

**Borough of Manhattan Community College | City University of New York**  
Social Sciences, Human Services and Criminal Justice Department  
**CRJ 204 1700: Criminal Justice and the Urban Community | Spring 2021 Syllabus**  
**ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS<sup>1</sup> Tu & Th 5:30-6:45 PM | ZERO TEXTBOOK COST | 3 Lecture Hours | 3 Credits**

**Professor:** Michelle Ronda, Ph.D.

**Email:** [mronda@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:mronda@bmcc.cuny.edu)

**Contact by text or email:** I am using Remind to send important updates, assignments, and information, and so we can all text each other without having to share our numbers/emails. Please click on the link that follows to join our class: <https://www.remind.com/classes/crj2041700/>

**Virtual class meetings:** We will meet in our virtual class every **Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30-6:45 pm**. The Zoom link is below. We will review material then, like in a face-to-face class, using PowerPoints and discussion, and we will do some small group work. I may post some recordings of class sessions on Blackboard, but you will not be able to make up the group work, which counts toward your participation, if you miss class. I strongly encourage you to take notes during virtual class meetings.

**Join CRJ 204 1700 on Tu & Th at 5:30 pm:** <https://bmcc-cuny.zoom.us/j/89309540608>

By cell or phone: 929-205-6099 | Meeting ID: 893 0954 0608

**Student assistance and advisement office hours online:** Communicating with students is one of the best parts of my job. I will have virtual office hours every **Tuesday and Thursday from 1-2:30 pm**. We can meet to discuss course material, assignments, questions or concerns you have, advising for classes, or the CUNY Justice Academy, and other transfer or career options.

Make an appointment to meet me in office hours here: <https://calendly.com/mronda/spring-2021-office-hours-with-prof-ronda>

If you are unavailable when I am scheduled for office hours, but want to meet with me, please email me ([mronda@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:mronda@bmcc.cuny.edu)) and include your name, CUNY ID #, and a suggested appointment date and time, and I will get back to you as soon as possible to confirm, but definitely within 48 hours.

### **Criminal Justice and the Urban Community (CRJ 204) Course Description**

This course takes a critical approach to the study of crime and justice in urban settings. Course materials examine contemporary crime-related issues that affect urban communities within a historical and sociological context. The course highlights the intersections of deviant behavior and the criminal justice system within the structures of class, race, gender, and power inequalities. Topics explored may include racial profiling, juvenile delinquency, media representations of crime, policing, the war on drugs, and prisoner re-entry.

**Prerequisites:** CRJ 101 (Introduction to Criminal Justice) AND CRJ 102 (Criminology)

### **What makes this course a Zero Textbook Cost course?**

This CRJ 204 course does not require students to purchase textbooks, using materials that are freely available or are available through the Library. In this course, you will access all materials through Blackboard.

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<sup>1</sup> **Synchronous:** Synchronous class meetings resemble traditional on-campus in-person classes in that students must be (virtually) present at the same time. Though they are conducted virtually, synchronous classes meet in real-time. Students must commit to scheduled class times and sign onto their virtual learning platform on schedule.



## Required Texts

The required readings and materials for this course are listed in the course timeline below and will be posted to Blackboard. You **must** access these materials for the course on Blackboard, so make sure you have access today. Visit this [BMCC webpage](#) for assistance accessing Blackboard.

## Class Objectives (our learning goals for this course):

1. To give students an understanding of the special characteristics of urban settings that affect crime and justice.
2. To develop an overall understanding of the current state of problems and solutions regarding crime in urban settings.
3. To learn how current urban methods of criminal justice are supported by empirical evidence.
4. To teach students the implications of today's urban crime and justice as it relates to social policy.

## Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Your grade in this course is based on a scale of 1000 points. The breakdown of points is shown below.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS: Points**

#### **CLASS ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION: 150 points**

Learning is a two-way street, and you will get the most out of this experience if you engage as much as possible with the course readings, class sessions, your peers, me, and the assignments. Over the course of the semester, there will be a variety of ways for you to show your engagement and participation, including asking questions and contributing to discussion during Zoom sessions either by speaking or texting in the chat, participating in group activities in Zoom sessions, completing short in-class assignments, and sharing things you learn in other courses or from the news that relate to criminal justice in urban communities.

You earn 25 points for uploading the E-Learning Certificate. You earn 25 points for joining Remind for our class. If you complete extra credit, it counts toward participation.

**NOTE ON EXTRA CREDIT:** I will distribute extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. You can earn 5 points in extra credit for participation by providing proof that you attended an event. If the event does not record attendance which can be shared with me, then you can write a few paragraphs describing the event and your experience there and submit it on Blackboard in the Extra Credit Upload section. You can earn a maximum of 25 points for extra credit in participation in the semester (so by attending up to five separate events).

#### **MIDTERM EXAM: 250 points**

The midterm exam will be online and will cover topics from the first day of class to the class before the midterm. It will include a mixture of short answer and multiple-choice questions.

#### **FINAL EXAM: 250 points**



The final exam will be online and will cover topics from the after the midterm to the last day of content. It will include a mixture of short answer and multiple-choice questions.

### **RESEARCH PAPER ON NEIGHBORHOODS, CRIME AND JUSTICE: 350 POINTS**

What kinds of issues related to crime and justice are currently of concern to the residents of New York City neighborhoods? You will select a neighborhood on which to focus to answer this question this semester. You will gather publicly available data and media reports about the neighborhood you select, summarize and analyze the data that you collect, and use all of these to write a paper about the area you selected. The assignment will be broken down into various smaller parts, culminating in a final paper of 5-7 pages which will pull together the previous assignments. The series of assignments will be uploaded to Blackboard, and you will submit each one in Blackboard as a Word document (best to use if you want the most feedback) or a PDF.

### **TOTAL: 1000 points**

**Grading Scale:** Use the following table to help you determine your grade throughout the semester.

Letter Grade	Point Ranges	GPA	100% Equivalent
A	930 - 1000	4	93-100%
A-	900 - 929	3.667	90-92%
B+	870 - 899	3.333	87-89%
B	830 - 869	3	83-86%
B-	800 - 829	2.667	80-82%
C+	770 - 799	2.333	77-79%
C	730 - 769	2	73-76%
C-	700 - 729	1.667	70-72%
D+	670 - 699	1.333	67-69%
D	630 - 669	1	63-66%
D-	600 - 629	0.667	60-62%
F	0 - 599	0	≤59%

### **Tutoring**

Tutors are available free of charge through the Learning Resource Center. Click here for information:  
<https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/students/lrc/online-tutoring/>

### **Class Participation**

Participation in the academic activity of each course is a significant component of the learning process and plays a significant role in determining overall student academic achievement. See above for information on the participation grade in this course.

### **Balancing Stress, Life and Academics**



Life happens! And sometimes it can make succeeding in your coursework difficult. If you find that you are having a hard time concentrating on your coursework because other issues in your life feel overwhelming, do not hesitate to reach out for assistance. You may talk to me about how your coursework is being affected, and I can refer you to some resources.

You can contact the Counseling Office at BMCC, which is staffed by psychologists and offers free consultations: (212) 220-8140. You may also email them: [counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu). See the [webpage](#) for more information.

You can also call, text, or chat online with NYC Well, which offers free mental health support. Visit their [webpage](#), or call 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355).

[Advocacy and Resource Center](#), room S-230, 212-220-8195, [arc@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:arc@bmcc.cuny.edu). The Advocacy and Resource Center offers services that include food assistance, finance consultation, health insurance and other services that may address challenges students experience. All the services that are offered at the Center are FREE! Assistance is also available through the Office of Student Affairs, S-350, 212-220-8130, [studentaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu).

[Office of Compliance and Diversity](#), 212-220-1236. BMCC is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive learning environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, where all students are treated fairly. For information about BMCC's policies and resources, or to request additional assistance in this area, please email [olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu) or [twade@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:twade@bmcc.cuny.edu)

**Office of Accessibility**, 212-220-8180. This office collaborates with students who have documented disabilities, to coordinate support services, reasonable accommodations, and programs that enable equal access to education and college life. You can find more information on the website [here](#). To request an accommodation due to a documented disability, please call the office or email [accessibility@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:accessibility@bmcc.cuny.edu)

### **BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.

Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's website, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu). For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).



### Student Learning Outcomes & Means of Assessment

Course Student Learning Outcomes (Students will be able to...)	Measurements (means of assessment for student learning outcomes listed in first column)
1. <b>Describe</b> the special characteristics of urban settings that affect crime and justice. 2. <b>Discuss</b> the implications of today’s urban crime and justice as it relates to social policy. 3. <b>Describe</b> how current urban methods of criminal justice are supported by empirical evidence. 4. <b>Demonstrate</b> an understanding of the current state of problems and solutions regarding crime in urban settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exams</li> <li>• Research project</li> </ul>

### General Education Outcomes & Means of Assessment

Below are the college’s general education goals that will be covered and assessed in this course.

General Education Goals	Assessments (for goals listed in first column)
<b>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences –</b> Students will understand and apply the concepts and methods of the social sciences. Student behaviors include being able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of the unique theories and methods of a social or behavioral science</li> <li>• analyze and interpret a social, economic, political, cultural, philosophical, or historical issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research project</li> </ul>
<b>Information &amp; Technology Literacy –</b> Students will collect, evaluate, and interpret information and effectively use information technologies. Student behaviors include being able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conduct research using appropriate research strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research project</li> <li>• In-class assignments</li> </ul>



## COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE

**Please note:** This is a “working schedule” and we may alter it to better fit the needs of the course as we proceed. Any changes will be announced in advance.

COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE	
DATES	READINGS, DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<b>Class session 1:</b>  <b>Tu 2/2</b>	<b>FIRST CLASS DAY:</b> Introduction to the course and each other; Why study criminal justice in urban communities? What do we mean by empirical evidence? What approach will we take to understanding urban neighborhoods this semester?
<b>Class session 2:</b>  <b>Th 2/4</b>	<b>Thinking about crime and justice in urban communities: The Sociological Imagination</b>  <b>By 5:30 pm on Th 2/4, please READ:</b> Mills, C.W. (1959). <i>The Promise of the Sociological Imagination</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.
<b>Class session 3:</b>  <b>T 2/9</b>	<b>How do we know what we know? Using systematic research to understand crime and justice in urban communities</b>  <b>By 5:30 pm on T 2/9, please READ:</b> Schwalbe, M. (2009). Finding out how the social world works. In J. Ferguson (ed.), <i>Mapping the Social Landscape</i> (6th ed.) (pp. 32-42). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
<b>Class session 4:</b>  <b>Th 2/11</b>	<b>How do cities promote or undermine community?</b>  <b>READ:</b> Jacobs, J. (1961). <i>Death and Life of Great American Cities</i> . Chapter 2: The uses of sidewalks – safety. In Gates and Stout (Eds.), <i>The City Reader</i> . Pp. 106-111.  <b>DISTRIBUTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSIGNMENT 1</b>
<b>Class session 5:</b>  <b>Tu 2/16</b>	<b>Understanding disparities: Poverty in the city</b>  <b>READ:</b> Austensen, M., Been, V., O’Regan, K. M., Rosoff, S., & Yager, J. (2016). 2016 focus: Poverty in New York City. New York, NY: New York University Furman Center.
<b>Class session 6:</b>  <b>Th 2/18</b>	<b>Understanding disparities: How a War on Poverty became a War on the Poor</b>  <b>READ:</b> Piven, Frances Fox. “Our Endless War on the Poor.” <i>Progressive.org</i> , <i>The Progressive</i> , 30 Mar. 2020, progressive.org/magazine/our-endless-war-on-poor-fox-piven/.  <b>REMINDER: Neighborhood Assignment 1 is due T 2/23</b>



COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE	
DATES	READINGS, DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<p><b>Class session 7:</b></p> <p><b>Tu 2/23</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding disparities: Racial and ethnic disparities</b></p> <p><b>READ:</b> Hinton, Elizabeth, LeShae Henderson, and Cindy Reed. "An unjust burden: The disparate treatment of black Americans in the criminal justice system." <i>Vera Institute of Justice</i>. May (2018).</p> <p><b>NEIGHBORHOOD RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE in BLACKBOARD by 11:59 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Class session 8:</b></p> <p><b>Th 2/25</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding disparities: Gender in neighborhoods</b></p> <p>(possible film in class, TBD)</p> <p><b>READ:</b> Miller, J. (2008). Chapter 2: Gender ‘n the ‘Hood: Neighborhood violence against women and girls. <i>Getting Played: African American girls, urban inequality, and gendered violence</i> (pp. 32-66). New York, NY: NYU Press.</p>
<p><b>Class session 9:</b></p> <p><b>Tu 3/2</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding disparities: Gender in neighborhoods</b></p> <p><b>READ:</b> Miller, J. (2008). Chapter 2: Gender ‘n the ‘Hood: Neighborhood violence against women and girls. <i>Getting Played: African American girls, urban inequality, and gendered violence</i> (pp. 32-66). New York, NY: NYU Press.</p>
<p><b>Class session 10:</b></p> <p><b>Th 3/4</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding disparities: Gender in neighborhoods</b></p> <p><b>Guest:</b> Richie Reseda: <a href="https://www.successtoriesprogram.org/ourroots">https://www.successtoriesprogram.org/ourroots</a></p> <p><b>READ:</b> Rios, V. (2011). Preface and Chapter 1. <i>Punished: Policing the lives of Black and Latino boys</i> (pp. vii to 23). New York, NY: NYU Press.</p>
<p><b>Class session 11:</b></p> <p><b>Tu 3/9</b></p>	<p><b>“Dangerous” neighborhoods and White Flight</b></p> <p><b>READ:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lurie, Stephen. “There's No Such Thing as a Dangerous Neighborhood.” <i>Bloomberg CityLab</i>, Bloomberg, 25 Feb. 2019, <a href="http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-02-25/beyond-broken-windows-what-really-drives-urban-crime">www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-02-25/beyond-broken-windows-what-really-drives-urban-crime</a>.</li> <li>"White flight." <i>Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia</i>. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 28 Jan. 2021. Web. 1 Feb. 2021.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Class session 12:</b></p> <p><b>Th 3/11</b></p>	<p><b>Neighborhood research assignment 1 &amp; 2 review in class</b></p> <p>Review returned neighborhood assignment 1 and distribute neighborhood assignment 2: Researching Community District needs and community health indicators</p>



COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE	
DATES	READINGS, DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Class session 13:  Tu 3/16	<b>Gentrification and Neighborhood Effects</b>  <b>READ:</b> Freeman, Lance. <i>There Goes the Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up</i> , Temple University Press, 2005. ProQuest Ebook Central, <a href="https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bmcc/detail.action?docID=535529">https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bmcc/detail.action?docID=535529</a> .
Class session 14:  Th 3/18	<b>Midterm exam review in Zoom class</b>
Class session 15:  T 3/23	<b>Midterm exam review in Zoom class, Part 2</b>  The midterm exam for CRJ 204 0501 will be released on Tuesday, March 23 at 9 pm.  <b>Midterm exam is DUE on Thursday, March 25 by 9 pm.</b>
Class session 16:  Th 3/25	<b>Urban inequality - Do Broken Windows lead to more crime?</b>  <b>READ:</b> Sampson, R. J., & Raudenbush, S. W. (2001). <i>Disorder in urban neighborhoods: Does it lead to crime</i> (pp. 1-6). US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.  <b>Reminder 1: Neighborhood Assignment 2 is due on Tu 4/6</b>  <b>Reminder 2: Midterm exam is due at 9 pm tonight</b>
Sat 3/27 to Sun 4/4	<b>Spring Recess – No classes</b>
Class session 17:  Tu 4/6	<b>Economic Diversity: Sharing neighborhood resources</b>  <b>READ:</b> Carter, M. (2018). Economic diversity in low-status communities. In Krumholz N. & Hexter K. (Eds.), <i>Advancing Equity Planning Now</i> (pp. 60-80). Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.  <b>NEIGHBORHOOD ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE in BLACKBOARD by 11:59 pm</b>
Class session 18:  Th 4/8	<b>Policing in urban neighborhoods: Cops see it differently</b>  <b>READ:</b> Glass, I. (2015, February 13). Cops see it differently, Part Two. [Online recording]. This American Life. Chicago, IL: WBEZ Chicago.
Class session 19:  T 4/13	<b>Neighborhood research Workshop 1 in class: Neighborhood assignment 3a</b>
Class session 20:  Th 4/15	<b>Neighborhood research Workshop 2 in class: Neighborhood assignment 3b</b>





COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE	
DATES	READINGS, DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Class session 21: T 4/20	<p><b>The War on Drugs and Public Policy</b></p> <p><b>READ:</b> "Social Problems: Continuity and Change." Chapter 7.5 <b>Drug Policy and the War on Illegal Drugs, 307-315.</b> <i>Open Textbook Library</i>, University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, 2016, open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/141. CC BY-NC-SA</p>
Class session 22: Th 4/22	<p><b>History of neglect of neighborhoods by the City</b></p> <p><b>Film in class:</b> Vázquez Irizarry, Vivian, and Gretchen Hildebran. "Decade of Fire." <i>PBS</i>, Public Broadcasting Service, 2018, <a href="http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/decade-of-fire/">www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/decade-of-fire/</a>. Red Nut Films, LLC.</p> <p><b>Reminder:</b> Neighborhood Assignments 3a &amp; 3b are due on Tu 4/27</p>
Class session 23: Tu 4/27	<p><b>The War on Drugs   Crack and the South Bronx</b></p> <p><b>Film in class continued</b></p> <p><b>READ:</b> Contreras, R. (2012). <i>Stickup Kids</i>. Ch. 1, The Rise of South Bronx and Crack. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press. (p. 35-55)</p> <p><b>NEIGHBORHOOD ASSIGNMENTS 3a &amp; 3b due in Blackboard by 11:59 pm</b></p>
Class session 24: Th 4/29	<p><b>Alternatives to the criminal justice system as a solution to social problems</b></p> <p><b>READ:</b> Austria, R. &amp; Peterson, J. (2017). <i>Credible Messenger Mentoring for Justice-Involved Youth</i>. The Pinkerton Papers.</p>
Class session 25: Tu 5/4	<p><b>Film in Zoom class: Restorative Justice</b></p>
Class session 26: Th 5/6	<p><b>Final research paper workshop in class: Peer review of drafts</b></p> <p><b>Final paper DRAFT due in Blackboard by 11:59 pm</b></p>
Class session 27: Tu 5/11	<p><b>Final exam review session in Zoom class</b></p>
Class session 28: Th 5/13	<p><b>Final exam review session in Zoom class</b></p>
M 5/17	<p><b>Last day of classes for Spring 2021</b></p>



COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE	
DATES	READINGS, DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Tu 5/18	READING DAY (no final exams should be scheduled on this day)
FINAL EXAM Due F 5/21	<b>FINAL EXAMS:</b> W 5/19 to Tu 5/25 Final exam will be released on W 5/19 at 1 pm and is <b>DUE on F 5/21 by 1 pm.</b>
FINAL PAPER Due Tu 5/25	<b>Final research paper is due in Blackboard by 11:59 pm.</b>