

Comparative Criminal Justice: New Zealand and the United States

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M & F 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

By appointment

Course Description

This is a comparative criminal justice course examining the legal systems of the United States and New Zealand. Comparative criminal justice is a field of study that, as its name suggests, compares the policies, personnel, agencies and processes that different countries use for policing, prosecuting, adjudicating, and punishing offenders. New Zealand's system of law is based on statutory and common law and the judiciary is structured in a manner that is similar to Great Britain and Canada. The police structure is centralized and differs significantly from the United States in that most officers do not carry firearms while on duty. New Zealand's prison system faces issues quite similar to those in the United States, including disproportionate minority contact and high incarceration rates. This course will compare the policing, court processes, citizen rights and incarceration and sentencing policies of the two countries.

A focal point of the course will be the intersection between the indigenous cultures and majority justice systems in the countries. Specifically, we will compare the Maori experience with those of the Great Sioux Nation. While both countries have colonial pasts, their interactions with the British Empire came at different points in history and there are some significant differences in how indigenous people were treated. Yet, there are also significant similarities, including the indigenous cultures' attempts to maintain their language, traditions and systems of social sanction. This course will highlight the experience of the Maori and Sioux people who are affected by the countries' criminal justice systems.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will have:

- Identified and articulated the significant differences and similarities between the criminal justice systems in the United States and New Zealand.
- Demonstrated an understanding of the traditional forms of social sanction used by the tribes with reservations located in South Dakota and by the Maori.
- Compared and contrasted the experiences of the indigenous peoples in the majority modern justice systems in the United States and New Zealand.
- Traveled to and toured the north and south islands of New Zealand, experiencing facets of both majority and indigenous culture.
- Students will demonstrate awareness of multiple perspectives within the global community.
- Students will investigate and analyze contemporary issues, phenomena, and ideas with global impact, considering their effect on the individuals, communities and social or nature environments involved.
- Students will identify and utilize a theory of comparative criminal justice in completing a significant written research assignment.

Required Materials

Morris, Grant, Law Alive: The New Zealand Legal System in Context. Oxford University Press (2015). ISBN 9780195585247

Anderson, Atholl, Binney, Judith, Harris Aroha, Tangata Whenua: A History. Bridget Williams Books (2014). 9780908321537 (students should purchase the ebook format).

Grading

Comparative Analysis Research Project <i>comparative analysis of the criminal justice systems of the US and NZ</i>	35%	10-12 page
Classroom attendance and participation	20%	
Reflection Journal Entries <i>A series of reflection journals written during students' time in New Zealand</i>	25%	
In class quizzes and responses to discussion questions <i>Regular quizzes and discussion question assignments to ensure student reading</i>	20%	