GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DIVISION OF LIBERAL ARTS

COURSE SYLLABUS

Index Number:  CJUS 560
Course Title:  Justice System Research, Design & Change
Professor:  Pat Goldenstein  
(708) 672-6907
Credit Hours:  3.0
Trimester:  Spring/Summer, 1997
Day/Time:  Wednesdays, 4:30-7:20pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE:

This course is designed to introduce the student to the analysis, research design, problem-solving approaches, conceptualization and implementation of various methodologies in the field of criminal justice.

EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES:

The student should be able to:

1. State a criminal justice problem that is researchable;

2. Demonstrate the ability to conduct a survey of the current literature regarding the particular problem;

3. Conduct field research and be aware of field research methodologies;

4. Present a written change strategy based upon his diagnosis of the problem and his philosophy of change;

5. Design an effective change strategy for bring about change in a setting appropriate to the system the student hopes to work within;

6. Articulate his own theory of design as it relates to problems and solutions;

7. Understand proper sequential steps to developing criminal justice programs inclusive of monitoring and evaluating mechanism;
8. Design an alternative program for the criminal justice subsystem which is based upon the maximization of human rights;

9. Conduct and interpret results of a program analysis of service systems.

Model For a Self-Study Approach to Criminal Justice Problems

1. Selecting a researchable criminal justice problem:

The definition of a social problem is essentially an assertion, based on the students prior knowledge. It is necessarily subjective, and ought to be: the purpose of social science is after all both to identify and make objective that which can be dealt with objectively, and to identify and make allowance for subjectivity, bias.

Thus, if the area of concern is, for example, juvenile delinquency, the statement of the problem may well be something like this: Based on my experience the root of juvenile delinquency is that parents just don't care about their children any more.

2. Establishment of a frame of reference:

What are the influencing factors? First, what do you think they are? Secondly, what does a literature search indicate? Then what do the people involved feel? Does the definition of the problem fit the evidence? Does the terminology define what it sets out to?

Thus the sample problem may lead to the following area of investigation:

a) The family patterns of juvenile offenders;
b) The role of criminal justice juvenile workers: their judgements;
c) The role of social service juvenile workers: their judgements;
d) The role of communities in juvenile crime;
e) Economic factors: employment patterns, etc.;
f) Peer influence;
g) Changing juvenile social roles in modern capitalist societies;
h) Juvenile crime and behavior in other societies in change/in stasis.

Research can thus lead in a number of directions, and involve a number of methodologies. Both library and field research methodologies must be used.
3. **Summary and restatement of the problem:**

The research will lead to a mass of evidence and facts, and very possibly a great deal of disguised opinion. The job in this section is to analyze and prioritize the information. Does the evidence agree with other material, do you agree with it? Does it contradict or confirm field work? Does it explain the phenomena? Is there a single factor which by itself can create the problem? Does the evidence lead you to redefine your original assertion?

4. **Goals:** What goals will you set for your model intervention based on your new information?

5. **Intervention:** How exactly will your model intervene in the situation you have defined?

6. **Resources:** What resources will be needed to accomplish the goals? Are they available?

7. **Quality control:** How will you ensure the quality of your intervention model?

8. **Evaluation and expected outcomes:** How will you base an evaluation of the success of your model, if it were implemented? What results? What are expecting as an outcome of the implementation of this model?

9. **Re-evaluation-Redesign:** On the basis of the evaluation, how would you redesign the model to have it work better? How will you use the experience of the model's implementation to look for areas of input that were ignored in the original model formulation and research? What role can users of the model play?

**TEXT:**

No required text but students will be given assigned reading materials relevant to their topic of study. Each student should read one basic social science research methods book available in the library by the third week of class.
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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

May 14    Introduction to the Model
May 21    Development of a Criminal Justice problem statement
May 28    Establish frame of reference
June 4    Establish frame of reference
June 11    Development of Questionnaire
June 18    Gathering Data
June 25    Gathering Data
July 2    Summarizing information and restatement of problem
July 9    Establish goal(s) - begin Intervention Strategies
July 16    Intervention Strategies - Resources needed and allocation
July 23    Quality Control & Evaluation of Intervention Strategies
July 30    Self-evaluation/redesign
Aug. 6    Paper Presentations
Aug. 13    Paper Presentations
Aug. 20    Paper Presentations

COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING:

Grading will depend upon completion of the nine steps outlined above and how well you followed the model. You will be required to present material each week. Class attendance, therefore, is very important. If you miss a session, you will jeopardize your final grade.