

LA321-15 Crime & Justice

26/27

Department

School of Law

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Jacqueline Hodgson

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Is our criminal justice system fair, delivering justice on behalf of society, or is it in crisis? The recent Post Office scandal, the disproportionate stop and search of minoritised groups, the dismantling of criminal defence funding and court delays of more than 2 years are symptomatic of deep-seated problems in our criminal process. What does this tell us about the politics of criminal justice and the values it seeks to promote? Is this about funding, wider legal and occupational cultures, or a combination of politically driven policies? How should we approach legal change? What can we learn from other legal systems? Do we have a coherent model around our process or fair trial, around which legal reform can be built? Is there a time when the criminal process was not in crisis? This module will take a critical, socio-legal and research-led approach to exploring current issues in criminal justice, locating discussion within the context of criminal justice policy and the values that have shaped it over the last half century.

Module aims

To analyse critically the criminal justice process and a selection of current criminal justice issues. To allow students to gain confidence in using a wide range of social science, policy and practitioner material, enabling them to strengthen research, debate and policy awareness skills that go beyond law to broader social science literature. In addition to studying criminal law in their first year, this provides an opportunity to study the criminal process in depth through a series of

current issues and case studies.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Indicative outline of lecture content

1. Introduction to context, topics & approach; legal actors; procedural models
2. Justice online. Fair trial, efficiency and administrativisation
3. Dismantling the defence - from police station to trial
4. Disproportionate policing; police-community engagement; creative approaches
5. Abolitionism, defunding the police - issues in the US and UK following Black Lives Matter movement
6. Miscarriages of justice - causes, Malkinson, Post Office, CCRC role, compensation, innocence
7. Attrition rates in rape complaints; treatment of victims; trials
8. The disappearance of the criminal trial and legal actors' role in it
9. Crime, Justice, Policy & Reform: From crisis to Royal Commission and Inquiry - what changes?

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand different models of justice eg due process/crime control; adversarial/inquisitorial
- Develop their independent research and writing skills to provide an evidence-based critical analysis of current criminal justice issues
- Evaluate legal and social science research studies, and a range of policy and practice materials and use these appropriately to support debate and critical analysis
- Situate current crime and justice issues within wider debates around eg managerialism and efficiency, and assess the impact of this on wider fair trial rights and accounts of justice

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Research element

Students will be expected to conduct their own research into relevant materials and generate a bibliography

Interdisciplinary

The module will draw on and expect students to be confident handling a wide range of legal, socio-legal, empirical, comparative and policy material

International

There is a modest comparative element to the module

Subject specific skills

- Understanding and analysis of legal procedural and theoretical models
- Critical understanding of contemporary issues and debate within criminal justice
- Ability to locate debate on key criminal justice issues within context of different policy discourses and agendas for reform

Transferable skills

- information literacy: Searching, selecting, understanding and using independent research of legal, empirical and social science materials to support argument and analysis
 - critical thinking: identifying, interpreting, synthesising, contextualising and analysing a wide range of literature and information sources to explore evidence-based argument from different viewpoints
 - digital literacy: IT skills in researching materials
 - teamwork: managing tasks and overcoming obstacles in a team to collaborate in problem solving
-

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 2 hours (10%)
Seminars	7 sessions of 1 hour (4%)
Private study	125 hours (71%)
Assessment	25 hours (14%)
Total	175 hours

Private study description

Students will conduct their own research and reading in preparation for seminars. Assessment will be closely tied to this and preparation for assessment is included in the private study time allocation.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
3,000 word essay	100%	25 hours	Yes (extension)
Students will be encouraged to choose a current challenge within criminal justice and write a critical analysis with recommendations for reform			

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback to individual student and generally to module cohort.

Preceded by optional formative assessment in the form of essay plan & bibliography

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of ULAA-M130 Undergraduate Law
- Year 3 of ULAA-M105 Undergraduate Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- ULAA-M131 Undergraduate Law (4 Year)
 - Year 2 of M131 Law (4 year)
 - Year 4 of M131 Law (4 year)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M106 Undergraduate Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M132 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M133 Undergraduate Law with French Law
- Year 2 of ULAA-M134 Undergraduate Law with German Law
- ULAA-M136 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
 - Year 2 of M136 Law with Humanities (3 year)
 - Year 3 of M136 Law with Humanities (3 year)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law

- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of ULAA-M131 Undergraduate Law (4 Year)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M132 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- ULAA-M135 Undergraduate Law and Sociology
 - Year 3 of M135 Law and Sociology
 - Year 4 of M135 Law and Sociology
- Year 4 of ULAA-M133 Undergraduate Law with French Law
- Year 4 of ULAA-M134 Undergraduate Law with German Law

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 4 of ULAA-ML34 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 3 of ULAA-M130 Undergraduate Law