

Community Justice (COMJ) Courses

COMJ1020 Community Justice

This course examines the origins and framework of the community justice movement as a means to achieve justice and prevent crime within localized jurisdictions, while improving quality of community life. This course prepares students to examine various ideas and strategies, such as community organizing, environmental crime prevention, and public-private/nonprofit partnerships as a means to assist criminal justice agencies in strengthening their relationships with the community in order to build healthy and viable communities, while being more responsive to community needs. Additional topics include exploring the decentralization of authority and accountability within our criminal justice system by encouraging front-line workers to take the initiative in order to solve community problems with a focus on bringing citizens into the justice process as advisers, stakeholders, collaborators and partners. Assignments and projects give students opportunities to examine the role of community justice in the context of distinctions and similarities in the use of informal (as opposed to formal) social control as a more effective means of crime management, while engaging in a critical assessment of the limitations, as well as the future of community justice.

Offered at Providence

3 Semester Credits

COMJ1080 Restorative Justice

This course examines the historical foundations and theoretical framework of restorative justice. By providing a unique perspective on assessing crime and responding to the strains it places upon the offender and victim, as well as the community, this course explores the pillars of harm, obligation, engagement and participation of all stakeholders. This course also examines the implementation of restorative justice practices and policies in order to broaden and enrich prevailing approaches to crime prevention, community building and criminal justice. This course therefore explores the importance of various restorative processes and practices, such as victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, victim impact panels, peacemaking circles, as well as reparative boards. Assignments and projects give students opportunities to examine the role of restorative justice in the context of distinctions and similarities with transitional justice, while engaging in a critical assessment of the limitations as well as the future of restorative justice.

Offered at Providence

3 Semester Credits

COMJ2030 Race, Crime and Justice

This course is an exploration of the historical intersection between race, crime, and the juvenile/criminal justice systems, as well as the extent of victimization. This course examines various contemporary issues critical to understanding race and crime through an analysis of policing, courts and corrections in the past and the present, as well as disparities in sentencing and the death penalty. In addition, this course explores existing challenges to the study of race and crime, such as hate/bias crimes, racial profiling, immigration and crime, as well as sentencing disparities, disenfranchisement, and wrongful convictions. Theoretical perspectives on race and crime and the collection of crime data in the United States are compared and contrasted.

Offered at Providence

3 Semester Credits

COMJ3050 Cultural Awareness and Diversity in Criminal Justice

This course provides students with a background and understanding of the importance of cultural awareness and diversity within our criminal justice system. The course offers a comprehensive examination of existing influences of culture, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation in multicultural communities within criminal justice. The course also looks at the importance of embracing community partnerships with law enforcement as a means to develop successful strategies to alleviate crime trends within multicultural communities and improve professionalism, as well as enhanced and enriched communication with members of diverse groups. Other course topics to be discussed in a broader context include police/community mutual stereotypes, implicit biases, the importance of verbal de-escalation in law enforcement, as well as the importance of improved cross-cultural competency, and improved cross-racial and interethnic relations.

Offered at Providence

3 Semester Credits

COMJ4060 Change and Innovation in Law Enforcement

This course provides an expansive insight into an array of reforms and innovations in policing from a domestic and global perspective. The course explores evolving areas in police procedure, such as the internet and social media, relationships between higher education and professionalization and accountability, and the restructuring of police relationships with the public in order to develop trust through diversity training within policing and public support for aggressive policing. In addition, students examine challenges being faced by the movement toward innovations in policing and the resistance of adhering to the long-standing origins and traditions of law enforcement. Topics include women in policing, police downsizing and corruption, as well as law enforcement in the fight against terrorism.

Prerequisite(s): Junior status.

Offered at Providence

3 Semester Credits