The prison, that darkest region in the apparatus of justice, is the place where the power to punish, which no longer dares to manifest itself openly, silently organizes a field . . . in which punishment will be able to function openly as treatment.

Michel Foucault, Discipline & Punishment

From capital punishment to three-strikes-and-you’re out to the highest imprisonment rates in the Western world by a factor of five . . . The United States has a punishment system that no one would knowingly have built from the ground up.

Michael Tonry, Thinking about Crime

Prison as a place of confinement, punishment and transformation orients this survey of adult corrections in the U. S. While our focus is on contemporary dynamics, we’ll begin with a consideration of the history and ideologies that have shaped the carceral structures and operations. The course critically examines the concept of prison as a total institution or panopticon and its implications as a method of social control. What are the objectives of imprisonment: retribution, incapacitation, deterrence or rehabilitation? How may we understand inmates’ as well as correctional officers’ subcultures as both adaptations to and resistance against totalizing institutions? What are the collateral “pains of punishment” imposed on their families and communities outside the bars? What have been the implications of mass incarceration for democracy and the economy in the U. S.? Other topics may include popular representations of prison life, women in prisons, the prison-industrial complex, the racialization of prisons, and prison as a culture of death.  

Dist: SOC  WCult: NA
**Important Note:**
The nature of our subject, prisons, will necessarily entailed exposure to and examination of extremely graphic language and behavior that may be highly offensive. Students with concerns regarding the suitability of this course for themselves should consult with the instructor before the end of the first week of term.

**Books Available for Purchase at the Wheelock Books**


**Additional Required Readings and Resources**

Assigned articles, book chapters, video clips and exhibitions are located in the “ASSIGNED READINGS” folder on Blackboard. The PDFs and links for the assigned readings for each week are filed together in a folder. Also see the list of prison-related films on reserve in Jones Media Center.

Developing the habit of routinely reading a national newspaper (e.g. *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *L. A. Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*) is an invaluable for effectively contributing to class discussions and for enhancing your cultural capital.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Much of the work of this course will involve our collective examination and discussion of secondary as well as primary sources - print, visual and recorded. Students are expected to attend all class sessions as well as any special sessions, to complete reading assignments in a timely fashion and to participate meaningfully in every class meeting.

25%  
**2 Short Exercises in the Sociological Imagination**  
The Virtual Prison Tour is mandatory, with second choosen from several

**Virtual Prison Tour**  
This course begins with travelers’ observations of the prisons and correctional system in U. S. during the 1800s. This exercise option affords you an opportunity to become more knowledgeable about contemporary corrections in a designated state by taking a virtual tour of its prisons. Details for this assignment will be posted on Blackboard (see Prison Travel Assignment).

**Beyond the Prison Walls**  
This option encourages you to consider the importance of non-profit organizations that are concerned with prison and prisoner issues at the state level through an examination of their objectives, structure and impact. Details for this assignment will be posted on Blackboard (see Prison Issues Assignment).

35%  
**In-Class Midterm Exam**  
The in-class midterm examination will consist of an essay question and may include identifications or short answers. It will cover readings, lectures, discussions, videos, guest presentation, and required special events.

40%  
**Final Project**  
The completion of a research paper or a take-home, final examination.
Honor Principle  Academic work is simultaneously a collaborative and an independent enterprise. Consulting others and using their ideas, findings, and interpretations are integral parts of intellectual inquiry. The laborious, critical and creative work of developing one’s own understandings is equally important. In this course, you will have opportunities to engage in both endeavors. Therefore it is essential that you maintain the integrity of each. Class members are encouraged to discuss readings, lectures and other course materials with one another. However in-class and take-home examinations, exercise reports, research papers and/or other assignments must be your own independent work, unless otherwise indicated. By putting your name on an assignment that you turn in, you are indicating to me that the work is your own original work.

You should familiarize yourself with Dartmouth College's Academic Honor Principle regarding honesty in completing all course examinations, research papers, and exercises (see online “Academic Honor” under the Registrar Regulations, plus the Standards of Conduct regulations on computing resources and library privileges). This Principle commits each of us to individual responsibility and fairness in all course work; and prohibits cheating on exams, fabricating research, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, purchasing papers, submitting fraudulent documents, engaging in computing abuses and forging signatures.

Religious Observances  Some class members may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term, but which may conflict with your participation in this course. Before the end of the second week of the term, please send me an email detailing the occasion, date and the specific course responsibility that may be affected. I will use this information to determine any appropriate accommodations.

Submission & Return of Assignments  The submission of assignments, exams and paper is expected on the indicated “due date” during that day’s class meeting (unless otherwise stated). Requests for late submissions should be made prior to the due date. Please note that grades on non-approved late submissions will be penalized. All work to be graded should be submitted in a clasp envelope, with your name clearly printed on the front. Graded work will be returned in the same envelope. Course assignments, examinations and papers may not be submitted by blitz, mail or fax (unless otherwise instructed and with prior approval).

Missed Classes  As responsible adults, class members should notify the instructor of any anticipated absences. In the event that you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for getting the lecture notes for that class from another student. As a general policy, I will not make my lecture notes available. I trust that members of the class will be cooperative in sharing their notes, realizing that you may be in a similar position one day. Repeated absences, without documented evidence of illness or family emergency, will adversely affect your participation grade.

Late Submissions & Make-up Exam  The submission of assignments, exams and paper is expected on the indicated “due date” during that day’s class meeting (unless otherwise stated). Requests for extensions beyond the submission date should be made prior to the due date. Please note that grades on non-approved late submissions may be penalized.

Make-up Exam  Students with legitimate reasons may be entitled to make-up the midterm examination. However, such arrangements are only available for students who inform me at least 48 hours prior to the original exam date.

Note for Students who Speak English as a Second Language  Students who speak English as a second language are encouraged to meet with the professor during the first week of the term to discuss any academic accommodations that may be of assistance to you.

Note for Students with Disabilities  Students with learning or other disabilities as well as chronic health conditions that may disrupt your studies are encouraged to meet with the professor during the first two weeks of the term to discuss any academic accommodations that may be of assistance to you. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Disabilities Coordinator, Dick’s House staff or other college officials may be consulted.

Electronic Devices  Cell and smart phones, iPods, MP3s, iPads, Bluetooths, etc. must be turned-off and put away during class sessions. Laptop computers and notepads should only be used for note taking. Web browsing, handling email or working on non-course related matters are discouraged, and may lead to a reduction in your participation grade.

Email Policy  Course assignments, examinations and research papers may not be submitted by email, snail mail or fax. Please note that I typically read and answer my email occasionally each day during the work week (i.e. Mon. – Fri.), but not necessarily according to any schedule. As a rule, I am not accessible via email during the weekends.

Classroom Etiquette  We will cover some complex and controversial subjects. Understandably, disagreement and debate are welcome and integral parts of the learning process. Please extend respect to all members of the class in terms of your verbal and nonverbal communications, listen attentively to their questions and comments as you would the lectures, and offer your informed observations and criticisms in a constructive manner.
SCHEDULE OF COURSE READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS & EVENTS

Class topics and reading assignments are subject to change

PART I THE PENITENTIARY AS A MODERN MARVEL

March 25 Course Overview

March 27 An Historical Overview: The Penitentiary as a Modern Marvel

Gustave de Beaumont & Alexis de Tocqueville report *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and Its Application in France*, 1833 (on Blackboard)

Charles Dickens, "Philadelphia, and its Solitary Prison," Chap. 7 in *American Notes* 1842 (on Blackboard)

*Browse:*
Eastern State Penitentiary - Examine "Explore" and "Learn" menus on the site (on Blackboard)

Gallery of Sing Sing Prison Photos, Ossing, NY by Karl Josker (on Blackboard)

Stratton, Margaret. “Sentencing the Sentenced: America’s Abandoned Prisons.” Photographs of prisons including Alcatraz Island, Eastern State Penitentiary, Jamesville Penitentiary, Montana Territorial Prison, and Ellis Island (on Blackboard)

March 29 Controlling Populations of ‘The Worst Kind’: Women


*Supplemental Materials:*
Photographs of Colorado State Prison 1883-1900, view images of female inmates (on Blackboard)

April 1 Denied Penitence: Punishment Worse than Slavery


Tritten, Larry. 2006. ‘Early Indian Prisoners of "The Rock"," *Native Peoples* v19 n4 July/August: 68, 70 (on Blackboard)

*Supplemental Materials:*

John and Ruby Lomax. 1939, *Southern States Recording Trip*. Under “Field notes” see entries for Ramsey State Farm, Huntsville, TX; Cummins State Farm in AK; Parchman in MS; Raiford in FL Under “Photographic Prints” search for “African American convicts” (on Blackboard)
PART II  THE AMERICAN WAY: PRISONS, PRISON, PRISON, PRISONS . . .

April 3  Lock ‘Em Up: The American Way of Social Control

"Mass Incarceration in America," The American Prospect, January/February 2011 (on Blackboard)

View: "US: A Nation of Inmates?" Inside Story Americas," Al Jazeera Television (on Blackboard)

Supplemental Materials:

April 5  So, You Think You Know About Prison: Popular (Mis) Representations of Corrections


Supplemental Materials
The Angola Prison Rodeo video (on Blackboard)

MSNBC Lock-Up Series. Episodes on Fridays and Sundays 11:00 pm - 2:00 am, Saturdays 9:00 pm - 6:00 am

April 8  Hiding ‘Em Away: The Surprising Invisibility of Mass Imprisonment


Supplemental Materials
“Freedom of Information Act Covering Prisons” Society of Professional Journalists (on Blackboard)


PART III  INMATE CULTURE, STAFF CULTURE: STATUS AND SURVIVAL

April 10  Life in A Totalizing Society

April 12  **Doing Time: Identity, Survival and Prisonization**  


**Supplemental Materials:**  

Jackson, Bruce. “Photo Essay: Texas Death Row and the Cummins Prison Farm in Arkansas,” pp. 112-129 (on Blackboard)

April 15  **Doing Prison Masculinities: Merchant, Mischief, Macho & Maturity**  


**Supplemental Materials:**  
*The Angolite*, the inmates’ newspaper from Angola State Penitentiary in LA (on Blackboard)  
*The Cell-Door*, an Internet magazine by inmates (on Blackboard)  

April 17  **Doing Prison Masculinities: Negotiating Violence**  


April 19  **Doing Gender: Prison Femininity in Domesticity and Punishment**  

**Supplemental Resources**  
“Cellblock Visions: Prison Art.” Web site compiled by Phyllis Kornfeld (on Blackboard)  
Art Gallery and Interviews on Women and Prison: A Site for Resistance website (on Blackboard)

April 22  **Doing Gender: Prison Femininity, Sexuality and Coercion**  


April 24  **Doing Time: Becoming a Prison Guard**  

*Supplemental Resources*
Browse: Maricopa County Sheriff Website [Under General menu, view mugshots, gallery, etc.] (on Blackboard)

April 26  **Compromise, Co-optation and Conflict: Keepers and the Kept**  
Britton, *At Work in the Iron Cage*, Chaps. 4-7

*Supplemental Resources*
National Public Radio.  2001.  All Things Considered Prison Diaries -- “Serving 9 to 5: Correctional Officers’ Diary”  (on Blackboard)

April 29  **No class meeting today**

May 1  **IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

Part IV  **THE HOUSE OF THE LIVING DEAD**

May 3  **A Very Dangerous Place to Be . . . Mental Anguish, Insanity and the Supermax**  

May 6  **Abandon All Hope: The Insanity of Total Control**  
Rhodes, *Total Confinement*, Chaps. 5 & 6

*Supplemental Materials*

May 8  **A Part of the Penalty: Sexual Abuse in Prisons**  

*View*
Video Clips and/or Read several Prisoners’ Statements, Case Histories and Voices:  “No Escape: Male Rape in U.S. Prisons.”  2001.  Human Rights Watch (on Blackboard)

May 10  **The House of the Dead: Old-Age in Prison**  


*Supplemental Materials*

Old Behind Bars: The Aging Prison Population in the United States," Executive Summary (on Blackboard)
Part V  COLLATERAL PROFITS & COSTS:  Economic & Political Beneficiaries of Mass Incarceration

May 13  Punishing Prisoner's Families


View: Prison Visiting Room Portraits, An Interview with Alyse Emdur

May 15  Prisoners of Love:  Intimacy & Trouble
Comfort, Doing Time Together, Chaps. 4-6


May 17  Profiting as We Build . . . More Prisons as Economic Recovery?
Readings TBA  (on Blackboard)


Supplemental Materials:

Prison Profits, PBS  24 min.  (on Blackboard)

CNBC. "Billions Behind Bars - Inside America's Prison Industry Parts 1, 2, and 3" (on Blackboard)

May 20  Going Home:  Does Prison Rehabilitate?

Supplemental Materials:
Stevenson, Bryan. "We need to talk about an injustice," TED Talks. Posted March 2012 (on Blackboard)

May 22  Ready for Life on the Outside?
Petersilia, When Prisoners Come Home, Chaps. 4 - 7

May 24  “I've Served My Time:” Making It on the Outside
Petersilia, When Prisoners Come Home, Chaps. 8 - 10


Supplemental Materials:

May 27  MEMORIAL DAY - NO CLASS MEETING

May 29  Course Overview

TAKE-HOME FINAL PROJECT DUE:  Sunday, June 2 at 9:00 pm

Submit in hard copy to either my departmental mailbox in 111 Silsby or the box outside my office 107 Silsby