the lives of individuals from a variety of socioeconomic classes. There are no prerequisites for this course.

About this course: A First Year Seminar is defined by John Jay as “small, hands-on classes designed for freshmen. In these classes, you will have the chance to work closely with supportive FYS professors and further develop your own academic and career interests.”

Learning objectives: This course will mainly focus on economics in the United States but will also seek to foster an understanding of global economic processes. By the end of this course, students should be able to express an introductory understanding of:

- *Capitalism:* Its history, development and how it operates in relation to the state.
- *Crime:* Why it exists, what it is and how it is figured.
- *Criminals:* Who are criminals, and how does capitalism relate to this designation?
- *Class:* How does class affect our views of capitalism, crime and criminals?

Peer success coach: Your peer success coach is a successful and well-accomplished John Jay student who is dedicated to supporting your success this semester (and beyond). They will keep you informed about upcoming events and opportunities, college policies and deadlines, and is knowledgeable about the services available at the college.

In addition to staying in touch with them, I strongly recommend that you to meet with them at least once this semester for a 30 minute coaching session. I encourage office visits if you are struggling with the course, but will ask you if you have seen your peer success coach first. They will assist you in following through on a plan to reach your academic and postgraduate goals, including recommending action items, helping you remove obstacles, and referring you to valuable resources. Your peer success coach for this course will be:

9:25-10:40 - Vani Ramnarain vani.ramnarain@jjay.cuny.edu

12:15-1:30 - Maryam Oguntola maryam.oguntola@jjay.cuny.edu

Course texts:

The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison: Ideology, Class and Criminal Justice
Jeffrey Reiman and Paul Leighton
12th Edition

All other texts will be available on the syllabi or on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard often to keep up with readings!

Evaluation and Assessment

The grading scale will be the following (grades rounded to the nearest whole number):

A	100-93 %	A-	92-90 %	B+	89-87 %	B	86-83 %
B-	82-80 %	C+	79-77 %	C	76-73 %	C-	72-70 %
D+	69-67 %	D	66-63 %	D-	63-60 %	F	Less than 60 %

Participation & discussion - 20%

Includes your presence in the class, as well as how often (and the quality of) your discussion regarding the materials being covered.

Economic Criminal Investigation – 30%

Using what you learn in class, each student will need to identify an economic crime and investigate it thoroughly, presenting the professor with a dossier containing the following:

1. An indictment: evidence that a financial crime has taken place, what the nature of this crime is, which parties were aggrieved, and which parties should be held responsible for the crime. (500 words)
2. An impact statement: what were the results of this crime? What were the damages? What are the lasting effects of this crime? (500 words)
3. A judgment: What do you think should happen as a result of this crime in order for aggrieved parties to win justice, and what should be done to prevent such a crime from taking place in the future? (500 words)
4. A presentation of your case for the class – this is flexible. You can either design a pamphlet/poster/flyer/infographic/video for circulation, or you can present your case in person during the last week of class.

You should submit your proposed topic of investigation to me by **March 1st** for approval, as well as your preference for presentation. Stronger assignments will think “outside the box” regarding crime, and will take into consideration the myriad intersectional approach we plan to use in class.

Possible examples include:

2008 Financial Crisis

Gentrification

Wage theft

Covid-19 response

Fare evasion/placard corruption

The BP Oil Spill or other man-made environmental disasters

Issues directly addressing the economic impact of the criminal justice system (bail reform, SRG)

Each investigation should have a bibliography of about 10-15 sources attached, from both scholarly and news sources.

Midterm (25%) + Final Exam (25%) – 50%

Your midterm and final exam will be opportunities for you to demonstrate what you learned over the course of this semester. The midterm will be on the first half of the class and what we have learned so far, while the final exam will focus mainly on the books presented in class and their reading guides. They will both be open-book and in essay format, with you having ample time to comprehensively answer two of four questions. Your midterm will be taken in class, but the final will be online.

Late work policy

I will not accept late work for the course, as you have ample time to prepare for both major assignments throughout the semester. If you encounter extenuating circumstances, I may consider accepting your work, but will ask for documentation of what might constitute a justifiable emergency, such as hospitalization, death in the family, or severe illness.

Attendance and participation policy

Discussion and asking questions are two critical components to learning. You cannot accomplish these without being physically and mentally present in class. Class participation and discussion makes up 30% of your total grade.

We will be discussing controversial topics in class, and I encourage diverse discussion as part of the learning experience. That said, we all come from different backgrounds and experiences, so above all else, I expect you to treat people with respect and courtesy.

Student success

You are responsible for your success in this class and for ensuring you have met the obligations outlined in this syllabus. I expect you to come to class having read the material to be discussed. I expect you to participate fully during discussions, either voluntarily or when called upon. I expect you to check your email daily and complete your work on time. Students who read the texts, turn in their work and participate in class have an excellent chance at success. Students who take advantage of my office hours, seeking help with understanding the material or improving their writing also have an excellent chance at success. If you are unable to meet me during office hours because of work or another class, I will make the time to meet you if you ask.

Course Outline

I reserve the right to make changes to this outline.

Week One – 1/25

Introduction to the course, review of syllabus and course policies

Week Two – 1/30 + 2/1

What is Capitalism?

Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn – [Who Killed the Knapp Family?](#)

Hypercapitalism Ch. 2 – On Blackboard

Week Three – 2/6 + 2/8

Who is a criminal?

Reiman & Leighton, pp.30-45; 65-72

Week Four –

COLLEGE CLOSED 2/13 + 2/15

What is the Strike?

Reiman & Leighton 86 – 92

NY Times: [The Strike That Busted Unions](#)

[WSJ: Union membership rate hits record low despite votes at Apple, Amazon, Starbucks](#)

Week Five –

COLLEGE CLOSED 2/20 We meet on 2/21 + 2/22

What is the State?

Reiman & Leighton, pp.124-134

David Whitehouse – [Origins of the Police](#)

Hypercapitalism Ch. 2 – On Blackboard

Week Six – 2/27 + 3/1

TOPIC FOR CAPSTONE GRADE MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL BY 3/1

The Osage Murders - *Readings on Blackboard*

[The Secret of Primitive Accumulation](#) – Karl Marx

Week Seven – 3/6 + 3/8

Witch Hunts & Other Scapegoats

Caliban and the Witch – Silvia Federici – pp. 61-115

Week Eight – 3/14 + 3/15

Midterm review + exam

Week Nine – 3/20 + 3/22

Intersections between social movements, capitalism and crime

Reiman & Leighton, pp. 118-156

Melamed – [Racial Capitalism](#)

Week Ten – 3/27 + 3/29

Attica rebellion and other uprisings

Reiman & Leighton, pp. 160 – 163 - *Additional readings on Blackboard*

Week Eleven – 4/3

The Environment

[National Geographic: We still don't know the full impacts of the BP oil spill, 10 years later](#)

[NY Times: Study links dolphin deaths to Deepwater Horizon oil spill](#)

[NY Times: Standing Rock protest camp, once home to thousands, is razed](#)

[NY Times: Exxon scientists predicted global warming, even as company cast doubts, study finds](#)

SPRING BREAK 5-13 APRIL

Week Twelve – 4/17 + 4/19

The 2008 Financial Crisis

Reiman & Leighton, pp. 156 – 160

Week Thirteen – 4/24 + 4/26

Abortion

[NY Times: Abortion Bombings Suspect: A Portrait of Piety and Rage](#)

Washington Post: [Talk of prosecuting women for abortion pills roils antiabortion movement](#)

NY Times: [“Her heart was beating, too”: The women who died after abortion bans](#)

NY Times: [Code Name Jane: The Women Behind a Covert Abortion Network](#)

Week Fourteen – 5/1 + 5/3

Covid-19

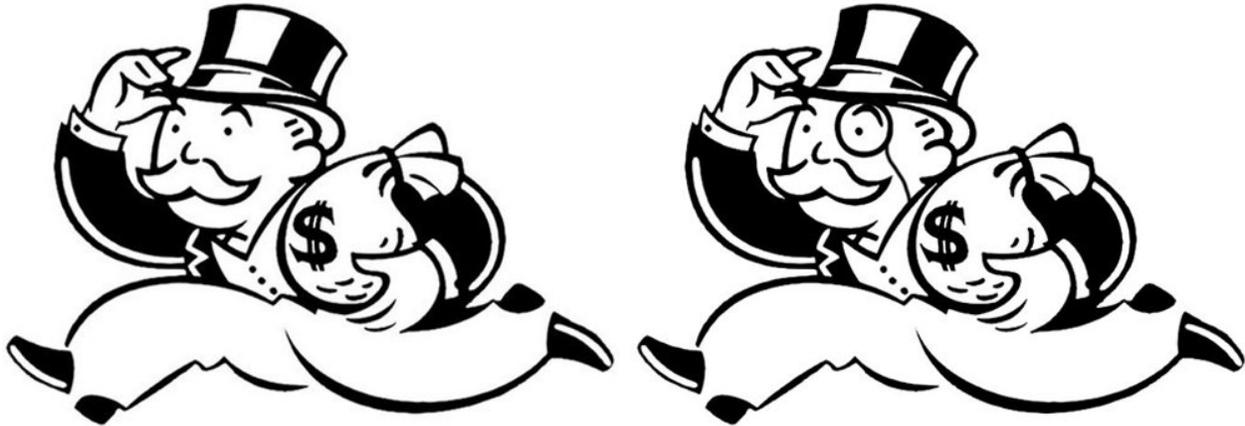
[Forbes: World Economic Forum: Here Are All The Covid-19 Precautions At Davos 2023](#)

Week Fifteen – 5/8 + 5/10

Crisis at a boiling point + student presentations

Week Sixteen – 5/15

Review for final exam



John Jay Policies

Academic Integrity (copied from the 2020-2021 Undergraduate Bulletin)

The following information is excerpted from the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity. The complete text of the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity can be accessed at

http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Academic_Integrity_Policy.pdf.

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.

Definitions and Examples of Academic Dishonesty

Cheating is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices or communication during an academic exercise. The following are some examples of cheating, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work
- Unauthorized collaboration on a take-home assignment or examination
- Using notes during a closed-book examination
- Taking an examination for another student, or asking or allowing another student to take an examination for you
- Changing a graded exam and returning it for more credit
- Submitting substantial portions of the same paper to more than one course without consulting with each instructor
- Preparing answers or writing notes in a blue book (exam booklet) before an examination

- Allowing others to research and write assigned papers or do assigned projects, including use of commercial term paper services
- Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/dishonesty
- Fabricating data (all or in part)
- Submitting someone else's work as your own
- Unauthorized use during an examination of any electronic devices such as cell phones, palm pilots, smart phones, tablet devices, computers or other technologies to retrieve or send information.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source
- Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the sources
- Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments
- Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the Internet without citing the source, and "cutting and pasting" from various sources without proper attribution.

Obtaining unfair advantage is any activity that intentionally or unintentionally gives a student an unfair advantage in the student's academic work over another student. The following are some examples of obtaining an unfair advantage, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Stealing, reproducing, circulating or otherwise gaining advance access to examination materials
- Depriving other students of access to library materials by stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing them
- Retaining, using or circulating examination materials, which clearly indicate that they should be returned at the end of the exam
- Intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's work

Falsification of records and official documents. The following are some examples of falsification, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Forging signatures of authorization
- Falsifying information on an official academic record
- Falsifying information on an official document such as a grade report, letter of permission, drop/add form, I.D. card or other college document

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

I reserve the right to review your work using plagiarism detection tools such as turnitin.com.

**Plagiarizing is the easiest way to fail this course.
DON'T DO IT!**

Attendance (copied from the 2020-2021 Undergraduate Bulletin)

Students are expected to attend all class meetings as scheduled. Excessive absence may result in a failing grade for the course and may result in the loss of financial aid. The number of absences that constitute

excessive absence is determined by the individual instructor, who announces attendance guidelines at the beginning of the semester in the course syllabus. Students who register during the Change of Program period after classes have begun are responsible for the individual course attendance policy, effective from the first day of the semester.

Extra Work During the Semester (copied from the 2020-2021 Undergraduate Bulletin)

Instructors are not obligated to offer extra-credit work in any course. Any extra-credit coursework opportunities offered during the semester for a student to improve his or her grade must be made available to all students at the same time. The term "extra credit work" refers to optional work that may be assigned by the instructor to all students in addition to the required work for the course that all students must complete. It is distinguished from substitute assignments or substitute work that may be assigned by the instructor to individual students, such as make-up assignments to accommodate emergencies or to accommodate the special circumstances of individual students.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (copied from the 2020-2021 Undergraduate Bulletin)

A student should make an initial request for accommodation to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, and provide appropriate supporting documentation. The Student Disabilities Services Coordinator may consult with appropriate college officials such as the instructor or Provost to determine the appropriateness of the requested accommodation consistent with the program requirements. Such consultation shall be confidential, and limited to those officials whose input is necessary to the decision. Students may consult with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities or the 504/ADA Compliance Coordinator at any time to discuss and understand their rights under the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA, and state and local legislation, and they are encouraged to do so.

Carrie Dehls is the Human Resources Benefits Coordinator. Employees may reach her at cdehls@jjay.cuny.edu or at 212.237.8504.

Malaine Clarke is the Director of Accessibility Services. Students may reach her at maclarke@jjay.cuny.edu or at 212.237.8185.

Silvia Montalban is the College's 504/ADA Compliance Coordinator, She can be reached at smontalban@jjay.cuny.edu or at 646.557.4409.

Additional information about this CUNY policy can be accessed at: <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/accessibility-services-appeal-process>

Writing Center

If you're having trouble with the course because of your writing skills, the writing center is a great way to improve your grade. The office is at 2450N.

Wellness Center

Many of us are suffering because of the economy. If you face challenges securing food, transport, housing and believe that this may affect your performance in this class, or your ability to remain enrolled at John Jay, you are urged to contact the Wellness Center (212-237-8111 / L68 NB) for support.

