

**Crime and Justice Comprehensive Exam—September 2-4, 2021**  
**Exam Committee: Jodi Lane (Chair) and Bonnie Ernst**

**Directions: Choose 2 of the following 4 questions, 1 from Part “1” and 1 from Part “2”.**

Then, write a response for each question that is a maximum of 12 double-spaced pages (with 12-point font) per answer, not including references. Please remember to add page numbers, put the question number before your answer, and have a references list formatted using APA citation style at the end of your response. You should 1) upload your answers to Canvas and 2) email your answers to the committee by Saturday at 11:59pm ([jlane@ufl.edu](mailto:jlane@ufl.edu); [b.ernst@ufl.edu](mailto:b.ernst@ufl.edu)).

**PART 1: Choose ONE**

1. Many states have recently decriminalized drugs that were prohibited during the war on drugs in the late twentieth century. To what extent does this trend represent a significant shift in criminal justice?
  - a. Critically evaluate the trend to decriminalize the sale, possession, and consumption of drugs in the context of efforts to reduce incarceration rates.
  - b. Based on your understanding of the empirical and theoretical literature, to what extent does this trend represent a shift in policing, prosecuting, and punishment in the United States?
2. In the last fifty years, the American prison population has grown in unprecedented ways. Scholars have debated the cause for mass incarceration and an emerging field of scholarship has focused on prosecutorial power.
  - a. Identify and evaluate three of the main narratives that scholars have developed to explain the causes of mass incarceration.
  - b. Relying on relevant current and classic scholarship, explain the role of the prosecutor in increasing incarceration rates in the United States.
  - c. Finally, critically analyze how the prosecutor might play a key role in reforming practices that have contributed to mass imprisonment.

**PART 2: Choose ONE**

1. Recent instances of racial bias in policing have renewed debates about appropriate standards and practices for law enforcement. In this essay, imagine you are a police expert and a major urban police department has requested help decreasing racial bias and improving police and community relations.
  - a. Identify and explain one major problem from a police department’s perspective and one major problem from the community’s perspective regarding racial bias in policing.
  - b. Using theoretical and empirical scholarship, propose two remedies to the problems you identified.

- c. How might your proposals help stem racial bias in one other criminal justice agency or institution?
- 2. Criminal justice scholars often frame policing and punishment practices as a form of social control. To what extent should we also think of practices in courtrooms as a form a social control?
  - a. Identify and explain two major ways in which courts uphold social control or surveillance of people facing criminal charges.
  - b. In your view, and grounded in the relevant scholarship, what are the advantages and disadvantages of thinking about the courts through the analytic lens of surveillance or social control?