Crime and Justice Comprehensive Exam—September 5-7, 2019
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 (September 5) (Choose one question to answer)

1. Criminologists often lament the disconnect that exists between criminological research and the criminal justice policies. Pick **one** current example that you feel best demonstrates this disconnect and **one** current example that demonstrates good alignment. For each example, describe: (1) what the topic is; (2) what research has revealed about the topic; (3) what the current policies are and how, specifically, they are or are not well aligned with research; and (4) how the policies should be revised and/or improved to better reflect the current evidence.

2. The recent mass shootings in Ohio and Texas have once again drawn public attention to the issue of gun violence and generated debates about the main cause(s) of gun violence. The possible explanations for gun violence have included: immigration, mental health problems, gangs, urban blight/disorganization, and the availability of weapons. Choose **three** of these factors and describe the research evidence linking each to gun violence. Considering the factor with the strongest level of evidence, identify **two** feasible policies that could be enacted to reduce or prevent gun violence.

Day 2 (September 6) (Choose one question to answer)

1. Research indicates that sex is one of the strongest socio-demographic correlates of crime and that the sexes are treated differently in the justice systems. Review this body of research by: (1) briefly describing sex differences in the prevalence, frequency, and/or nature of offending, and (2) describing in more detail the research indicating sex differences in the processing of offenders. Conclude by describing what is meant by "gender responsive programming" and whether or not it is warranted given the evidence reviewed.

2. Recently, the Washington Post compiled a list of almost 150 studies, which taken together led them to believe there was "overwhelming evidence that the criminal justice system is racist" Given your understanding of the statistics and criminological research as a whole, is the Post right? Specifically, using recent statistics and literature to support your points, 1) indicate whether or not you think the system is racist and why and 2) anticipate the argument against your conclusion, and using literature, refute those counterpoints.)

Day 3 (September 7) (Choose one question to answer)

1. In December 2018, President Trump signed The First Step Act into law, which was designed to "create safer communities and a fairer Federal justice system." Among its goals was to promote prisoner reentry by allowing good time credits for participation in vocational, educational or faith-based programming and to reform mandatory minimum sentences, including eliminating three-strikes mandatory life provisions and allowing some offenders to petition courts for review of their sentences. Drawing on the research and literatures on rehabilitation and reentry, identify and describe what you consider to be the top two evidence-based programs or policies you would recommend they implement for prisoners to ensure successful reentry. Explain why you believe these programs should be our top choices.

2. Criminal and juvenile justice policies aimed at reducing crime include police, prosecution, courts and corrections efforts, but also community-based treatment, prevention, and education policies and programs. Considering all of these options, select two examples of programs or policies designed to reduce crime and, based on the literature and research about them, 1) analyze the theoretical and empirical background or assumptions on which the program or programs are based, 2) evaluate the program's(') outcomes or effectiveness, and 3) make an argument to the governor supporting or discouraging widespread implementation of the program(s).