Political Science 3681 provides an overview of corrections policy and practice in Newfoundland and Labrador from the time of settlement to the present day. The course examines how various political, social and economic forces have shaped correctional decision-making. It explores the impact of liberal and conservative ideology along with political and economic considerations on correctional policy-making.

The course traces this province’s fascinating correctional history, exploring broad topics ranging from capital punishment to restorative justice. It concentrates on contemporary matters regarding correctional policy and practice from both a national and local perspective, examining specific issues such as the public release of information on sex offenders and the need for a new provincial prison.

Requirements

Journal articles and selections from texts are placed on reserve and will be supplemented by class notes and handouts. An updated syllabus will be provided which will incorporate student suggestions for new topics of interest for the second part of the course.

Articles on Reserve


TERM PAPER - Value 30%

The Term Paper should be approximately 2,500 words - eight to 10 double-spaced, typed pages. Adherence to proper reference citations such as APA or Turabian for books, articles, Internet sources etc. is required. Always remember to support your paper with good documentation.

1. Discuss whether correctional policy and practice in pre-and post-Confederation Newfoundland and Labrador has been progressive, effective and humane in its treatment of offenders, when compared to other jurisdictions e.g. other Canadian provinces, Britain and the U.S.

Your paper should cite specific examples of correctional policy and practice (which may include a decision not to introduce a particular action) from any or all eras of Newfoundland’s correctional history, and it should include the impact of political, social and economic forces on policy-making.

OR

2. Harsher sentencing and the increased use of imprisonment; ‘three strikes’ and mandatory minimum sentencing laws, ‘truth in sentencing’ and parole release restrictions; no frills prisons laws and ‘austere prisons’; ... There is now a long list of measures that appear to signify a punitive turn in contemporary penality [corrections].

David Garland, The Culture of Control (2001, p. 142)

Discuss in relation to the contemporary Canadian justice system, noting specific policy initiatives by the Conservative government, and the effectiveness of ‘get tough’ as compared to other approaches to tackling crime. Ensure that your paper contains evidence-based research.

OR

3. Propose an effective correctional policy for dealing with: a) mentally ill offenders, b) elderly offenders, or c) sex offenders. Discuss the factors that would have to be taken into account in its strategic development, the forces that you would expect to bear on the policy’s ultimate determination and the stages involved in the process of policy approval and implementation.

Discuss the likelihood of your policy being adopted, and the consequences, including the political implications, if it was implemented in the province.

OR

4. The unique problems and needs of Aboriginal and women offenders have been portrayed on numerous occasions through such means as reports, commissions of inquiry and court rulings.
Discuss how far Canadian correctional policy and practice has gone to address the unique problems and needs of EITHER: 1) Aboriginal offenders OR 2) women offenders (Aboriginal women offenders can be included in either of the options chosen). In your opinion, what steps, if any, are required to address their needs both nationally and in this province? Why?

**Topics covered to First Test – Wednesday 7 October 2008**

- **9 September** Introduction
- **14 September** Crime and punishment in 18th century Newfoundland
- **16 September** 18th c. penal crisis and early 19th c. political and penal reform
- **21 September** Politics, ideology and the rise of the penitentiary
- **23 September** Political background to the establishment of a local ‘Penitentiary’
- **28 September** Politics, punishment and progress in late 19th century Newfoundland
- **30 September** International correctional transformations and local inertia
- **5 October** Penal Developments in pre-confederation Newfoundland and Canada
- **7 October** First Test (20%)

**Required Articles for First Test – 7 October (on reserve)**

The following articles will be supplemented by class notes and handouts.


On Wednesday 7 October an updated course outline (14 October – 2 December 2009) will be provided which may include student suggestions of topics of particular interest. It will focus on a variety of contemporary issues e.g. the Youth Criminal Justice Act, and it will include presentations by several guest speakers.
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