

Crime and Justice Comprehensive Exam—January 2018
University of Florida, January 18-20 (10 am-4 pm each day over three days)
Exam Committee: Jodi Lane (Chair) and Abby Fagan

Directions: **You will answer 3 questions total.** You have a maximum limit of 10 double-spaced pages per answer (not including references). Please remember to double space your answers, add page numbers, and put the question number (or question itself) before each of your answers. You should also put your name on each page. Also, please add a references list. You should 1) upload your answers to Canvas and 2) email your answers to the committee **no later 4 pm on the day you receive the question** (jlane@ufl.edu, afagan@ufl.edu).

Day 1 (January 18) (Choose one question to answer)

- 1) Criminal justice scholars have had a longstanding interest in examining gender and racial/ethnic disparities in the processing of criminal offenders. In this essay, provide a critical review of research that has assessed the potential for bias in the processing of offenders based on EITHER gender OR race/ethnicity. In your review of the literature, describe the degree to which studies have demonstrated that bias exists in each stage of the criminal justice system (e.g., arrest, conviction, and sentencing). Then, provide an overall evaluation of the quality of this research and whether or not additional research is needed to more conclusively demonstrate whether or not bias exists.
- 2) Some have argued that the War on Drugs in the U.S. has been unsuccessful, as it has fueled mass incarceration, contributed to racial disparities in the processing of offenders, and failed to reduce drug use/dependency. Evaluate these claims by reviewing evidence of the effects of the war on drugs over the past two decades. Based on your findings, describe whether or not you think the war on drugs should be discontinued, abandoned, or altered, and provide recommendations for future drug-related criminal justice policies or practices.

Day 2 (January 19) (Choose one question to answer)

- 1) Despite media publicity of the high rates of violence in Chicago, newly released official data indicate that homicide rates fell 16 percent in 2017. The Chicago Chief of Police attributes this reduction in part to the hiring and deployment of more police officers. Drawing on criminological theory, explain why increasing the number of law enforcement officers could decrease crime, but also have unanticipated negative effects on crime rates and/or the community. Then, review empirical literature that has examined the relationship between the number of police officers and crime rates. To what degree has a relationship been shown to exist?
- 2) The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) report just turned 50 years old. The commission argued then that (1967: 12) "The most striking fact about the correctional apparatus today is that, although the rehabilitation of criminals is presumably its major purpose, the custody of criminals is actually its major task." Reflect on fifty years of correctional research and policy. Specifically, using empirical evidence, trends in correctional policy and discuss what works, what does not

work, and what policymakers should fund in the next few years if they want to improve corrections to reduce crime

Day 3 (January 20) (Choose one question to answer)

- 1) The “risk-needs-responsivity” model has been advocated to rehabilitate offenders and reduce recidivism. Describe this approach, including the theory(ies) and research upon which it is based and how criminal justice officials should use this approach when processing offenders. Then, based on a critical review of the research, describe the degree to which use of the risk-needs-responsivity model has been shown to reduce recidivism and/or rehabilitate offenders.
- 2) Theoretically the juvenile justice and adult justice systems are different. However, Barry Feld has argued that efforts to give due process to juvenile offenders have over time “criminalized” the juvenile court yet given juveniles only watered down protections. 1) Describe how the juvenile and criminal systems currently are philosophically and procedurally similar and different, and then 2) based on the literature, make recommendations for how we should proceed to ensure that juvenile offenders are given procedural justice while also ensuring that the public is protected.