

Non-Thesis Track M.A. Comprehensive Exam

Fall Semester 2017

Instructions

You must address one of the following three questions in your policy paper. Generally, each topic requires you to review, analyze, and synthesize the literature as it pertains to a particular policy area and draw conclusions or make recommendations based on your findings. Please be sure you read the entire question and address all parts of it.

The Fall 2017 exam will be distributed on Friday, September 15th 2017 by Shamauri Jenkins. Both a paper and electronic copy (pdf format) of your completed examination must be submitted to Ms. Jenkins **by noon** on Wednesday, November 15th 2017. Late examinations will not be accepted and will result in a failing score. Please note that once you receive the comprehensive examination, you are required to submit an examination paper by the deadline; otherwise your exam will receive a failing score. If you experience extenuating circumstances that interfere with your ability to complete your comprehensive exam, you should notify the graduate program director immediately. Please make sure your exam complies with the following submission requirements:

- ✓ You have written a response to one of the three questions on the exam.
- ✓ Your submission contains FOUR parts: (1) an Executive Summary (2-3 pages briefly outlining the contents of your paper); (2) a Policy Paper (20-25 pages in length, not including the cover); (3) a separate List of References (which does not count against the page limit); and (4) a signed Honor Pledge. Please note that students receiving assistance from the University's writing center is considered a violation of the Honor Pledge.
- ✓ **You do not identify yourself anywhere within the document other than on the cover page.** You will be assigned an **identification code** for each question so your answers can be linked to your name after grading is complete.
- ✓ Your **identification code** is typed on both the cover page and the top right-hand corner of each page of your answer. (*see attached example page*)
- ✓ You follow the APA format, with 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spacing, and 1-inch margins throughout your answer.
- ✓ You have checked your document to ensure that you have not plagiarized. Any finding of plagiarism will result in a failing score on the exam. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/> or <http://plagiarism.org/>.
- ✓ You provide a signed honor pledge indicating that you neither gave nor received assistance with the comprehensive examination.
- ✓ Be sure to use a well-developed list of academic sources (i.e., no Wikipedia and if necessary, a very limited number of popular media sources such as newspapers, magazines, etc.).

When possible (i.e., when there are two or more test takers), your comprehensive examination will be graded in a double-blind manner – neither you nor the faculty graders will know each other’s identities. A committee of the entire regular graduate faculty (excepting faculty members on leave or on sabbatical) will grade all examination questions. To pass the exam, at least 2/3 of the grading faculty members must give your exam a passing score (a grade of “pass” or “high pass”). To earn a “high pass”, at least 90% of the grading faculty must assign a grade of “high pass.” Students who fail this examination are permitted to retake it one additional time.

Exam Questions (*Please Answer One*):

1. The use of solitary confinement in prisons has come under considerable scrutiny. Write a policy paper detailing the historical and contemporary use of solitary confinement in our corrections system. Discuss what we know about its positive and negative impact on inmates and corrections institutions. Finally, discuss policy recommendations for its continued practice in U.S. prisons.
2. In mid-2016, the State of South Carolina amended several statutes concerning the jurisdictional boundary between the juvenile justice (or family court) system and the adult criminal justice system. These amendments raised the age at which someone accused of a crime would be considered a juvenile, effectively extending the jurisdiction of the juvenile system. Similar revisions have been undertaken by a handful of other states as well. Consider this trend in the context of the justifications for handling juveniles differently from adults, and the empirical evidence on the impact of juvenile versus adult processing of youths’ cases. Present a coherent argument on the pros and cons of increasing the age at which a person would face processing in the adult court versus the juvenile court, concluding with a recommendation to the South Carolina Legislature about any future actions in this area.
3. Police crackdowns have long been used by law enforcement executives and elected community leaders to confront hot spots of crime and disorder. Write an essay in which you: (1) trace the history of how police crackdowns have been used in the past; (2) address both the effectiveness and the legal and ethical propriety of police crackdowns; and (3) offer recommendations (with appropriate justification) about whether and under what circumstances police crackdowns should continue to be used in the future.



DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Non-Thesis Track MA Comprehensive Exam
Honor Pledge - Fall 2017

Your Exam Identification Code: _____

Honor Pledge: In accordance with the ideals set forth in the Carolinian Creed, I hereby pledge that I neither gave nor received assistance on this examination.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____