

Issues & Problems in Criminal Justice Policy Paper Literature Review – Summer 2020

You are required to write a **7 (full) to 8-page literature review on a specific criminal policy (not including your work cited and title page)** chosen from one of the topics below. There are numerous areas to choose from so pick something that you find particularly interesting, may not know a lot about, or could be useful for your professional career (or pertinent to your internship). If you are interested in analyzing another policy, please contact me. Do note that not all of these topics are covered over the course of the semester. Other topics that have been approved include amber alerts, truth-in-sentencing laws, and circles of accountability and support (COSA). Topics such as capital punishment, gun control, the war on drugs, marijuana issues, and broken windows are not permitted as these are overly broad and cannot be examined in the number of pages required.

In this paper, you will examine a specific policy in a number of different contexts and weigh the evidence on it including its origins, efficacy, positive, negative, and unanticipated effects, cost-benefit, etc., primarily relying on academic, empirical sources. **The paper is by 11:59 pm Saturday, June 20;** a rubric is provided on Canvas. **This assignment overall is worth a significant portion of your grade. As this is a research paper on a specific criminal justice policy, academic (i.e., peer reviewed/scholarly) articles will comprise most of your sources.** Of the 8 acceptable sources, a minimum of 5 must be academic, empirical articles (more on the below). Students who have earned higher grades (i.e., As and Bs) typically use at minimum 10-12 sources. Please note that law reviews do not count as academic sources though they do fall under 'acceptable' sources later.

You will be assessed on five different criteria which serves as the grading rubric. There is also a checklist on the last page that I urge you to go through prior to submitting it to ensure your paper meets the requirements (e.g., **no quotes/no first or second person**).

Academic, empirical sources are defined as research based on observed and measured phenomena and published in peer reviewed (academic) journals. These academic, empirical articles are research that derives knowledge from actual experience rather than from theory or belief. This includes primary data collection and meta-analyses, but systematic and literature reviews are not considered an empirical article though it would count as an acceptable source. If you have questions about your sources, please reach out to me!

Please refer to the accompanying PowerPoint presentation and utilize the course resources (e.g., APA formatting for in-text citations and works cited page, plagiarism, academic writing tips) in addition to using what you learned from the research/plagiarism modules. It is important that you follow the requirements and review the rubric for each one (e.g. the number of sources required, no usage of quotes, etc.). An example "A" paper is provided on Canvas (note this is from a previous spring semester in which the requirement was 10 pages).

Topics to Choose From

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Asset forfeiture | • Zero tolerance & juveniles |
| • Privatization of prisons / jails | • Alternatives to incarceration |

• Three strikes laws	• Mandatory minimum laws
• Truth in sentencing laws	• Stand your ground laws
• Sex offender residence restrictions (SORR)	• Sex offender registration OR notification
• Body worn cameras	• CJ Harm reduction policies‡
• Sexual assault nurse examiner programs (SANE)	• Mandatory sexual assault kit (SAK) testing
• SWAT / Militarization of law enforcement	• Solitary confinement
• High school student drug testing	• School resource officers
• Crisis intervention teams	• Specialty (problem solving) courts‡
• Ban the box	• Red light OR speed cameras

Note. ‡As these topics are quite broad, you should choose a **single, specific aspect** of it to analyze while providing a general overview (e.g., **if you select specialty courts, select a specific type such as DWI courts; if you select alternatives, focus on a specific type such as electronic monitoring, intensive supervised probation, bootcamps, for harm reduction, needle exchange programs, etc.** You cannot do probation nor parole itself in addition to the excluded topics mentioned previously).

Specific components of the assignment

- Overview & origins of the policy/program
 - This includes a brief overview of how it came to be. You should discuss important legislation or cases (e.g., State or Supreme Court decisions) pertaining to the topic though for some, this may not apply
- Prior academic research on the topic regarding its efficacy/efficiency
- Current concerns, controversial perspectives associated with the policy/practice
- Policy implications / Future of the policy/practice

You must use headers identifying these components throughout your paper. This will also help with your organization, flow, and transitions resulting in a better paper.

Assessment Criteria

You will be assessed on **five** different criteria for your overall policy paper which are listed below and serves as the grading rubric. Please make sure that you also review the PowerPoint (I cannot emphasize this enough!) and the checklist (at the end of this document) to ensure you have a completed paper – make sure each element has been covered in your paper:

- Thesis Statement/Research Evidence
- Understanding of the Issue
- Mechanical, Grammar, & Language
- Argument & Structure
- Formatting & APA. Please follow these APA requirements:
 - In-text citations
 - Works cited page
 - Section headers
 - Page numbers

- An abstract is **NOT** needed!

Extra Credit Opportunities

There are **two** ways to earn extra credit. The first is submitting your policy at least three days in advance of the due date (i.e., by 11:59 pm Wednesday, June 17) will result in a third of a letter increase (e.g., from a B to a B+). Your first priority should be a well written assignment – turning in a poorly done assignment solely for the extra credit will result in a worse grade.

Additionally, you can earn a third of a letter increase on your policy paper grade by attending a session at the University Writing Center. ***Sessions are available both in-person and through their Online Writing Lab:*** <https://writing.ecu.edu/uwc/>. This link also shows you how to make an online appointment. The session must be at minimum **40 minutes long** and **you must have developed a full draft (6 pages)** of your paper for them to review with you. While I do encourage you to utilize them earlier on in the process, this will not result in any extra credit, but it should improve your grade if you attend and follow through with their advice and recommendations. When you set up an appointment, you must provide them with a copy of the assignment (and I recommend the PowerPoint as well) and let them know that it is specifically for this class. If you do not provide them with the latter information, I will not get a confirmation e-mail from them about your session. Additionally, you must also write up a 1 to 2-page document that demonstrates how you took their feedback into account (be specific) and mine, if you did ask or receive any. **You must do both of these (the appointment & write up) in order to receive the extra points.** If you did the extra credit for this make sure to submit the 1-2 page write up on Canvas when submitting the paper (you can submit multiple documents at one time). *Do not e-mail it to me.*

Late Policy

You can submit your paper up to three days late; submitting it at 12:15 AM on Monday morning will lower your grade so you would be better off waiting till the end of the day to work on it some more. Each day late is a third of a letter grade off (e.g., from a B to B- if it is one day late; a full letter if three days late). If it is not submitted within three days of the due date, the grade is a 0 unless you have prior approval.

Tips on Writing

Avoid all first and second person (e.g., “I”, “you”, “we”). Instead, I recommend using phrases such as, “Author X argues...”. This will help you focus on what the author’s objectives or goals are in the piece. Do not use quotes. The objective is to read the articles and sources and summarize it in your own words. Do not use the words “believe” and “feel” in the paper. The author(s) do not believe things or feel them. As they are social scientists, they “think,” “propose,” “assert,” “argue,” “conclude,” interpret,” “assume,” etc. Remember, writing is a process. You should not expect to be able to do it overnight. Most of your faculty struggle with this task and write and rewrite several times before submitting our own articles for publication. There are other resources on Canvas on academic writing as well as a catalogue of phrases (feel free to copy them and integrate them in your own writing). There is a guide on common phrases to use (no need to worry about plagiarism when you use these).

Acceptable Sources (Click the links for examples)

For your final paper, **8** acceptable sources, of which **5** are academic, empirical sources are required. An empirical source is defined as research based on observed and measured phenomena. It is research that derives knowledge from actual experience rather than from theory or belief. Includes primary data collection and meta-analyses but does not include systematic/literature reviews and is published in an academic journal. Academic sources are those that are published in peer-reviewed journals. Note that law reviews do not count as these are not peer reviewed. Students that do well typically use more than the minimum required of sources.

Academic (peer-reviewed) journals

- [“Sexual Abuse”](#), [“Criminology & Public Policy”](#)) [Again, note that journals publish editorials, introductions, book reviews, etc.; these do not count and are not considered acceptable!].
- Journal articles are usually reports of [empirical studies](#), [\(empirical\) meta analyses](#), and [systematic \(literature\) reviews](#) (this last one is not an empirical article and only counts as an acceptable source)

Other sources that are acceptable (note, these do not count as academic sources / academic, empirical sources)

- Academic book/chapter in an edited volume ([“Rape and Sexual Assault”](#))
- Gray literature
 - Research reports ([“Urban Institute”](#), [“RAND”](#), [“Human Rights Watch”](#), [“Justice Center”](#)) / white papers ([“NCJRS”](#)) [All examples of acceptable, empirical sources]
 - Gov’t reports ([“Bureau of Justice Statistics”](#), [“Office of National Drug Control Policy”](#), [“Government Accountability Office”](#), [“Department of Justice”](#), [“Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports”](#), [“National Institute of Drug Abuse”](#) etc.)
 - Organization reports ([“National White Collar Center”](#))
 - [NIJ Journal](#)
 - [NIJ Topics / Example](#)
 - [BJS example - mental health](#)
 - [CrimeSolutions](#) [Do **not** use the website itself but the primary sources cited]
 - [Example 1 – Residence Restrictions for Sex Offenders](#)
 - [Example 2 – Adolescent Community Reinforcement \(Drugs\)](#)
 - Dissertations ([example](#))
 - Law review journals
 - Professional journals ([“Police Chief”](#), [“National Institute of Justice Journal”](#))
 - These last two are not considered academic source as they are NOT peer reviewed. Rather, these are specifically aimed at those working in the field.

Sources that are unacceptable are listed on the PowerPoint. Commentaries, letters to the editor, book reviews, and other similar articles in peer reviewed journals do not count as acceptable sources. Additional examples of empirical sources are provided in the PowerPoint presentation. Sites such as DrugAbuse.gov, summary websites from the CDC or the DOJ, research reviews such as [CrimeSolutions.gov](#), are not allowed. **Refer to their primary sources and use those instead.** Again, you cannot use newspaper/magazine articles (e.g., Washington Post, New York Times), encyclopedias (e.g., Wikipedia), most online websites, journal editorials/editorial introductions/commentaries, letter to the editor, book reviews,

movies/films, etc. as an acceptable source. *While you may use the text used in the class, it does not count towards the required number of sources.*

Please make sure to complete this checklist to ensure you have a full, completed paper prior to submitting it to Canvas.

- I have addressed all parts of the assignment.
- My thesis statement in the introduction would be clear and unambiguous to any reader.
- My paragraphs are organized in a logical manner and advances my argument. Transitions are used between paragraphs.
- My sources and evidence are used to support my thesis statement.
- I have at minimum **8** acceptable sources, of which **5** are academic, empirical sources.
- I have both an introduction and a conclusion. The latter does not only restate the topic paragraph but summarizes the argument and its implications.
- I have incorporated feedback into my paper
- I have revised my paper multiple times to improve its organization, argument, sentence structure, and style which is evident to the reader.
- Headers are used to identify the specific components of the assignment
- The paper is formatted correctly (Times New Roman, 1" margins, size 12 font, double spaced, title page, page numbers).
- The title is relevant.
- The paper is 7 (full) to 8 pages excluding the title page / works cited page.
- No quotes are used.
- All of my sources in the works cited page are cited in the text.
- All of my in-text citations are in the works cited page.
- APA format is utilized throughout the paper.
- I have read the plagiarism statement in the syllabus, understand it, and agree to abide by the definitions and penalties described there.**