**Inside-Out Prison Exchange Course: Criminal Justice Issues**

**Spring 2016**

**University of Baltimore – School of Criminal Justice**

**Course Description:** The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Course is an opportunity for a small group of students from University of Baltimore and group of residents of the Jessup Correctional Institution to exchange ideas and perceptions about crime, corrections, and the criminal justice system. It is a chance for all participants to gain a deeper understanding of the criminal justice system through the marriage of theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students are expected to conduct themselves respectfully and professionally in class. Many of the topics we will discuss are controversial. I ask that you be respectful of others opinions. Disparaging remarks will not be tolerated in class discussions. All students must read and sign the *“Rules of Participating in the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program”* prior to our first joint class session. We will go over these rules in great detail during our first class session. Any student who violates a program rule will be removed from the course.

**Reflection Papers:** Students are required to submit 4 reflection papers. Each reflective paper should be 2-3 pages. Students should be prepared to hand these in each week they are due.

**Group Project:** Students will be responsible for developing a group project. Groups will be selected at random and will consist of an equal number of inside and outside students. Project topics and instructions will be distributed in class towards the end of the semester.

**Inside-Out Prison Exchange Course – Written Assignments**

1. **Paper 1:** Write a 2-3 page paper about your EXPECTATIONS for this course. You will be studying with a group of peers that you often don’t have the chance to interact with. How do you feel about this? Share your thoughts on how you expect this course to go. What do you hope to get out of this course?
2. **Paper 2:** Write a 2-3 page paper about your EXPERIENCES so far. What stands out to you the most when you think about your first class at JCI? Anything surprising? How does this compare to your expectations?
3. **Daily journal activity**: This assignment is designed for you to record everything you do for two days (include one weekday and one weekend day). This must be done in the week prior to March 8th. The journals will be shared verbally in small groups during class on March 8th. The purpose of this exercise is to give the inside and outside students a clearer idea of what each other’s lives are like.

The instructions are: be as specific as possible, writing down every single thing done over the two-day period, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute. For example, when meals are mentioned include the contents of the meals; when phone calls or conversations are mentioned, indicated the person and the general content of conversation. Obviously, once it comes time to share the content of your days, you can withhold whatever you want, for the sake of privacy. There is no particular format.

1. **Paper 3:** Write a 2-3 page paper about the journal activity you participated in class on March 8th. Discuss whether you enjoyed this activity. Why or why not? Did you learn anything about your peer’s life that was surprising to you? Discuss the similarities and differences of you and your peer’s daily activities.

1. **Paper 4:** Write a final 2-3 page paper about your overall perceptions of this course. Be sure to include your perceptions of the course content (the various criminal justice topics) AND your perceptions of interacting with your peers.

**Course Schedule, Readings, & Assignments**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Topic**  | **Assignments/Activities** |
| 9-Feb | First Class – Overview  |  |
| 16-Feb | Introductions; What is crime? | Paper 1 due  |
| 23-Feb | Why do people commit crime? | Paper 2 due |
| *Reading: Crime Causation: Sociological Theories* |
| 1-Mar | Sentencing & Punishment  |   |
|   | *Reading: Sentencing in the U.S.* |
| 8-Mar | Mass Incarceration  | Daily journal activity due  |
| *Reading: Causes & Consequences of prison growth in U.S.*  |
| 15-Mar | **NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK** |   |
| 22-Mar | The many faces of victimization | Paper 3 due |
| *Reading: Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims* |
| 29-Mar | Imprisoning communities  |  |
| *Reading: In their own voices…* |
| 5-Apr | Community Justice  |   |
| *Reading: Dealing with concentrated disadvantage...* |
| 12-Apr | Alternatives to Incarceration |   |
| *Reading: Abolitionist Alternatives* |
| 19-Apr | Group Project prep | Group Project prep |
| 26-Apr | Group Project prep | Group Project prep |
| 3-May | Presentations and Wrap-up | Present group project |
| 10-May | NO CLASS |  |
| 17-May | Last class – with professor only | Paper 4 due  |