

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS: MASTER OF ARTS IN JUSTICE STUDIES

SCCJ-600. Proseminar in Justice Studies

This graduate proseminar course is designed to provide students enrolled in the Justice Studies Master's Program with the essentials for a smooth transition to graduate life and success within the program. The course will provide students introductory information of the justice studies discipline and how to be good scholars and researchers. The course will include faculty speakers from the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department to provide students an overview of the types of research conducted in the department and information for how students can become involved. Credit, one hour.

SCCJ-601. Criminological Theories

This graduate level course focuses on the development of criminological thought with a thorough analysis of classical and neoclassical literature, an examination of contemporary criminological thought using a sociological lens and a discussion of criminal justice theory. Further emphasis is placed on critiquing and applying criminological thought to current criminal justice events. Credit, three hours.

SCCJ-602. Sociological Theories

This graduate course will review many of the key social theories in the classical and contemporary sociological tradition. This course will provide an in-depth engagement with the canonical works, develop your ability to read and understand theories critically and introduce you to the logic of social inquiry. The course emphasizes a close reading of original texts, as well as seminar-style class discussions. Credit, three hours.

SCCJ-603. Theories of Justice

This graduate course will compare and contrast classical and contemporary theories of social justice. We will apply these theories to contemporary issues of social injustice in the US and the Global system. The aim of this course will be to show some implications these theories have in aiding the construction of public policy around critical issues in our society. The course emphasizes a close reading of original texts, as well as seminar-style class discussions. Credit, three hours.

SCCJ-605. Research Methods in Justice Studies

This graduate level seminar will provide students with advanced skills necessary to conduct and evaluate research in the Justice Studies discipline. Students will discuss the central methods that justice studies scholars use to gather information about social phenomena, along with "best practices" in research design that help ensure data quality and usefulness. Students will gain firsthand experience with the research process as they apply various methodologies in class and for their own research project. Credit, three hours.

SCCJ-606. Statistical Analysis in Justice Studies

This graduate seminar will cover moderate-level statistical techniques most commonly used by justice studies scholars. The goal of this course is to understand the logic of quantitative justice studies research and gain hands-on practice in statistical analysis of social data. Students will learn how to answer a particular research question of their choosing and build the knowledge from which they can critically evaluate quality of statistical evidence produced by justice studies scholars. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-607. Qualitative Methods in Justice Studies

This graduate seminar trains students in qualitative methodology, from conceptualization, through design and data collection processes for use in their own scholarship, and problem solving and evaluation of qualitative justice studies scholarship. The course includes an advanced discussion of qualitative research design and the role of theory in guiding and informing research design. The course is structured so students learn the important components for completing an original, qualitative research project. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-608. Issues in Justice Studies

This graduate course explores key questions, topics, and current issues in Justice Studies. The class will engage these topics from within contemporary philosophical, political, economic, sociological, and theological approaches to justice and equity. Topics will include but are not limited to human rights, environmental justice, civil society, social movements, democratization, liberation theology, social and political philosophy, the global south, and globalization. The course emphasizes a close reading of original texts, as well as seminar-style class discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-609. Issues in Juvenile Justice

This graduate seminar explores how the development of the juvenile justice system and the enactment of corresponding laws and policies impact youthful offenders. With a predominant focus on past issues, such as truancy and lack of familial stability, and current issues, such as substance abuse and misuse, mental illness and violence, that confront youthful offenders, this course analyzes how well the juvenile justice system is equipped to handle the progressive issues that confront youthful offenders. By the end of this seminar, students will be able to critique the responses of the juvenile justice system and understand how youthful offenders remain a part of the justice system into adulthood. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-610. Population Dynamics

This graduate course examines the causes and consequences of population change. This course will examine demographic dynamics including fertility, mortality, migration, technology, lifestyle and culture. Moreover, this course will examine related issues of hunger, the spread of illness and disease, environmental degradation, health services, household formation, the labor force, marriage and divorce among other phenomena. This course emphasizes primary readings and seminar style discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-611. Environment and Sustainability

This graduate seminar explores the intricate relationship between environmental resilience and corresponding ecological vulnerability of communities through the prism of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Drawing on the social constructionist perspective and grounded theory, the course critiques notions of de-linked social and environmental perspectives. The impact of environmental issues, such as the lack of resources, environmental degradation, environmental program assistance, and minimal community engagement, are also examined. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-612. Health Ecologies

This graduate course explores the impacts that human-environment interactions have on health. It focuses on the topics of disease diffusion, geographical information systems (GIS) for public health, health and healthcare disparities and various methods for analyzing health/disease data. This course analyzes primary readings and will include seminar style discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-615. Race and Justice

This graduate course addresses the origins, consequences, and perpetuation of stratification, specifically by race and ethnicity. The focus on the study of race and ethnicity will employ a global perspective to understand how it informs intersectional identities and processes. Students will be introduced to the foundational readings, including contemporary theories and empirical research. The course emphasizes a close reading of original texts, as well as seminar-style class discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-616. Intersectionality and Justice Studies

This graduate level seminar aims to critically examine important issues, questions, and debates regarding the intersection or the notion that race, class, gender, sexuality, and other terrains of difference gain meaning from each other. This will include investigating intersectionality in its different representations, discussing the wide range of doing intersectional scholarship, introducing students to intersectionality beyond the canonical texts, and discussing how race, class, gender, and sexuality are embedded in social institutions, including the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-617. Power and Inequality in Society

This course focuses on the current American experience with socioeconomic inequality and mobility. The goals of the course are to understand the structure of inequality in contemporary U.S., to learn the principal theories and evidence for long-term trends in inequality, to understand the persistence of poverty and the impact of social policies on American rates of poverty, and to understand the forces that both produce and inhibit intergenerational social mobility in the U.S. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-618. Urban Structure and Process

This course will tackle the broad topic of Urban Sociology. Urban Sociology focuses our attention to the built environment and reminds us that no house, skyscraper, factory, landfill, sidewalk, or store is there by accident nor is it just a spatial adaptation of nature. It is instead a social product, built by people and bound by all the forces of power, privilege, wealth, ideology, and culture that shape all aspects of our lives. Through a variety of social processes and changes, the built environment takes shape, likewise the built environment will have different meanings to different people and will ultimately continue to shape our lived experiences. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-620. Community and Social Change

This graduate seminar examines the causes, mechanics, patterns, strategies, and consequences of change in structure (relationships and institutions) of societies, and analysis of specific kinds of change such as revolutions, social movements, modernization, and industrialization. Students will engage with primary readings, case studies, and empirical research to understand the socio-historical context of social change; they will be able to use theories to identify and differentiate patterns of social change and to explain when, how and why social changes occur. The course emphasizes a close reading of original texts, as well as seminar-style class discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-621. Global Justice

This graduate seminar explores the theoretical foundations of justice beyond the borders of the nation-state. We will examine issues of political and economic justice, human rights, environmental justice, women's rights among other globally relevant topics. This course will critique and engage with the idea of the possibility of global justice through global democracy, global criminal justice systems, transnational organizations, and global civil society. The course emphasizes a close reading of original texts, as well as seminar-style class discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-622. Juvenile Justice Policy

This graduate level course is a continuation of SCCJ 609 that critiques the responses of the juvenile justice system and juvenile justice practitioners to youthful offenders. Students will read current and past legislation and policies that impact adjudicated (and detained) youth that include addressing their treatment and rehabilitative needs, providing substantive educational and vocational programming while they are detained and assisting in their successful reintegration into the community and at home. This course will also focus on critiquing pending legislation and the intended (and unintended) consequences that impact youthful offenders. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-623. American Penal System

This graduate seminar critically examines the American correctional system with an analysis of the historical development of the penal system, the purpose of punishment, the treatment of people who are subjected to criminal justice system control, correctional programming, and offender reintegration into the community. Additional topics address disproportionate minority confinement, the treatment of mental illness within correctional systems offenders and the fluctuation of treatment and educational programming in correctional facilities. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-624. Global Criminology

This graduate seminar is designed to familiarize students with the similarities and differences in the criminal justice systems from selected western and non-western cultures using a comparative approach. This perspective will focus on the impact of the legal, cultural, political, philosophical, and historical elements which have shaped these international justice systems. This course emphasizes the reading of primary texts and seminar style discussions. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-650. Special Topics in Justice and Equity

This graduate seminar explores an emerging or trending topic in the justice and equity concentration that is not addressed in the required or elective courses. The topic for the graduate seminar will be selected by the instructor who will have expertise and research experience in the subject matter. The intent of the course is to ensure that students have examined emerging and trending topics in the justice studies discipline, so they are prepared for the next step in their careers. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-651. Special Topics in Crime and Justice

This graduate seminar explores an emerging or trending topic in the crime and justice concentration that is not addressed in the required or elective courses. The topic for the graduate seminar will be selected by the instructor who will have expertise and research experience in the subject matter. The intent of the course is to ensure that students have examined emerging and trending topics in the justice studies discipline, so they are prepared for the next step in their careers. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-652. Independent Study in Justice Studies

Independent study allows graduate students enrolled in the Justice Studies MA program to pursue a specific topic with a faculty member for academic credit. This includes exploring an idea, contributing to research, or developing a project under the guidance of a faculty member from the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department. Independent study credits can only be earned based on topics not covered in the Justice Studies MA program curriculum. Students must receive consent of the instructor and can only take one independent study class towards their graduate degree. Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-660. Thesis I

An in-depth individualized investigation of a research question conducted under close supervision of the thesis advisor. The student is required to present the study's findings in a scholarly paper and an oral presentation. University and departmental guidelines are to be followed in preparing and defending the thesis. (Advisor Approval). Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-661. Thesis II

An in-depth individualized investigation of a research question conducted under close supervision of the thesis advisor. The student is required to present the study's findings in a scholarly paper and an oral presentation. University and departmental guidelines are to be followed in preparing and defending the thesis. (Pre-req SCCJ 660). Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-662. Practicum I

This course provides students with opportunities to employ the knowledge, values, skills and conceptual frameworks that are related to their field of study while under the direction of an approved supervisor. Students are enabled to develop and refine the skills necessary for effective practice and to integrate the concepts and methods of Justice Studies into their chosen career pathways. University and departmental guidelines are to be followed in final course product including course reports, paper projects, organizational evaluations. (Need Advisor Approval). Credits, three hours.

SCCJ-663. Practicum II

This course provides students with opportunities to employ the knowledge, values, skills and conceptual frameworks that are related to their field of study while under the direction of an approved supervisor. Students are enabled to develop and refine the skills necessary for effective advance practice and to integrate the concepts and methods of Justice Studies into their chosen career pathways. University and departmental guidelines are to be followed in final course product including course reports, paper projects, organizational evaluations. (Pre-req SCCJ 662). Credits, three hours.