

# Imagining Crime: Criminal Justice in Fact and Fiction

[figs.wisc.edu/2019fall38](http://figs.wisc.edu/2019fall38)

**FIG 38 • Fall 2019**



**10 credits**

**MAIN CLASS**

Comparative Literature 203  
**Law and Literature**

**LINKED CLASS**

Legal Studies 131  
**Criminal Justice in America**

**LINKED CLASS**

Sociology 170  
**Population Problems**

Crimes are on TV and in the paper every day. There are shows and reports on big and small crimes, and big and small criminals. Crimes and the justice system fascinate us on many, sometimes contradictory levels. We watch *Dexter*, *The Good Wife*, or *Breaking Bad* with enthusiasm while at the same time we and the criminal justice system condemn and convict serial killers and drugs lords. This is the same justice system that incarcerates thousands (!) of people that are (later) proven innocent. Are we “Making a Murderer,” to quote the title of the much-debated Netflix documentary? We also often wonder how well the justice system “understands” the individual because law has its own complex way of seeing the world and us and defining our responsibilities.

In this FIG we will explore law,

crime and justice in a multi-dimensional way. We will study the criminal justice system as a legal system, look at how it functions, and what particular roles its actors have.

The FIG seminar, **Comparative Literature 203: “Law and Literature,”** will not only complement what we study in “Criminal Justice in America,” the course offers a unique perspective on law and how it is represented in literature or fiction in general. It might sound counterintuitive, but literature can describe and make understandable certain issues in the legal system much more clearly than a law journal article or the legal discourse in general. Literature provides the other perspective, considers the human condition, and shows how it feels to be subjected to the law. At the same time, literature as a discipline provides tools that help us understand the workings of the law better. How does storytelling in court work? What makes for a convincing story, what roles does rhetoric in a court decision play, why do lawyers often use every day words in such an odd way, and how do lawyers create meaning? We will look at these questions very closely in the FIG seminar. The goal of this FIG is to help students understand that legal and literary studies are connected, and that ideas of law and justice have a foundation in

the humanities. This course emphasizes the importance of writing and precise wording, so students can work on and improve their textual-analytical skills. We will discuss our course topics together in an open and inclusive manner. Students will learn to “think” (a little bit) like lawyers, but we will also explore law’s limitations and the benefits of a broader approach to both law and literature.

**Legal Studies 131: “Criminal Justice in America”** — We will study the criminal justice system as a legal system, look at its elements, how it functions, and what particular roles its actors have. The class follows how a typical case moves through the system, beginning at the stage where police want to make an arrest or search a residence to the moment when an individual reenters society after a prison sentence.

**Sociology 170: “Population Problems”** — This sociology class draws on materials and perspectives from the related fields of demography (the statistical study of populations) and epidemiology (the study of the distribution and determinants of health and disease states in populations). You will examine how certain social phenomena—particularly structural inequality—influence and are reproduced by population change both globally and in the contemporary United States. ●

main class instructor: **Ralph Grunewald**

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	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 am					
9:00 am					
10:00 am					
11:00 am					
12:00 pm	<b>COMP LIT 203</b> LEC 1 11:00 am–12:15 pm	<b>SOC 170</b> LEC 1 11:00–11:50 am	<b>COMP LIT 203</b> LEC 1 11:00 am–12:15 pm	<b>SOC 170</b> LEC 1 11:00–11:50 am	<b>LEGAL ST 131</b> DIS 314 11:00–11:50 am
1:00 pm					
2:00 pm					
3:00 pm	<b>LEGAL ST 131</b> LEC 1 2:30–3:45 pm	<b>SOC 170</b> DIS 323 2:25–3:15 pm	<b>LEGAL ST 131</b> LEC 1 2:30–3:45 pm		
4:00 pm					
5:00 pm					
6:00 pm					

## Enrolled in a FIG and you change your mind?

FIG classes are designed to be taken together. When you enroll in a FIG, you are signed up for these classes as a whole group, not as separate classes.

**Dropping one FIG class means ending your enrollment in all of the classes in the FIG.**

So, here's what you should know if you want to drop the FIG:

- You can drop all the classes on your own at [enroll.wisc.edu](http://enroll.wisc.edu). Any non-FIG class will not be affected.
- After classes begin, if you need to drop a single class within the FIG, please contact Kari Fernholz (see below) to review your situation. If necessary, she will provide the required authorization to drop the class.
- Wednesday, September 11, 2019** is the last day to drop a class without it appearing on your college transcript.
- Friday, September 13, 2019** is the last day to add a class without first getting department permission.

## MAIN CLASS

### Comparative Literature 203 Law and Literature

LEC 1: MW 11:00–12:15

- Literature
- Elementary
- Honors Optional

credits: 3

class number: **61461**

## LINKED CLASS

### Legal Studies 131 Criminal Justice in America

LEC 1: MW 2:30–3:45 +  
DIS 314: F 11:00–11:50

- Social Science
- Elementary

credits: 4

class number: **64790**

## LINKED CLASS

### Sociology 170 Population Problems

LEC 1: TR 11:00–11:50 +  
DIS 323: T 2:25–3:15

- Ethnic Studies
- Social Science
- Elementary

credits: 3

class number: **65825**



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get help from **Kari Fernholz**, assistant director  
608-262-7375 • [kari.fernholz@wisc.edu](mailto:kari.fernholz@wisc.edu)

June 4, 2019 11:07 AM