

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
The City University of New York
Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee

Course Revision Form

Date Submitted: 4/19/13

1. Name of Department or Program: English

2. Contact information of proposer(s):

Name(s): Allison Pease
 Email(s): apease@jjay.cuny.edu
 Phone number(s): (212) 237-8565

3. Current number, title, and abbreviated title of course: **LIT 327 Crime and Punishment in Literature**

4. Current course description:

A study of works treating the theme of crime and related matters, such as motivation, guilt, and responsibility. Works are considered from the psychological, sociological, and philosophical points of view, as well as from the purely literary standpoint. Authors include Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Dostoevski, Poe, Melville.

a. Number of credits: 3

b. Number of class hours (please specify if the course has lab hours): 3

c. Current prerequisites: ENG 201 and LIT 230 or 231 or 232 or 233

5. Describe the nature of the revision:

Change of course number, title and course description as well as prerequisites; restrict content to only U.S. texts.

6. Rationale for the proposed change(s):

This course is being revised in order to be included in the John Jay College Option "Struggle for Justice and Inequality in the U.S."

7. Text of proposed revisions (use NA, not applicable, where appropriate):

a. Revised course description:

This course examines literary texts about crime, punishment, and justice from the

United States in order to explore how questions of right, wrong, and fairness have been and are understood. Students will read literary texts that question the psychological and social causes of crime, philosophies of law, the varieties and purposes of punishment, and what justice might mean in any given context. Critical and writing skills will be enhanced through close analysis of texts and the application of basic literary concepts and methods of interpretation.

b. Revised course title: **Crime, Punishment, and Justice in U.S. Literature**

c. Revised abbreviated title (original can be found on SIMS, max of 20 characters including spaces!): **CRIME PUN U.S. LIT**

d. Revised learning outcomes:

- Develop an understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural contexts of the struggles for justice in the U.S.
- Analyze how struggles for justice have shaped U.S. society and culture
- Differentiate multiple perspectives on the same subject

e. Revised assignments and activities related to revised outcomes

The content of the course has been revised to include only U.S. based texts

f. Revised number of credits: n/a

g. Revised number of hours: n/a

h. Revised prerequisites: ENG 201 and junior standing

[please note: because we have split LIT 327 into two courses, one world lit and one U.S., this course will need a new number: we propose LIT 326]

8. Enrollment in past semesters: 180 students per semester

9a. Will this course be offered as part of the new JJ General Education program (Common Core or College Option)?

(reminder - complete the CUNY Common Core or JJ College Option form if appropriate)

No _____ Yes X If yes, please indicate the area: College Option

College Option:

Justice Core 100-level: Justice and the Individual	
Justice Core 300-level: Struggle for Justice & Inequality in the U.S.	X

Justice Core 300-level: Justice in Global Perspective	
Learning from the Past	
Communications	

9b. Please explain why and how this course fits into the selected area:

This course investigates literatures from the U.S. dealing directly with the issues of crime, punishment, and justice. While literary texts may deal with fictional characters and actions, they can yield valuable insights about the actual causes of crime, the nature of the criminal, the investigative process, the force of law, the power of guilt, and the realities and potential effects of punishment. In the process of offering a narrative account — or story — these texts may delve deeply into the very issues and problems facing the society and culture of the author; if these issues and problems persist, the text may also shed light on the world of the future reader. This course asks students to read texts which expose and attempt to analyze key historical, sociological, political and psychological issues in the realm of crime, punishment, and justice in the United States, including: the nature, limits, and validity of the law; natural law versus the rule of law; the role of race, class, and gender in the commission of crimes and the determination of punishments; the psychology and sociology of criminal behavior; self defense as a plea and as a reality; self incrimination and recrimination; the role of point of view in the collection and interpretation of evidence; and the ethics and poetics of bearing witness, making judgments, and carrying out — not to mention reading — sentences. The course also considers relevant criminological theories and how literature comments on or even anticipates the development of theory and practice.

9c. If yes, frequency and number of sections to be offered for General Education:

Every semester <u> X </u>	Number of sections: <u> 4-6 </u>
Fall semesters only <u> </u>	Number of sections: <u> </u>
Spring semesters only <u> </u>	Number of sections: <u> </u>

10. Does this change affect any other departments?

 X No Yes (if so what consultation has taken place)?

11. Date of Department or Program Curriculum Committee approval: March 7, 2013

12. Name of Department Chair(s) or Program Coordinator(s) approving this revision proposal:

Allison Pease

John Jay General Education College Option Course Submission Form

Course Prefix & Number	LIT 326
Course Title	Crime, Punishment, and Justice in U.S. Literature
Department or Program	English
Discipline	LIT
Credits	3
Contact Hours	3
Prerequisites (ENG 101 required for 200-level, ENG 201 required for 300 & 400-level courses)	ENG 201 and junior standing
Co-requisites	
Course Description	This course examines literary texts about crime, punishment, and justice from the United States in order to explore how questions of right, wrong, and fairness have been and are understood. Students will read literary texts that question the psychological and social causes of crime, philosophies of law, the varieties and purposes of punishment, and what justice might mean in any given context. Critical and writing skills will be enhanced through close analysis of texts and the application of basic literary concepts and methods of interpretation.
Sample Syllabus	Syllabus must be included with submission, 5 pages max recommended

Indicate the status of this course being nominated:

current course X revision of current course a new course being proposed

John Jay College Option Location

Please check below the area of the College Option for which the course is being submitted. (Select only one.)

<p>Justice Core</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Justice & the Individual (100-level)</p> <p>X <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Struggle for Justice & Inequality in U.S. (300-level)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Justice in Global Perspective (300-level)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Learning from the Past</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Communication</p>
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<p>I. Justice Core II: Struggle for Justice and Equality in the U.S. - Please explain how your course meets these learning outcomes</p> <p>Students will:</p>	
<p>The course will focus on ways in which literary texts present, analyze, and critique crime, punishment, and justice, and how they speak to and from broader legal, social, economic, and psychological contexts. Attention will be given to multiple periods (depending on the Instructor) ranging from the colonial, early Republic, antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and Civil Rights eras into the 21st century. Class discussions and assignments — low-stakes writing, formal thesis-driven essays, comparative essay exam questions, oral presentations with accompanying written analysis — will require students to identify and analyze relevant <u>causes</u> (including ongoing social, economic and race-based inequality and prejudice) and their <u>effects</u> (including sometimes violent and often “illegal” battles for redress, justice, and equality under the law).</p> <p>Examples from sample syllabus Assignments relating to Melville's <i>Billy Budd</i> will challenge students to understand and articulate (in their discussions, Blackboard posts, informal and formal writing) the dynamic relationships between 18th-century mutinies at sea, the force of Maritime law, personal malice, an act of violence precipitated by false accusation, and a verdict driven by deterrence theory. Melville's <i>Benito Cereno</i> will then challenge students to consider the validity, criminality and /or legality of a slave mutiny and armed rebellion as a response to enslavement. Students will be asked to identify and analyze the relevance of these broad concepts to Melville's historical contexts and concerns, which include chattel slavery, fugitive slave laws, and the status of human rights in the antebellum and post-Civil War periods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural contexts of the struggles for justice in the U.S.
<p>The struggle for justice will be approached in part through attention to the legacy of race-based prejudice and the post-Reconstruction escalation of lynching and mob violence. Class discussions and assignments — low-stakes writing, formal thesis-driven essays, comparative essay exam questions, oral presentations with accompanying written analysis — will ask students to address the complex question of culpability by analyzing who is 1) directly responsible for the injustice and 2) who can be held indirectly responsible for failing to take incisive action.</p> <p>Example from sample syllabus A selection of texts from <i>Witnessing Lynching: American Writers Respond</i> will challenge students to understand and articulate — in their discussions, Blackboard posts, and formal writing — the connection between mob violence and “vigilante justice” and the ways in which literary texts may expose, eliminate, and seek redress for these forms of injustice. Through Dunbar's “The Lynching of Jube Benson,” in particular, students will trace the gradual movement of a narrator / protagonist from a position that is flawed by unexamined prejudice to one of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how struggles for justice have shaped U.S. society and culture

<p>belated regret, and the posthumous exoneration of an innocent man — a resolution aided by developments in forensic science. In another approach to the problem, students will analyze Ida B. Wells-Barnett's journalistic reports and the accusations she levels against both public citizens, who are often the perpetrators of the violence, and representatives of the legal system, who rarely bring them to justice.</p>	
<p>A key attribute of literary texts, particularly works of narrative fiction, is their ability to assemble and animate a microcosm of perceptions. Students will demonstrate their grasp of this element by examining — in their discussions, Blackboard posts, and formal writing — how different ways of seeing, analyzing, and responding to characters and their actions are represented within a single text. Students will also engage in comparative analytical examinations by considering how a particular issue is addressed in two or more texts.</p> <p>Examples from the sample syllabus</p> <p>Zora Neale Hurston's short story "Sweat" will call upon students to recognize how societal norms regarding gender may be a factor in the problem of domestic violence. Students will attend to both individual and communal attitudes toward women's rights and roles, and will consider why the text offers an argument for self-defense as the only apparent recourse to violence. Two prison memoirs, Malcolm Braly's <i>On the Yard</i> and Piri Thomas's <i>Seven Long Times</i>, will anatomize the realities of incarceration as experienced by the authors and other inmates. Students will be asked to identify and compare the various crimes, cultures, and coping mechanisms represented in each text individually, and to engage in a comparative analysis of the two texts — including the ethnic and economic backgrounds of the authors, their modes of self-presentation, their crimes, their punishments, and their presentations of the corrections system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate multiple perspectives on the same subject

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
 Department of English
 524 West 59th St., NY, NY 10019

LIT 32X Crime, Punishment, and Justice in U.S. Literature

Professor Bettina Carbonell
 Office: 524 W. 59th St.; 7.63.09NB
bcarbonell@jjay.cuny.edu
 212-237-8702

Section # / Day / Time / Classroom
 Office Hours:

Course Description:

This course examines literary texts about crime, punishment, and justice from the United States in order to explore how questions of right, wrong, and fairness have been and are understood. Students will read literary texts that question the psychological and social causes of crime, philosophies of law, the varieties and purposes of punishment, and what justice might mean in any given context. Critical and writing skills will be enhanced through close analysis of texts and the application of basic literary concepts and methods of interpretation.

Prerequisites: ENG 201 and Junior standing

Learning Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural contexts of the struggles for justice in the U.S.
- Analyze how struggles for justice have shaped U.S. society and culture
- Differentiate multiple perspectives on the same subject

Required Texts

Please purchase these editions:

- * Melville, Herman. *Billy Budd* and *The Piazza Tales*. Barnes & Noble. ISBN # 1593082533
- * Beccaria, Cesare. *On Crimes and Punishments*. Hackett. ISBN # 0915145973
- * Braly, Malcolm. *On the Yard*. NY Review Books. ISBN# 0940322967
- * Rice, Anne P. (Ed.) *Witnessing Lynching: American Writers Respond*. Rutgers UP. ISBN # 0813533309
- * Thomas, Piri. *Seven Long Times*. (1974.1994) Arte Publico Press. ISBN # 1558851054/
Library Call # HV 9468 .T55

e-Reserve / Library downloads: Password = Justice

- * Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.
Electronic download / JJ [ebrary Reader](#)
Part I.1. "The Body of the Condemned" and Part III. 3. "Panopticism"
- * Hurston, Zora Neale. "Sweat"

Recommended Text: [on Library reserve]:

- * Moyer, Imogene. Criminological Theories: Traditional and Non-Traditional Voices and Themes. Sage Pubs. 2001. Call # HV6025 .M69 2001

<u>Course Requirements</u>	<u>Grading Ratio</u>
1 formal analytical essay [5-7 pages] [or a class presentation and follow-up essay, see note "A"]	30%
Midterm Essay Exam	20%
Final Essay Exam [cumulative]	40%

In-class writing (averaged) and Blackboard Posts

10%

Note A: Class Presentations:

In place of the formal analytical paper there will be an opportunity for some students to do a class presentation, followed by a 3-4 page essay to be submitted within one week of the presentation date. The presentation /paper might involve the application of a relevant criminological theory in an analysis of one of our literary texts. This may be a good option for students who have studied and/or are majoring in criminal justice or a related field. The presentation / paper might involve the discussion / critique of a scholarly article (which I will provide) that involves the application of literary theory to the literary text. This may be a good option for English majors. The presentation might involve the application of a philosophical school of thought or principle in the analysis of the literary text. This may be a good option for Humanities and Justice majors. The presentations must be given on the assigned date; failure to do so will mean an “F” for this course requirement. The presenters and dates for class presentations will be decided based on a brief survey of students in our class, their majors, and their interests, in order to determine likely candidates. I’ll discuss this in more detail on the first day of class.

Note B: Blackboard Posts and In-class writing:

I will announce Blackboard Discussion Forum Postings in advance, and I may assign brief writing assignments during class. These informal but graded writing assignments will be used to help you to focus on certain key issues or elements of a text prior to or during class and / or to gauge how well you have prepared for class.

Course Policies and Protocols

* Attendance: If you are absent three times your final grade will drop by one grade step — for example a B will become a B-. If you are absent more than four times you will fail the course. Lateness counts as ½ an absence.

* Plagiarism: The College policies regarding plagiarism are outlined in the John Jay College Undergraduate Bulletin. I will deal with plagiarism issues as harshly as these policies allow. In order to establish the originality of your work, and the proper documentation of your sources, I will require that you post your analytical papers and/or class presentation papers to turnitin.com.

* In the interest of mutual respect and attention to the work of the class, all forms of cell-phone interaction, text messaging, etc. are prohibited.

* Please do not bring food to class.

General Focus for Each Week / Each Text

As you read the assigned texts, ask yourself:

- What crimes and/or punishments are explicitly represented in the text?
- What explicit references are made to actual events?
- What crimes and/or punishments are implied by the narrator, by the characters, and/or by events?
- What unspoken crimes and/or punishments can you – the reader – infer (read into) the text?
- Our working definition of “crime” will be broad – it includes any violation of the rule of law, or of ethical, societal or cultural norms.

LIT 327

Calendar and Assignments

1st Day Introductions to the course: focus, goals, rationale
Historical horizons of reception; Individual subject positions:
authors, characters, narrators, and readers

I. Topics:

Mutinies at sea; Maritime Law; Natural Law; the Rights of Man; Deterrence Theory; False Witness; Self-Defense

8/31 Herman Melville. *Billy Budd, Sailor* [pub. 1924] (*Billy Budd* and *The Piazza Tales*): Parts 1-15 (pp. 7-49)

9/2 *Billy Budd*: Parts 16-19 (pages 49-64) and
Beccaria. *On Crimes and Punishments* [1764]: “To the Reader”; Introduction; Chaps. 1-3 (pages 1-10)

9/7 *Billy Budd*: Parts 20-30 (pages 64-93) and
Beccaria. *On Crimes and Punishments*:
Chap.4 (pages 10-12); Chap.15 (pages 26-27); Chap.19 (pages 36-37); Chap. 30 (pages 56-57)

9/9 **No Classes**

9/14 **Friday Classes meet**

II. Topics:

Human Rights; Slave Rebellions; Fugitive Slave Laws; North and South; Self-Deception

9/16 Herman Melville. *Benito Cereno* [1855] (In *Billy Budd* and *The Piazza Tales*):
from the start of the text – page 151- to page 191

9/21 *Benito Cereno*: pages 191-218 and
Foucault. *Discipline & Punish* [1975]: “The Body of the Condemned” and
Beccaria: *On Crimes and Punishments*: Chaps. 6-8 (pages 14-19); Chaps. 11-14 (pages 22-27);
Chap. 28 (pages 48-55)

9/23 *Benito Cereno* (pages 218-235)

III. Topics:

Lynching; Race-Based Prejudice; the Myth of the Black Rapist; Mob Violence; Responsibility – Collective and Individual

9/28 *Witnessing Lynching*. Introduction: pages 1-24

9/30 *Witnessing Lynching*. 1889-1900:
Chesnutt. “The Sheriff’s Children”; Douglass. “Lynch Law in the South”

10/5 *Witnessing Lynching*: Harper. “An Appeal to My Countrywomen”; Wells-Barnett. From *Mob Rule in New Orleans*; Hopkins. “Will Smith’s Defense of His Race”

10/7 *Witnessing Lynching*. 1901-1910:
Susie Baker King Taylor. “Thoughts on the Present Conditions”; Alice French. “Beyond the Limit”

10/12 *Witnessing Lynching*: Paul Laurence Dunbar. “The Lynching of Jube Benson”

10/14 *Witnessing Lynching*: Mary Church Terrell. From “Lynching from a Negro’s Point of View”;
Sutton E. Griggs. “The Blaze”; W.E.B. DuBois. “A Litany at Atlanta”

10/19 *Witnessing Lynching*. 1911-1935:
James Weldon Johnson. From *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* and “Brothers”
Mary Powell Burrill. *Aftermath*.
Richard Wright. “Between the World and Me”

10/21 **Midterm Exam**

IV. TOPICS:

Women's Rights and Roles; Domestic Violence; Responsibility – Communal? Individual?

10/26 Zora Neale Hurston. "Sweat" [1926] (on e-reserve)

V.A. TOPICS:

Incarceration; Social Structures; Subcultures; Conflict Theory; Adaptation; Inmates as Characters

10/28 Malcolm Braly. *On the Yard* [1967]: Prologue and Chapters 1-4

11/2 *On the Yard*: Chapters 5-12

11/4 *On the Yard*: Chapters 13 and 14

11/9 *On the Yard*: Chapters 15 - 22

V.B. TOPICS:

Discipline, Punishment, Human Rights

11/11 Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Punish*. III. 3. "Panopticism." *ebRARY Reader* Download and Beccaria. Chap. 47 (page 81) and Discussion of Topics for the Analytical Essay

V.C. TOPICS:

Incarceration – Prison as "A Tomb for the Living"; Social Structures; Race and Ethnicity; Adaptation; Inmates as Persons

11/16 Piri Thomas. *Seven Long Times* [1994]: Prologue and pages 5-31

11/18 *Seven Long Times*: pages 32-77

11/23 *Seven Long Times*: pages 78-125

11/25 **Thanksgiving Holiday**

11/30 *Seven Long Times*: pages 126-174

12/2 *Seven Long Times*: Epilogue

12/7 **FINAL EXAM REVIEW.**

ANALYTICAL PAPER IS DUE [unless you have chosen the Class Presentation Option]
A copy of your paper must also be submitted to turnitin.com

12/9 **No class**

12/21 **12:30 - 2:30 Final Exam per College Calendar**