

Crime and Justice Comprehensive Exam—January 16-18, 2020

University of Florida, (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 16) (Choose one question to answer)

- 1) Since its inception, the U.S. criminal justice system has experienced shifts in the degree to which it emphasizes rehabilitation and retribution. Begin this essay by defining these two philosophies and describing how they guide criminal justice practices and policies. Then, choose a period of time in which the criminal justice system experienced a shift in emphasis from one philosophy to the other. Describe: 1) when this shift occurred; 2) the significant political, social, and or/cultural events that have been posited as influencing this shift; and 3) the major changes in policies and practices that occurred during the shift.
- 2) Compare and contrast “restorative” and “punitive” efforts to rehabilitate offenders. What are the characteristics of each approach and how do they reflect the philosophical orientation and goals of the criminal justice system? Drawing on the general body of evaluation literature, as well as evaluations of distinct programs that exemplify each type of rehabilitation approach, describe the degree to which each strategy is effective in reducing recidivism. Conclude by indicating which approach is more effective and explaining why one approach is better able to reduce recidivism than the other.

Day 2 (January 17) (Choose one question to answer)

- 1) There is often a public perception that increasing the numbers of police in communities will lower rates of crime. Following highly publicized school shootings, many communities are now seeking to increase the number of police officers in schools. In this essay, review empirical literature that has examined the relationship between the number of police officers and crime, differentiating community-based and school-based research. To what degree has each body of research demonstrated a relationship between police and rates of crime and/or delinquency? To what degree has research indicated that increasing police presence in communities and schools results in unanticipated, undesirable outcomes? In conclusion, provide a recommendation for or against increasing the number of police in each setting, defending your answer by relying on the research evidence.
- 2) Assume you have been asked to contribute an overview paper on courts to a special journal issue or to an edited volume of chapters for a criminological audience that may include some readers who are not specialized in the topic you have chosen. The editor has asked you to

contribute a state-of-the-field essay on that topic. In your essay be sure to include the basic concepts and overview needed to inform the reader of the general knowledge on that part of the justice system, the principal hypotheses used, prevalence data, and review the state of the major research. Be sure to indicate what further research is most needed to advance knowledge regarding the topic .

Day 3 (January 18) (Choose one question to answer)

- 1) Recent discussions of an “opioid epidemic”, have once again put drug policy front and center in the public discourse about crime. Write a comprehensive essay in which you advise the governor of Florida about evidence-based approaches to dealing with drug use, overdoses, and illicit drug markets.
- 2) Summarize the research evidence for the nature and causes of disparity in our criminal justice system, choosing to focus on either race/ethnicity or income. Describe what policies and interventions have been implemented to address disparities, and analyze whether they are effective in creating a fairer and more just system. You may home in on a specific part of the criminal justice system or discuss disparities in the system as a whole.