

Changes in Examination Regulations to the University Gazette – Social Sciences Division

SSD/2/2/4

Social Sciences Board

Approved by TAC 8 October 2012

Title of programme

MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice and the MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice (Research Methods)

Brief note about nature of change:

Introduction of a new option for MSc students, 'Violence and Civilisation', to be taught by Dr Jonny Steinberg from Hilary Term 2013.

Effective date

With immediate effect

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations* 2012

Detail of change

1. **P.693, I.47, insert** 'Violence and Civilisation'.
2. **P.696, I.17, insert** 'Violence and Civilisation'.

Explanatory Notes

This change adds a new Criminology option to be offered to students taking the MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice and MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice (Research Methods) from academic year 2012-13.

Academic justification and course details:

The aim of the course is to interrogate an argument and its corollary. The argument is that societies that have been through a process approximating Western state formation are less violent, less cruel and more peaceful than any other in human history. Such societies, the argument goes, have left both warfare as well as violence as a form of personal engagement in the past. The corollary is that where violence remains endemic today, whether in the form of armed conflict or interpersonal aggression, it is because it occurs in social space unlucky enough not to have gone through a process of Western state formation, or in a pocket of the world that has 'decivilised' for one reason or another.

It is an incendiary argument that is bound to offend. For one, it is highly evolutionist, suggesting that violence is prevalent among those who inhabit what amounts to a more primitive time. And those unfortunate enough to be living in these past historical times are, of course, generally dark-skinned or non-European. It is also a thesis that might offend left and liberal sensibilities since it potentially leaves the wealthy and the powerful unimplicated in violence among the poor and on the global periphery. It is nonetheless an argument with deep roots in social theory and is not easy to dismiss. And, as we shall see, many of its assumptions undergird some of the central arguments about policing and violence found in contemporary criminology.

The first aim of the course is to carefully exposit and then to interrogate this thesis. This constitutes the first third of the course. In the remaining two-thirds, we take this debate and use it to examine violence in contemporary Africa, first theoretically, and then in relation to two case studies.

Intended learning outcomes:

- a) immerse students in key contemporary debates about the sources of violence in the modern world;
- b) think about violence in a systemic and integrated fashion
- c) acquire a deep knowledge of controversies about contemporary African conflict

Assessment methods:

This option will be assessed at the end of the term by a graded essay of 3500-5000 words. As with other options on the MSc, students will choose 1 title from a choice of 3. All of our MSc options are double-blind examined. This course would be no exception. Jonny Steinberg, the course tutor, would be one of the two examiners and there are a number of other people with sufficient expertise to co-assess such a course, including Professor Carolyn Hoyle; Dr Mary Bosworth and Dr Rachel Condry.

Teaching Resources:

This new option will be taught by Dr Steinberg and Drs Liora Lazarus and Nicky Lacey could provide cover in his absence of. This model of offering optional courses is concomitant with the Centre for Criminology's commitment to offer optional courses that

correspond with their research interests and expertise to give their graduate students the best teaching experience.

Administrative Support:

The current GSA will administer this option as part of the GSA role.

Timetabling:

This option will be included in the timetable as one of the five options of which each student selects two, available to students during Hilary Term.

Date of the effect of the change:

The effective date of change is the beginning of the academic year 2012/13, i.e. 1st October 2012, however the option will not be available to students until Hilary Term. Therefore this new option will have no adverse effect on students, as it will be part of their option choice from the start of the programme.