Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice Studies

CCJS News

Fall 2013

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

from one of SSU’s wild turkeys
From the Chair

It has been an honor and a challenge taking on the role of chair of the department August 1st, but I couldn’t be more excited about our future. In my six years at SSU, I have watched our department grow immensely. We have three times as many majors as we did when I arrived, hired a new professor and now we are moving ahead in hiring another for next year. We have seen the birth of the Pre-Law Society as well as the Criminal Justice Forum, under the advisorship of Professor Reyes. We lost Katie Musick to the dean’s office, but the wonderful Cara Stevens, who has been and will continue to be a huge asset to our department, replaced her. It really is amazing to see how much different the CCJS department is than it was when I walked in as a brand new professor in the Fall of 2008.

But that growth is just the beginning for us. This year we are taking four students to present their own work at an academic conference in Hawaii, I am teaching a summer class that includes an eight day trip to London, England and our internship opportunities continue to grow. Our interns continue to make us proud with their work in the field spreading the word in the community about what great students we have here. Fifteen students are taking part in a workshop with Piper Kerman, author of the book Orange is the New Black and 200 of our majors are attending her talk. I am so proud of our accomplishments, both by our current students and our graduates, who have spread out across the country, be it for work, graduate school or law school.

I heard from one of our recent graduates who just prosecuted her first trial for the Solano County District Attorney’s office and another who is beginning his final year at Harvard law school. Our grads are working in police and sheriff’s departments all over the state, as well as probation, parole and an amazing number of non-profit groups working on criminal justice issues. We’ve also had three alumni take part in the prestigious Capital Fellows Program in Sacramento. It really is such an exciting time to be the chair of such an amazing department with such special students. I hope we will continue to grow and thrive, but we can only do so with your input and help. I hope to be as accessible as possible to you for anything you need, so please feel free to swing by anytime to talk.

Eric J. Williams
Chair
Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies

Advising and Registration

Registration is now upon us. See your assigned advisor if you need advisement:

Assigned by First Letter of Last Name:
Professor Diana Grant: F - J
Professor Patrick Jackson: C - E & K - O
Professor Napoleon Reyes: P - T
Professor Eric Williams: A - B & U - Z

Peer Advisor. Don’t forget your peer advisor for GE related questions. Nicole Bravo can answer questions about General Education Requirements, the Academic Requirements Report (ARR), the Transfer Credit Report, course registration, and waitlists. The peer advisor cannot answer major specific questions or sign any paperwork. Phone: 707.664.2731. Her office is in Stevenson Hall 2070 Room L (in the Political Science Office) on Monday 11-1 & Thursday 12-1. For further information about her, including email and related information, go to the CCJS web pages at http://www.sonoma.edu/ccjs/academic_advising/seeing-an-advisor.html.

Advising for Masters in Social Work. Linh Huynh, a lecturer at SSU, is available to discuss your specific questions regarding social work careers and applying to MSW programs. Email her for an appointment: linh.huynh47@gmail.com.

Winter courses

Registration for Spring 2014 classes is just around the corner but winter intersession courses have not yet filled. The latter run from 12/17-1/10.

Two CCJS courses are offered then: CCJS 370 (taught by Professor Reyes) and CCJS 450 (taught by Professor Williams). Both are core requirements of the major.
Prelaw Society

The Sonoma State Pre-Law Society is a rich resource for students interested in applying to law school. We foster a community among law-oriented students and help those students to navigate the complex process of applying to their chosen law schools. Society members receive advising from both our pre-law advisor, Eric Williams, as well as from peers who have already completed the application process. Our meeting activities consist of LSAC website tutorials, personal statement workshops, letter-of-recommendation advice, and resume building.

We coordinate with LSAT prep-courses, and organize a discounted class specifically for our members.

The society also hosts admissions advisors from prominent local law schools, such as Hastings, Santa Clara, McGeorge, Empire, USF, and Golden Gate. This provides students with the opportunity to ask questions directly of law school representatives and get personalized answers relevant to specific schools. We also plan trips to various schools, for example this semester we will be touring and sitting in on classes at Hastings. The Pre-Law Society is a place where law-oriented students can gather all the information and skills needed to successfully apply to law school.

The Forum

The Criminal Justice Forum is looking forward to this upcoming semester! With many exciting guest speakers lined up, from DEA agents to CHP officers, this term is sure to be a hit! Our goal is to become informed about all the possibilities we have with Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies degrees, as well as producing a foundation that networks ourselves into possible applicants for our desired fields.

We will be doing many things as a club, such as taking trips to visit prisons, listening to many guest speakers, attending conferences, and more! Being a part of the Criminal Justice Forum will also help you tremendously; you will have opportunities to connect with people who are current in the field, it looks appealing on a resumé, you will be able to form study groups with students in the same class, and much more.

We also have dedicated office members to help our club be the best it can be. Our President, Courtney Adam, is very committed to this field of study and wants to expand the opportunity for all CCJS majors to connect with others in the same field of interest. For more information on joining the club you can contact her at adamco@seawolf.sonoma.edu or add us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/ssuCCJforum.

Come join our meetings held on Fridays at 12 pm in the Library on the second floor to get involved!
Our Fall into Winter Graduates With Distinction in 2013

In photo from left: Annie Marie Burrows, Brandon Mills, Ryan Eckert, Veronica Dunn, Diana Loeza-Montero, Martin “Ace” Vindiola, Ed Weamer, Alex Garbe, Qiana Brown, Brandon Hanson

Fall into Winter Graduates with Distinction

Every semester some students merit special distinction at graduation. This is a university-wide practice. In CCJS during Fall 2013 Department faculty have identified eleven students. Our Winter 2013 students who graduate with Distinction include (in alphabetical order).

Qiana Brown
Annie Marie Burrows
Veronica Dunn
Ryan Eckert
Alex Garbe
Brandon Hanson

Diana Loeza-Montero
Brandon Mills
Martin “Ace” Vindiola
Kimberly Warner
Ed Weamer

The CCJS Department congratulates these students.

WSC meetings in Spring 2014

The Western Society of Criminology (WSC) meetings will be attended by several CCJS students and faculty in February. This meeting will be held in Honolulu.

The following students are working with CCJS faculty on the presentations: Shelby Foster is working with Pat Jackson, Renee Olsen with Napoleon Reyes, Alexandria Pech with Barbara Bloom, and Deserae Sanchez with Eric Williams.

The CCJS Department supports these students in their scholarly efforts and wishes them well in their preparation over the coming months.
Piper Kerman on Monday

On Monday, Nov. 18th, Piper Kerman, author of *Orange is the New Black*, spoke to a sold-out SSU Associated Students event at the new Student Center at 7:00 p.m. in the Student Center ballroom. Earlier that day, the CCJS Department hosted a private discussion with Piper Kerman, moderated by Barbara Bloom, with selected students who have become very familiar with her work and the Netflix series bearing the book’s name. This event was highlighted in advance in an article on SSU’s home page at http://goo.gl/ZdqP4p.

The discussion with Piper Kerman that morning happened with majors in CCJS, Political Science, Liberal Studies and others sitting in a circle with Piper, asking her a wide range of questions. These went to specific questions about the quality of programming and services in prison, the coping mechanisms she and other women used in day-to-day life, what kinds of fears she had about prison, how her experiences differed from other inmates’, the effects of incarceration on the mother-child relationship, the differences between a documentary and entertainment, how she came to write the book, and, among others, how she would suggest continuing the discussion about the problems and varied solutions to prisons in general and women’s prisons in particular.

This was a wonderful moment for SSU students to enjoy a personal, interactive and engaging discussion with a book author about the neglected topic of the imprisonment and control of women in the federal system and the myriad issues that this reveals in the criminal justice system—such as the intersection of gender, race, class and crime, and the efficacy of the war on drugs and mass imprisonment as a means of responding to the perceived problems of crime in America.
Thanks to Napoleon Reyes for these photos.
Laws and Policies

Realignment

The latest research on realignment is by the Joan Petersilia group at Stanford, which received a grant from the National Institute of Justice to study the implementation of realignment in California. This research, indexed at the Stanford Criminal Justice Center (URL: http://stanford.io/1aJatl6) has resulted in several studies that look at realignment mainly from the perspective of the officials whose primary responsibility has been implementing the legislation at the local level, such as probation departments, prosecutors, sheriffs (jails), judges, defense attorneys, and others. They find that realignment is still very much in the middle of being implemented and that some parts may need changing, e.g., felons with very long sentences may not be appropriate in local jails. Probation and defense attorneys generally hold more optimistic views about realignment since it promises greater local treatment responses for offenders but prosecutors are more critical because the legislation removes the extent of their prior control over sentencing. These findings are not in the least surprising given the purposes of AB 109. Issues such as the implementation of victims’ rights are not directly addressed by realignment; rather, realignment merely reveals the broader problems underlying the implementation of Marsy’s law/victims’ rights. The study does not attempt to determine whether realignment has affected recidivism, although it clearly finds that return to prison rates for technical violations of parole have been dramatically reduced.

Marijuana Legalization

There are now two initiatives proposed to legalize marijuana in California similar to how alcohol is presently regulated. An October 2013 poll at http://bit.ly/1bLClHV shows that nearly two-thirds (65%) of likely California voters would support a proposal to regulate, legalize and tax pot for adults in the 2016 election. Only thirty-two percent would oppose it with only three percent undecided. One of the proposed initiatives would make it a crime to drive under the influence of marijuana. The estimated billion dollars a year in tax revenues would fund schools, public safety and other important services and audits would be required to ensure this happens.

The last proposal to legalize pot in California failed in 2010 by about a three percent margin. The current proposal appears to enjoy far greater support. The legalization of marijuana in other states may portend some big changes in California, which has long supported medicinal use of marijuana.

App Crime

Some may disagree with the importance of app crime as a trending issue, but most people today own smart phones or other electronic devices that use apps to accomplish a wide range of purposes: commerce, gaming, etc. Even casual downloading and use of apps reveals issues of misrepresentation of apps and greed. Some would argue that where there is no regulation and greed is king that the situation is ripe for abuse. California’s Attorney General has recently completed a twenty-two page booklet (see http://bit.ly/1bLDMGr), Privacy on the Go, which summarizes laws and rules regulating this area of commerce and discusses how app developers should respect privacy rights of users in light of abuses. See the latest article on the topic in Wired: http://www.wired.com/business/2013/01/app-crime/.
Recruitment of a New Faculty Member

Over the next few weeks the department hiring committee will be interviewing and selecting a new faculty member to join our department. Watch for announcements around the department.

The Department is searching for an new assistant professor in the area of criminology/delinquency.

The CCJS Department is one of three in the School of Social Sciences who are currently conducting a search for a new tenure track faculty member.

In the Office

Cara Stevens has the smiling face you see when you come into the department. Say hello to Cara!

Taylor and Alyssa are our student assistants. Lisa Kelley is our office administrative coordinator.

Thanks to our staff you can usually find someone to help get your questions answered.

CCJS on Facebook

Our Facebook page is at http://www.facebook.com/ccjsatssu

About CCJS News

CCJS News is a newsletter of the CCJS Department at SSU, organized by Pat Jackson with the help of department faculty, students, alumni and staff. On the web: http://www.sonoma.edu/ccjs/ccjs-news