

Class Curriculum for Criminal Justice Reform Fall 2020

- Sept. 16 Welcome, introductions, expectations, review syllabus, discuss film “13th” by Ava DuVernay, “Just Mercy” by Bryan Stevenson, The Marshall Project, impact of Covid-19 and protest movements. (*Providence Police Chief Colonel Hugh Clements, Sal Monteiro of Nonviolence Institute*)
- Sept. 23 Criminal justice legislation to consider, Black Lives Matter movement, current trends in leadership and strategies, and more. (*Jordan Seaberry, artist, organizer, legislative advocate, Director at U.S. Department of Arts and Culture*)
- Sept. 30 What about mandatory sentencing? Is solitary confinement cruel and unusual? Should incarceration be punishment or an opportunity for corrections and treatment? What kind of programming should take place in prison? Is solitary confinement cruel and unusual? Is prison the new asylum for the mentally ill? Will Pell grants for the incarcerated be restored? (*Chief Justice U.S. District Court for District of R.I. John J. McConnell, Jr. & Roberta Richman, artist, former Warden of Women’s Facilities & retired Assistant Director of Rehabilitative Services, R.I. Department of Corrections*)
- Oct. 7 When is a crime against a woman (women) considered a hate crime? And why? What are the effects on their families and the community; are family members of incarcerated “hidden victims”? Discuss issues of victims’ compensation, complicity of lawyers in criminal justice system; should everyone have the right to a competent lawyer? (*Amy R. Romero, Assistant U.S. Attorney for District of R.I.*)
- Oct. 14 How do we analyze crises that occur during peaceful protests at the Wyatt Detention Center? Should private prisons be allowed? Should incarceration of undocumented immigrants who have not committed a crime be allowed? (*Aaron Regunberg, organizer/activist, former State Representative & current student at Harvard Law*)
- Oct. 21 Do race, ethnicity, poverty and trauma determine who runs into trouble? Should juveniles receive special protection? What kinds of crimes would warrant alternatives, such as community service, home confinement, probation? How do parole and probation impact offender reentry and the community? (*Heather Gaydos, Reentry Project Manager, Center for Health & Justice Transformation, Miriam Hospital, & Professor Keith Morton, author, Providence College, Chair, Public & Community Service*)
- Oct. 28 How to stem gun violence? Prohibit the sale of high assault magazines and assault weapons? What strategies prevent school shootings and create nonviolence in class rooms? How have police tactics changed by working with community services?

How treat drug users as the public health crisis? *(R.I. Attorney General Peter F. Neronha; Linda Finn, former State Representative & President, R.I. Coalition Against Gun Violence; Chief of Police Elwood Johnson, Jr., Town of Richmond)*

Nov. 4 Lessons learned; suggestions for actions to reform the criminal justice system; recommendations for future classes; guest speaker may be chosen for final meeting. *(Dr. Brent D. Glass, author and Director Emeritus of the Smithsonian's National American History Museum & retired Judge Judith Savage, Distinguished Jurist in Residence at Roger Williams University School of Law.)*