Project Title: Informing The California Penal Code Revision Committee Proposed Statutory Reforms to Reduce Mass Incarceration

Faculty Mentor: Caitlin Henry, J.D.
Criminology and Criminal Justice
email: henry@sonoma.edu

Project Description: This project will provide analysis to the new California Committee on the Revision of the Penal Code to revise P.C. 1170(d)(1) to re-sentence and release thousands of illegally or unfairly sentenced people, saving the state billions of dollars and preventing suffering and death. The Committee seeks scholarly input on its “Active Studies” of statutory reforms. The project will use qualitative and quantitative data to write reports based on more accurate data than the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation’s reports.

P.C. 1170(d)(1) enables District Attorneys (DAs) and corrections officials to ask a judge to release someone. In a nationwide first, law enforcement agencies can request courts to resentence people based on sentence calculation errors, changes in law, exceptional conduct, or infirmity. Thousands of people are eligible but agency limitations of scope and failures in implementation are curtailing this law’s power.

Student Contributions: Students will obtain qualitative and quantitative data, upload it to a database, code it, and analyze it. This project can improve P.C. 1170(d)(1) implementation by making recommendations for CDCR and court process improvements. Students can contribute to ensuring equitable policy promulgation and implementation.

Students will work remotely using the software below to go through large amounts of data already uploaded in an online folder, code it, and put it into a database. Students would have up to one hour a week of supervision, and work independently for the rest of the time, sending progress updates by email.