



**CRIMINAL JUSTICE DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE
EXAMINATION**
Criminal Justice Process and Policy
CRJ 70600 & CRJ 70700
August 2018

*There are two questions on this exam. You **must answer both questions**. You are strongly discouraged from writing about the same policy issue more than once (e.g. do not write about gun control in both questions). **You have three hours and thirty minutes to complete this examination.***

1) During the 2016 Presidential campaign, Donald Trump ran on a platform emphasizing “tough on crime” policies as well as vast crackdowns on both legal and illegal immigration. Trump’s views on immigration and crime were not distinct from one another. Rather, they were interconnected under the premise that immigrants were largely responsible for recent upticks in crime, especially violent crime, in the United States. Upon his inauguration in January 2017, the Trump administration began to enact policies reflecting their stance on crime and immigration. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement began conducting large multi-day investigations to identify, arrest, and deport people who have committed immigration violations. On the federal level, the administration pursued heightened restrictions of both immigration and temporary travel to the U.S. from countries deemed “high-risk” of importing radicalized individuals.

Crime policy experts have widely criticized the administration’s strategy, largely due to the lack of empirical evidence in support of immigration crack downs as a crime control mechanism. In fact, numerous experts have highlighted studies suggesting that immigration levels exhibit a negative correlation with crime levels (in other words, as immigrant levels rise, crime declines).

Given the lack of support from crime policy experts, why was the Trump administration able to install such an immigration strategy? In answering this question, you are to present a critical analysis of the social, cultural, and political factors that may have enabled such a strong immigration crackdown in the name of public safety.



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2) You recently received a call from Cynthia Nixon, who is running for Governor of New York State. She has identified criminal justice reform as a key issue in her campaign and pledges to support the development of evidence-based practices throughout the entirety of New York.

For every component of the criminal justice system (policing, courts, corrections) the Nixon campaign has a multi-pronged plan that will include the following steps: 1) identifying programs with a record of success (i.e. “what works”); 2) establishing and evaluating pilot studies of these programs to measure if their success translates to this setting, and; 3) permanently implementing the programs shown to be effective via rigorous program evaluation.

The Nixon campaign has contacted you, a widely recognized criminal justice policy expert, to write a plan to implement this criminal justice reform plan in New York City. You are asked to identify a borough as a test site and to provide critical feedback on the reform plan.

For this question, you are to provide critical feedback to the Nixon campaign in respect to 1 of the components of the criminal justice system: policing, courts, or corrections. Your answer must include the following:

- 1) A brief overview of the borough you’ve selected as a test site, including the criminal justice and community stakeholders that would be involved in/impacted by the reform plan
- 2) A discussion of the empirical evidence on effective and ineffective programs within your selected system component (policing, courts, or corrections)
- 3) A discussion of the challenges the mayor may face in attempting to implement/evaluate pilot studies of effective programs
- 4) Your hypothesis of whether the programs will be effective in the test borough along with a discussion of the factors that may facilitate/impede upon their success