Prof. K. Russell-Brown Fall 2020

Phone (352) 273-0912 Tu/Th 10:35am– 12:00pm

OH: Mondays 11-1, or by appt. (zoom/phone) Bruton-Geer 224

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**RACE, CRIME, AND LAW**

Section 156E

[3 credits]

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the interplay of race, crime, and the law in the U.S. The course has two interrelated and underlying themes. First, the role of history as context for understanding contemporary laws that govern the criminal justice system. Second, how existing laws, their applications within the justice system, might be restructured and re-imagined to further racial justice. Course readings and class discussions will examine a variety of topics including legally sanctioned segregation (e.g., slave codes and Jim Crow), racial profiling, jury nullification, hate crime, prosecution, and incarceration. Though the assigned readings primarily focus on the Black/White dynamic, we will also read and discuss material on other racial groups, including American Indians, Latinx, and Asian Americans. The course readings combine legal, historical, political, empirical, and sociological materials.

**REQUIRED MATERIAL**

* K. Russell-Brown (2009) *The Color of Crime*, 2d ed. (NYU Press)
* Reading Packet (prepared by Target Copy) (UF Law bookstore)
* CANVAS/TWEN postings

Please note that additional reading may be assigned.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class Participation 10 percent

Student Presentations 15 percent

Reading & Writing Assignments 20 percent

Take-home Final 55 percent

**ATTENDANCE, CLASS PARTICIPATION & ASSIGNMENTS**

It is expected that students will attend class regularly, read assigned materials prior to the class discussion, and participate in class discussions.

*Writing and Reading Assignments*. During the semester, students will complete three short Writing Exercises (1-2 pages each). All assignments should be e-mailed to the professor on or before the assigned due date. Students will also select a book on race, crime and law (a book list will be provided). After reading the book, students will post summaries and reflections on the course website.

*Student Presentations* These will take place during the last two weeks of class. Students will present their “elevator pitches” on race and crime. You will have 7-10 minutes to identify, discuss and advocate on an issue of significance regarding race and crime. Your presentation should include some type of art (broadly defined), graphic, or other material.

**FINAL EXAMINATION**

The final examination will be a Take-home Exam. It will be available on Friday, December 4, 2020 at 9:00AM. Exams must be submitted no later than Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 12:00 Noon.

**COURSE WORKLOAD**

Students should expect to spend, on average, approximately two hours preparing for every hour of class.

**GRADING SCALE**

Grading for this course will adhere to the Levin College of Law’s mean and mandatory distributions, detailed in the below chart. For further information, visit <http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/academic-policies#9>.

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| **Letter Grade** | **Point Equivalent** |
| A (Excellent) | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.33 |
| B | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.67 |
| C+ | 2.33 |
| C (Satisfactory) | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.67 |
| D+ | 1.33 |
| D (Poor) | 1.0 |
| D- | 0.67 |
| F (Failure) | 0.0 |

**ACCOMODATIONS & OTHER POLICIES**

* Requests for classroom accommodations must be made with the Office of Disability Resources. The UF Office of Disability will provide documentation to the student who must then provide documentation to the Law School’s Office of Student Affairs.
* Students are expected to complete online course evaluations. Evaluations are done during the last few weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific times when they are to complete the evaluations at <https://evaluatons.ufl.edu>
* For information on UF Law grading policies visit: <http://www.law.ufl.edu/students/policies.shtml#9>
* Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Please review the UF Student Honor Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/stuetns.php>
* Please plan to arrive on time and remain in class for the entire time period. If you know in advance that you will need to leave before the end time, or arrive after the start time, please notify the professor.

**COVID-19**

This course will be taught in person and online. The following policies and requirements are in place to maintain the learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions:

* Students are required to wear approved face coverings *at all times during class* and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to wear an approved face covering will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. You also will no longer be permitted on the UF Law campus. Finally, Dean Inman will also report your noncompliance to the relevant state board of bar examiners.
* This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
* Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
* Follow your TA’s guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom.  Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
* If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please do not come to campus or, if you are already on campus, please immediately leave campus. Please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions about when you are able to return too campus. <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/>.
* Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss historical approaches to race and law
2. Refer to race-related statistics involving the justice system (e.g., arrests, incarceration)
3. Identify and detail seminal U.S. Supreme Court cases involving racial issues
4. Analyze how the case law and legislation (and the absence of laws) have shaped race, race relations, and the workings of the justice system
5. Provide overview of relevant terms and concepts, e.g., racial profiling, racial discrimination, racial disparity, racial literacy, implicit bias, and racial hoaxes.
6. Understand issues related to capital punishment and race and police violence and race.
7. Identify solutions to race-related issues in the criminal justice system.

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