



**NYU**

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**PADM-GP.4401**

**Race, Crime and Incarceration Policy in the United States  
Fall 2018 (Half-Term)**

**Meeting Time:** Thursday, 6:45 PM - 8:25 PM

**Location:** 60 Fifth Avenue, Rm. C14 (Washington Square)

**Instructor:** Morgan C. Williams, Jr., Assistant Professor and Faculty Fellow

**Office:** The Puck Building, Room 3087

**Office Hours:** Thursdays (4:30 PM - 6:30 PM) by appointment only and requests can be made at the following link <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/jyosw>.

**Email:** mcw394@nyu.edu

**Course Description:**

Recent momentum behind criminal justice reform permitted new discussions concerning incarceration policy and punishment in the United States. This course examines the role of crime, incarceration policy, and institutions in driving contemporary discussions on criminal justice reform through the prism of race. The course will provide students with an opportunity to critically examine how behaviors such as racial stereotypes and stigma influence a variety of issues at the center of criminal justice reform—including racial disparities in crime, law enforcement strategy, sentencing outcomes, and prisoner reentry into the labor market. Students will ultimately learn that even as a pure social construct, race plays a vital role in shaping both social policy and outcomes related to criminal justice reform.

**Course Objectives:**

The goal of this course is to provide students with considerable insight into the salient social behaviors driving racial inequality and their influence on various aspects of criminal justice reform. We begin by examining how “rational” behaviors such as stereotypes and stigma can have a profound influence on racial inequality. We then explore some of the prominent theories across the

social sciences on the racial differences in criminal behavior. Equipped with a sound theoretical understanding of race and crime, we will then explore several important topics within the criminal justice reform debate including: racial disparities in gun violence, the importance of race to policing, racial differences in drug enforcement policies, disparities in criminal justice sentence outcomes, and inequalities in labor market outcomes with respect to prisoner reentry.

Through this course students will be able to:

1. Critically assess the roles of stereotypes, stigma, and “racially-oriented” social policy in driving racial inequality
2. Theoretically examine the impact of race on a variety of criminal justice topics including crime, policing, incarceration, and prisoner reentry
3. Evaluate the current empirical evidence on how some of the most salient criminal justice reform policies are influencing racial inequality

### **Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. Each student is required to sign and abide by Wagner’s Academic Code. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated since you have all signed an Academic Oath and are bound by the academic code of the school. Every student is expected to maintain academic integrity and is expected to report violations to me. If you are unsure about what is expected of you should ask.

### **Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU:**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website at [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or e-mail CSD at (212)-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

### NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays:

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

### Grading Policy and Assignments:

- Class Attendance and Participation 10%
- Discussion Board 10%
- Essay One 30%
- Essay Two 50%

**Discussion Board:** Each week you will be required to submit a brief assessment (i.e., no more than 200 words) of the required readings and overall lecture topic using the online discussion board—specifically addressing the key concepts and arguments presented by the authors. Weekly assessments must be submitted no later than **10 PM EST on Wednesday evening** before the lecture. Late submissions will not be accepted and the participation grade will be subject to the overall quality of the assessment.

**Essay One:** Students will complete a short essay (i.e., four to five pages) based on concepts and themes discussed in the first three lectures of the course. A prompt providing all of the relevant information on formatting and other instructions will be provided at the end of the lecture on **November 8, 2018**. All students must submit their essay no later than the beginning of the course lecture on **November 15, 2018**.

**Essay Two:** Students will complete a two-part short essay (i.e., six pages total) based on concepts and themes discussed throughout the course. A prompt providing all of the relevant information on formatting and other instructions will be provided at the end of the lecture on **December 13,**

**2018.** All students must submit their essay no later than **5 PM EST on December 20, 2018.**

**Grading Scale and Rubric:**

Students will receive grades according to the following scale:

There is no A+

A = 4.0 points

A- = 3.7 points

B+ = 3.3 points

B = 3.0 points

B- = 2.7 points

C+ = 2.3 points

C = 2.0 points

C- = 1.7 points

There are no D+/D/D-

F(fail) = 0.0 points

*Student grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:*

(A) Excellent: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.

(A-) Very good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.

(B+) Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, methodologically sound. This is the graduate student grade that indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of the course.

(B) Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student even though some weaknesses are evident. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but shows some indication that understand-

ing of some important issues is less than complete. Methodological or analytical approaches used are adequate but student has not been thorough or has shown other weaknesses or limitations.

(B-) Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student; meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate. Overall performance, if consistent in graduate courses, would not suffice to sustain graduate status in “good standing.”

(C/-/+ ) Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.

(F) Fail: Work fails to meet even minimal expectations for course credit for a graduate student. Performance has been consistently weak in methodology and understanding, with serious limits in many areas. Weaknesses or limits are pervasive.

**NYU Classes:**

All announcements, resources, and assignments will be delivered through the NYU Classes website—including the submission of online discussion board assignments. Any assignment modifications, due dates, and other course-related matters will be posted as soon as possible through this website.

## **Semester Overview:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
10-25-18	Introduction	
11-1-18	Race and Crime: What do We Know?	Discussion Assessment (10-31-18)
11-8-18	Racial Disparities in Gun Violence	Discussion Assessment (11-7-18)
11-15-18	Race and Policing in America: Reconciling the Evidence	Discussion Assessment (11-14-18) Essay One Due (11-15-18)
11-29-18	The “War on Drugs” Then and Now	Discussion Assessment (11-28-18)
12-6-18	Race, Incarceration, and Sentencing Outcomes	Discussion Assessment (12-5-18)
12-13-18	From Prison to Free Society: Race and Labor Markets	Discussion Assessment (12-12-18)
12-20-18	Final Essay	Submit by 5 PM EST (12-20-18)

## **Week One: Introduction**

### *Required Reading:*

Glenn C. Loury (2009). “The Anatomy of Racial Inequality”. In: Harvard University Press.  
Chap. 1-3

### *Supplemental Reading:*

Steven D. Levitt (2004). “Understanding Why Crime Fell in the 1990s: Four Factors that Explain the Decline and Six that Do Not”. In: *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18.1, pp. 163–190

Glenn C. Loury (2008). *Race, Incarceration, and American Values*. The MIT Press

Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015). *The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration*. URL: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

## **Week Two: Race and Crime: What do We Know?**

### *Required Reading:*

Robert J. Sampson and William Julius Wilson (1995). “Towards a Theory of Race, Crime, and Ur-

ban Inequality”. In: ed. by John Hagan and Ruth D. Peterson. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Chap. 2, pp. 37–56

Brendan O’Flaherty and Rajiv Sethi (2010c). “The Racial Geography of Street Vice”. In: *Journal of Urban Economics* 67.3, pp. 270–286

*Supplemental Reading:*

George Akerlof and Janet L. Yellen (1994). “Gang Behavior, Law Enforcement, and Community Values”. In: *Canadian Institute for Advanced Research*

W.E.B. Du Bois (1996 (1899)). *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*. University of Pennsylvania Press

Mary E. Pattillo (1998). “Sweet Mothers and Gangbangers: Managing Crime in a Black Middle-Class Neighborhood”. In: *Social Forces* 76.3, pp. 747–774

Elijah Anderson (2000). *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. WW Norton and Company

Brendan O’Flaherty and Rajiv Sethi (2008). “Racial Stereotypes and Robbery”. In: *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 68.3, pp. 511–524

Khalil G. Muhammad (2010). *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Harvard University Press

Brendan O’Flaherty (2015). *The Economics of Race in the United States*. Harvard University Press

### **Week Three: Racial Disparities in Gun Violence**

*Required Reading:*

Philip J. Cook et al. (2007). “Underground Gun Markets”. In: *The Economic Journal* 117, F588–F618

Brendan O’Flaherty and Rajiv Sethi (2010a). “Homicide in Black and White”. In: *Journal of Urban Economics* 68.3, pp. 215–230

*Supplemental Reading:*

Jens Ludwig and Philip J. Cook (2000). “Homicide and Suicide Rates Associated with Implementation of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act”. In: *Journal of the American Medical Association* 284.5, pp. 239–254

Brendan O’Flaherty and Rajiv Sethi (2010b). “The Economics of Crime: Lessons for and from Latin America”. In: ed. by Rafael Di Tella, Sebastian Edwards, and Ernesto Schargrotsky. University of Chicago Press. Chap. Peaceable Kingdoms and War Zones: Preemption, Ballistics, and Murder in Newark

Alexia Cooper and Erica L. Smith (2011). *Homicide Trends in the United States, 1980-2008*. Tech. rep. NCJ 236018. Bureau of Justice Statistics

Philip J. Cook, Susan T. Parker, and Harold A. Pollack (2015). “Sources of Guns to Dangerous People: What We Learn by Asking Them”. In: *Preventive Medicine* 79, pp. 28–36

Morgan C. Williams Jr. (2018). “Gun Violence in Black and White: Evidence from Policy Reform in Missouri”. Working Paper

**Week Four: Race and Policing in America: Reconciling the Evidence**

*Required Reading:*

Jeffrey Grogger and Greg Ridgeway (2006). “Testing for Racial Profiling in Traffic Stops Behind a Veil of Darkness”. In: *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 101.475, pp. 878–887

Andrew Gelman, Jeffrey Fagan, and Alex Kiss (Sept. 2007). “An Analysis of the New York City Police Department’s “Stop-and-Frisk” Policy in the Context of Claims in Racial Bias”. In: *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 102.479, pp. 813–823



Roland G. Fryer (2016). “An Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force”. In: *NBER Working Paper Series, Working Paper 22399*

*Supplemental Reading:*

Jeffrey Fagan and Garth Davies (2000). “Street Stops and Broken Windows: Terry, Race, and Disorder in New York City”. In: *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 28.2, pp. 457–504

John J. Donohue III and Steven D. Levitt (2001). “The Impact of Race on Policing and Arrests”. In: *Journal of Law and Economics* 44.2, pp. 367–394

Bernard E. Harcourt and Jens Ludwig (2006). “Broken Windows: New Evidence from New York City and a Five-City Social Experiment”. In: *The University of Chicago Law Review* 73.1, pp. 271–320

Nicola Persico (2009). “Racial Profiling? Detecting Bias Using Statistical Evidence”. In: *Annual Review of Economics* 1.1, pp. 229–254

Aaron Chalfin and Justin McCrary (2013). “The Effect of Police on Crime: New Evidence from U.S. Cities, 1960-2010”. In: *NBER Working Paper Series, Working Paper 18815*

Jill Leovy (2015). *Ghettoside: A True story of Murder in America*. New York: Spiegel and Grau

Jeremy West (2018). “Racial Bias in Police Investigations”. Working Paper

**Week Five: The “War on Drugs” Then and Now**

*Required Reading:*

Kerwin K. Charles and Ming C. Luoh (2010). “Male Incarceration, the Marriage Market, and Female Outcomes”. In: *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 92.3, pp. 614–627

Dave Davies (2012). *Legal Scholar: Jim Crow Still Exists in America*. URL: <https://www.npr.org/2012/01/16/145175694/legal-scholar-jim-crow-still-exists-in-america>

Brian Lehrer (2015). *Mass Incarceration's Black Support*. URL: <https://www.wnyc.org/story/mass-incarcerations-black-support/>

John F. Pfaff (2015). "The War on Drugs and Prison Growth: Limited Importance, Limited Legislative Options". In: *Harvard Journal on Legislation* 52, pp. 173–220

*Supplemental Reading:*

Gary S. Becker, Kevin M. Murphy, and Micahel Grossman (2006). "The Market for Illegal Goods: The Case of Drugs". In: *Journal of Political Economy* 114.1, pp. 38–60

John J. Donohue III, Benjamin Ewing, and David Peloquin (2010). "Controlling Crime: Strategies and Tradeoffs". In: ed. by Philip J. Cook, Jens Ludwig, and Justin McCrary. University of Chicago Press. Chap. Rethinking America's Illegal Drug Policy

Michelle Alexander (2012). *The New Jim Crow*. The New Press

Anne Case and Angus Deaton (2015). "Rising Morbidity and Mortality in Midlife Among White Non-Hispanic Americans in the 21st Century". In: *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112.49, pp. 15078–15083

Michael J. Fortner (2015). *Black Silent Majority: The Rockefeller Drug Laws and the Politics of Punishment*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

John F. Pfaff (2017). *Locked In: The True Causes of Mass Incarceration—And How to Achieve Real Reform*. Basic Books

**Week Six: Race, Incarceration, and Sentencing Outcomes**

*Required Reading:*

M. Marit Rehavi and Sonja B. Starr (2014). "Racial Disparity in Federal Criminal Sentences". In: *Journal of Political Economy* 122.6, pp. 1320–1354

David Arnold, Will Dobbie, and Crystal Yang (2017). "Racial Bias in Bail Decisions". In: *The*

*Quarterly Journal of Economics*

Jon Kleinberg et al. (2017). “Human Decisions and Machine Predictions”. In: *NBER Working Paper Series, Work Paper 23180*

*Supplemental Reading:*

Becky Pettit and Bruce Western (2004). “Mass Imprisonment and the Life Course: Race and Class Inequality in U.S. Incarceration”. In: *American Sociological Review* 69.2, pp. 151–169

Bruce Western (2006). *Punishment and Inequality in America*. Russell Sage Foundation

John F. Pfaff (2008). “The Empirics of Prison Growth: A Critical Review and Path Forward”. In: *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 98.2, pp. 547–619

Anna Aizer and Joseph J. Doyle Jr. (2015). “Juvenile Incarceration, Human Capital, and Future Crime: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Judges”. In: *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 130.2, pp. 795–803

Brendan O’Flaherty (2015). *The Economics of Race in the United States*. Harvard University Press

### **Week Seven: From Prison to Free Society: Race and Labor Markets**

*Required Reading:*

Devah Pager (2003). “The Mark of a Criminal Record”. In: *American Journal of Sociology* 108.5, pp. 937–975

Amanda Agan and Sonja Starr (2017). “Ban The Box, Criminal Records, and Racial Discrimination: A Field Experiment”. In: *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 133.1, pp. 191–235

*Supplemental Reading:*

Jeremy Travis and Michelle Waul, eds. (2003). *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities*. The Urban Institute Press

Jeremy Travis (2005). *But They All Come Back: Facing the Challenges of Prisoner Reentry*. The Urban Institute Press

Harry J. Holzer, Steven Raphael, and Michael A. Stoll (2006). “Perceived Criminality, Criminal Background Checks, and the Racial Hiring Practices of Employers”. In: *Journal of Law and Economics* 49.2, pp. 451–480

Devah Pager, Bruce Western, and Bart Bonikowski (2009). “Discrimination in a Low-Wage Labor Market: A Field Experiment”. In: *American Sociological Review* 74.5, pp. 777–799

Jennifer L. Doleac and Benjamin Hansen (2017). “The Unintended Consequences of “Ban the Box:” Statistical Discrimination and Employment Outcomes when Criminal Histories are Hidden”. Working Paper