

Syllabus

Technology and Justice.

Canadian policies and practices as a case study

1. Course information

Professor : Dominique Robert
Semester :
Schedule :
Classroom:

2. Contact information and availability

Office :
Telephone:
Office Hours:

3. Course description and objectives

Technology is an important component of the criminal justice practices, from crime prevention to corrections via policing. Various theories were developed to examine if and how such technologies change the way we “do justice” and if and how humans being change, adapt, if not pervert, the technologies they use. The question of technology’s relation to and impact on criminal justice, crime and society as well as the measure of its efficiency and trades-off is central to criminologists. The course will review recent developments in the field and will examine them through three main theoretical perspectives. In order to do so, we will use Canada as a case study. Indeed, Canada has embraced the technological turn in its justice system while also emphasizing its role as a human rights leader. After getting acquainted briefly with the Canadian policy process and the justice apparatus, the course will look at the way the pressures for technological progress and the precautionary principle has been translated in the inception and development of two important building blocks of the Canadian criminal justice system: the sexual offender registry and the national DNA database and.

Objectives:

- Mastering different perspectives on technology: the received view, the critical view and the cultural view;
- Using the pertinent concepts and perspective to empirically analyze different technologies implemented in the criminal justice system;
- Discuss the implications of technologies for criminologists.

4. Pedagogy

An active participation on your part is necessary in class since we will conduct it as a seminar. In addition to lectures and in-class analyses of the readings, you will prepare

and conduct workshops. You are expected to read the compulsory texts **BEFORE** each class and prepare accordingly.

5. Required readings and website

- a) Compulsory readings are listed below.
- b) Additional readings will be suggested for each class.
- c) A website is used in this course.

The site will allow us to communicate efficiently together via the “email” tool. I will write to you frequently so, visit your mailbox on the site regularly. When you want to ask me questions or share comments, use the website email tool rather than my regular email address. Journal articles for the different workshops will be posted under “Compulsory readings”. Moreover, electronic documents necessary for certain exercises or complementary to the course readings will be added during the semester under the “Resources for the course” icon. Assignments’ directives will also be posted under the “Assignments” icon. Finally, some websites for further information regarding technology and justice as well as the Canadian parliamentary system and the criminal justice system will also be posted under the “Links” menu.

6. Assignments and Marks

In class exam (mid term)	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the compulsory readings.	
Workshops (Different weeks)	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a team, you will have to produce an empirical analysis of the policy implementation and development of a technology (either the national sexual offender registry or the national DNA database). The compulsory readings for the group will be selected, in part, by you and, in part, by the professor according to the topic you chose. A portion of the empirical material will be provided to you by the professor but you will have to select and use additional empirical materials (documentary excerpts, commercials, websites, newspaper articles, radio interviews, documents or pamphlets, etc.). Your team will be in charge of presenting your analysis of the material according to the perspectives and concepts learned in the first two blocks of the course. The week following your workshop, you will hand in an analytical paper on your topic that will include and expand upon the discussion that took place in your workshop (analysis of the materials and compulsory readings). Detailed instructions will be provided.	
Take-home (April, 16, 2010, 9:00-10:00)	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The take-home will pertain to the discussion and application of concepts learned throughout the semester on different empirical materials, including the materials used in the different workshops conducted by you and your colleagues.	
Attendance and participation	10%
Your marks will be posted on the website.	

7. Rules

- Attendance and participation are required and marked.
- Lectures are copyrighted material and electronic recording of lectures and class discussion is not allowed without the permission of the professor.

- There will be a penalty for late submission (5% if handed in after the due date and time and 5% additional for each 24 hour period) unless you provide a medical certificate.
- Penalty for poor writing quality will apply for papers and the take-home.
- The prescriptions in the document “Integrity in Writing: Avoiding Plagiarism” (on the website of the course) applies in this class.

8. Course content and associated readings

The course is organized in four blocks:

Perspectives on technology	6 courses	<p>Books:</p> <p>Slack, J. D., & Wise, J. M. (2005). <u>Culture + Technology. A Primer</u>. New York: Peter Lang.</p> <p>Goyder, John (2005). <u>Technology and Society: A Canadian Perspective</u>. (2nd edition) Broadview Press. (pertinent chapters will be assigned)</p> <p>Series of journal articles under “Compulsory readings” on the website of the course.</p>
The Canadian state, the policy process and policy analysis	2 courses	<p>Book chapters:</p> <p>Fischer, Frank. 2007. "Deliberative Policy Analysis as Practical Reason: Integrating Empirical and Normative Arguments." Pp. 223-236 in <i>Handbook of Public Policy Analysis</i>, edited by F. Fischer, G. J. Miller, and M. S. Sidney. Boca Raton: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis.</p> <p>Gottweis, Herbert. 2006. "Argumentative Policy Analysis." Pp. 461-479 in <i>Public Policy Handbook</i> edited by G. B. Peters and J. Pierre. London: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Pal, Leslie A. 2009. <i>Beyond Policy Analysis. Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times</i>. Scarborough, Ont.: Nelson Thompson Learning. (different chapters will be assigned)</p> <p>Yanow, Dvora. 2000. <i>Conducting Interpretative Policy Analysis</i>. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Series of journal articles and websites under “Compulsory readings” and “links” on the website of the course.</p>
Case study 1: The national sexual offender registry	3 courses	<p>Empirical material provided: Parliamentary and Senate debates, Briefs from the interest groups, Official documents and grey</p>

literature from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Journal articles:

- Anderson, A. L., Evans, M. K., & Sample, L. L. (2009). Who accesses the sex offender registries? A look at legislative intent and citizen action in Nebraska.
- Cole, M. and M. Petrunik. (2006) Sex offender registration and privacy rights.
- Murphy, Lisa, Paul, Federoff and Melissa Martineau. (2009) Canada's sex offender registries: Background, implementation and social policy considerations.
- Veysey, B., Zgoba, K., & Dalessandro, M. (2009). A preliminary step towards evaluating the impact of Megan's Law: A trend analysis of sexual offenses in New Jersey from 1985 to 2005.

Case study 2: The national DNA database

3 courses

Empirical material provided: Parliamentary and Senate debates, Briefs from the interest groups, Official reports from the National DNA database.

Journal articles:

- Mopas (2007). Examining the CSI Effect Through an ANT lense.
- Pato, J.N. & L.I. Millett (2010). Biometric Recognition: Challenges and Opportunities.
- Robert, D. and M. Dufresne (2008). The Social Uses of DNA in the Political Realm or How Politics Construct DNA Technology in the Fight Against Crime.
- Wilson, D. B., D. McClure, & D. Weisburd (2010). Does Forensic DNA Help to Solve Crime? The Benefit of Sophisticated Answers to Naive Questions.