

CRJ 412 MASS SHOOTINGS AND SOCIETY

SPRING 2026

LANIGAN HALL 102A

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 1:50 PM-2:45 PM

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 3-5pm	Other times and virtual offerings by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will explore the impact of mass shootings on both the criminal justice system and society as a whole. Topics will include (but not be limited to) shifting law enforcement practices, the impact of mass shootings on safety perceptions, security protocols, and how they are framed by the media. More broadly, this course is designed to provide you with a more well-rounded understanding about the phenomenon of public mass shootings, allow you to more critically analyze information presented in the public discourse about these events, and prepare you to better understand these events as they continue to happen.

In addition to learning about the subject of mass shootings, students will participate in a social action related to this subject. A key part of the social action model is that students have the opportunity to enact a policy (i.e., a rule, regulation, norm, or practice of an institution) on campus or in the community, with the students choosing and developing the campaigns on their own rather than assigned by the instructor.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The objectives of this course are for students to learn how to:

- Describe the cultural impact of various mass shooting events in the United States;
- Analyze coverage of mass shootings in and by the media;
- Conduct research (historical analysis, power map, target analysis) and Summarize key policy changes that arose from the Columbine and other mass shooting events;
- Evaluate solutions proposed in the wake of mass and/or school shootings;
- Critique arguments offered about the causes of mass and/or school shootings;
- Conduct issue development about a particular mass shooting related campaign;
- Build power and implement various strategies and tactics to achieve their campaign; and
- Perform campaign implementation and evaluation plans.

COURSE MATERIALS:

There are no materials that need to be purchased for this course. All required readings will be provided and linked via the course Brightspace page. You are responsible for making sure you are able to access the course materials and that you do any preparation in advance of class.

Suggested Reading: Scott Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action*, ISBN: 9781138297296, ISBN: 9781612057279.

MODE OF INSTRUCTION:

This course is designed for in-person delivery. Although course materials are available in Brightspace, the course is not designed to be delivered in a remote context. Students are expected to

attend class in person. Many of the topics and content explored in the course will be taught and communicated via class demonstrations, activities, and discussions. Therefore, attendance and participation are crucial for students to acquire a complete understanding of the course material and for the course to achieve its learning goals.

Furthermore, given the unique social action component of this course, attendance at all class meetings is critical for your group to achieve the objectives of your social action.

Another key feature of the social action model is the topic and flow of the course. The motto of this model is “On Your Mark, Go, Get Set.” In order to launch the campaigns by mid-semester, students go through the issue development process (identifying demands and targets) in the opening days of the class. By choosing the campaigns by the 4th or 5th class, students have enough time to learn about all of the necessary aspects of social change, and then to launch a campaign by the ninth week and still have almost half a semester to do several actions.

All students will be involved in social action. This will require a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of campaign work (25 hours minimum over 15 weeks, with about one-half of the time DOING something, that is, doing *campaign activities* (e.g., tabling, fliering, giving organization raps) or *campaign actions* (marches, rallies, street theater, etc.).

If you do not do more than 25 hours a semester, you will most likely not receive a grade higher than a C on your overall portfolio grade, since it is difficult to do reflection if you are not doing campaign activities and actions. Of course, if you want to do more campaign work, that is great. FYI: The course reading has been reduced to offset the 25 hours of campaign work.

It will be possible to do your social action on campus, so all students should be able to work it into their schedule. In addition, class time will be dedicated to your social action campaign, so you will be able to do some of your organizing in class. During the second through fourth classes, you will brainstorm various ideas for a social action campaign, and then you will choose one to work on.³ The requirements for the campaign are: (i) that you have a minimum of 3 students on your team, (ii) you have a passion for the issue, and (iii) your campaign tries to change some type of policy. The campaign you choose to work on may come from a liberal, conservative, social democrat, or libertarian perspective...or it may have no ideology. Whatever campaign you choose to do, I will teach you about democracy, power, and how to bring about change.

Importantly, there is no political indoctrination, as students develop and choose what campaigns to work on, and can change campaigns at any point in the semester. Furthermore, my role is to offer guidance about strategy and tactics, and to help students consider the variety of options available, with the students deciding on how to best move forward.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance and class participation are mandatory and will be taken into consideration in the grading process. Students should come to each class prepared to engage in class exercises and discussions, and having completed the assigned readings.

Attendance (50 points): You are expected to attend every class. If you accumulate more than three (3) unexcused absences, your final grade may be reduced. There will be a reduction of one-half letter grade for every unexcused absence exceeding the three allowed. There is no limit to the number of excused absences. Attendance will be taken every class and contribute to the final grade.

Classroom Conduct: All students are required to always act and speak in a civil and courteous manner towards one another and towards the instructor. Talking and whispering to others during class, leaving the room during class, and arriving late are examples of rude, discourteous behavior. If you are excessively disruptive you may be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for the day. Because of the nature of some of the topics discussed, we need to make sure we are approaching discussing with curiosity and sensitivity.

Participation (150 points): Students are expected to participate in and contribute meaningfully to class discussion. Due to the nature of this course, we will be discussing and exploring the course content together and a significant portion of each class will be spent sharing your thoughts out loud, in small groups, or on individual written participation prompts. Each student is required to participate during each class meeting. In the event that in-class participation or speaking is a struggle, you can submit written responses to the prompts, which will be due at the end of the day of the class meeting (email them to me). I will be providing a midterm participation grade so you can gauge how you are doing and make adjustments as needed.

Portfolio and Log (350 points):

In this class, portfolios take the place of exams. Importantly, the portfolio is where you demonstrate your knowledge of the text in light of your social action experiences. Therefore, you must integrate the text with your community work throughout each portfolio. With no integration of text, you cannot receive above a C on your portfolio. You can talk to your teammates, but all of the portfolios will be your own work. In addition, you will most likely not receive higher than a C on your overall portfolio grade if you do not complete at least 25 hours of social action work (1.5 to 2 hours a week). Please use the provided log to keep track of your community work and then turn it in with the portfolios. Your portfolio and log will be collected with portfolio 1-3, with portfolio 4-7, and at the conclusion of class. Your log will be worth 70 points, and each portfolio will be worth 40 points.

Campaign Presentation and Binder (100 points)

For the final exam, students give a group presentation on your social action campaign. In addition, your group will turn in a campaign binder, which will be evaluated. The binder will be used by future students when they choose their campaigns.

Grading

Grade Item	Total Points
Attendance	50 points
Participation & Discussion	150 points
Portfolios (40 points x 7)	350 points
Campaign Binder and Presentation	100 points
TOTAL	600 Points

To calculate your final grade, add up your scores on all assignments and divide the sum by the total possible number of points.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
94-100	90-93	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	0-59

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Intellectual Integrity

The college policy on cheating and plagiarism applies to all assignments and exams in this course. You should familiarize yourself with that policy, which is reproduced in the college catalogue, and can also be accessed on the website listed below. If it is determined that you have cheated or plagiarized on an assignment or exam in this course, I reserve the right to assign a grade of "E" for that assignment or exam, or a grade of "E" for the course, depending on the circumstances.

Additionally, students who engage in academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean's Office, and the Provost's Office.

"Intellectual integrity on the part of all students is basic to individual growth and development through college course work. When academic dishonesty occurs, the teaching/learning climate is seriously undermined and student growth and development are impeded. For these reasons, any form of intellectual dishonesty is a serious concern and is therefore prohibited."

Disability Services

If you have a disabling condition which may interfere with your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR) located at 155 Campus Center, phone (315) 312-3358. Please also see me after class or during office hours to discuss your needs.

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) provides support services and adaptive technologies to students who have a legally documented disability or students who suspect that they may have a disability. Students must contact the office before adaptive services can begin. Certain services, such as alternative testing, require advanced notice and are contingent upon the student initiating the process in a timely fashion. Alternative testing may occur at a time other than the time the rest of the class is taking the exam.

The Office of Learning Services (OLS) Support and Resources

The Office of Learning Services (OLS) provides support to students who might need additional help.

For additional help beyond class time and your instructor's office hours please visit OLS. OLS provides no-cost peer-tutoring, study skills, writing assistance and technology help for all SUNY Oswego students.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with a tutor please visit oswego.edu/ols , call 315.312.2571 or visit the office in Penfield 112-114.

Mental Health of Students

Stress is a normal and important part of our human experience. However, there are times when your stress will exceed your coping skills and resources. The changes that we have experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted us all in various ways and are expected to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Your health and well-being are critical components in your ability to learn. If you find that you are struggling to engage and function, please reach out. Resources are available, including **Counseling Services**, oswego.edu/csc, which provides brief and confidential counseling support to enrolled students (covered by your student health fee.) **After-hours** crisis coverage is available by calling **Counseling Services** at **315.312.4416** and listening to the available options. The **CrisisTextLine** can be accessed by **texting GOT5U to 741741**. Lastly, the **Oz Concern Navigator**, oswego.concerncenter.com, is now available to point you to additional resources to help you address your concerns.

Non-Discrimination Policy

SUNY Oswego values the contributions to learning for its members that result from maintaining a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. The goal of SUNY Oswego is to nurture members' abilities and capacities for appreciation of living and working together in a diverse learning environment. Members must not expose others to discriminatory acts of any form related to gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or disability since such acts, either active or passive, create a hostile environment.

Members of the college community who experience or observe discrimination, an incident of sexual discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, violence, or exploitation, whether occurring on or off campus, should immediately report the incident. For further information on this policy, and reporting procedures, access the following link:

<https://oswego.edu/about/titleix/discriminationpolicy.html>

Clery Act/Title IX Reporting Statement

SUNY Oswego is committed to enhancing the safety and security of the campus for all its members. In support of this, faculty may be required to report their knowledge of certain crimes or harassment. Upon receipt of a report of harassment or discrimination based on sex, gender, pregnancy and/or related conditions, or familial status, all employees have a responsibility to report to the Title IX Coordinator. For more information about Title IX protections, go to <https://ww1.oswego.edu/title-ix/> or contact the Title IX Coordinator, 407 Culklin Hall, 315-312-5604, titleix@oswego.edu, or schedule a meeting here: tinyurl.com/MeetWithLisaE.

For more information about the Clery Act and campus reporting, go to the University Police annual report: <https://www.oswego.edu/police/annual-report>.

Correct Pronouns, Names, And Inclusion

I hope to create a space where students have the opportunity to bring all aspects of their selves into the classroom in order to fully engage in this course. I support people of all gender expressions and gender identities and encourage students to use the name and set of pronouns which best reflect who they are. In this spirit, I welcome and expect all students to also use the correct name and pronouns of their classmates. I will do my best to respect and use the language you use to refer to yourself and will encourage other members of our online classroom community to do the same. Please inform me if my documentation reflects a name or set of pronouns different from what you use, and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

SUNY Oswego Basic Needs Statement

SUNY Oswego is dedicated to recognizing the basic needs of every individual on campus by connecting them to resources and services that assist them in meeting their basic needs. If you are in need of [food, clothing](#), academic supplies, emergency housing, addiction services or are unsure of what resources are available to meet your basic needs, please complete the following form to connect to the Office of the Dean of Students: [Basic Needs Self-Disclosure Form](#).

For information on mental health services visit the [Counseling Services website](#) and for information on health services visit the [Health Services website](#).

If you have any questions or would like to schedule a meeting with one of the Assistant Dean of Students, email deanofstudents@oswego.edu or call 315-312-5483. Visit the Office of the Dean of Students website <https://ww1.oswego.edu/dean-students/> for more information.

For other inquiries, visit the Oz Concern Navigator at <https://oswego.concerncenter.com>.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

This schedule is subject to change and revisions will be announced in Moodle and via e-mail message.

Dates	Subject Content	Social Action Content	Assignments
Week 1 (1/26-2/1)	Defining Mass Violence Reading	Setting Class Norms Discussing Social Action Social Action Log	
Week 2 (2/2-2/8)	Exploring Mass Shooting Examples	Identifying and Choosing Campaigns	CHANGE! Chapter 1 Portfolio 1 Participation 1
Week 3 (2/9-2/15)	Exploring Mass Shooting Examples: Continued	Setting the Tone: Leadership and Group Dynamics Finalize Campaign Selections	CHANGE! Chapter 2 Portfolio 2
Week 4 (2/16-2/22)	Theories of Mass Violence	Change Theory Finalize Campaign Goals and Target Finalize Campaign Name	CHANGE! Chapter 3 Portfolio 3 Participation 2
Week 5 (3/2-3/8)	Theories of Mass Violence Continued	Building Power Recruiting Others	CHANGE! Chapter 4 Portfolio 4 Participation 3
Week 6 (3/9-3/15)	Media Responses to Mass Shootings	Walking Tour?	Turn In Portfolio 1-3 Submit Action Log
Week 7 (3/16-3/22)	SPRING BREAK! <i>Begin Reading the Chapter 5 reading to keep your mind on your social action.</i>		
Week 8 (3/23-3/29)	Mass Violence in Popular Culture	Research: Power Mapping, Target Analysis, & Budget Analysis	CHANGE! Chapter 5 Portfolio 5
Week 9 (3/30-4/5)	Survivor Narratives and Media Portrayal of Survivors	Group Dynamics	CHANGE! Chapter 6 Portfolio 6 Participation 4
Week 10 (4/6-4/12)	Law Enforcement Practices: Threat Assessments	Strategy and Tactics	CHANGE! Chapter 7 Portfolio 7 Participation 5
Week 11 (4/13-4/19)	Law Enforcement Practices: Schools	Campaign Kick Off	CHANGE! Chapter 8
Week 12 (4/20-4/26)	Solutions: Prevention	Timeline and Campaign Plan Campaign Implementation	CHANGE! Chapter 9
Week 13 (4/27-5/3)	Solutions: Intervention	Campaign Execution	Turn in Portfolio 4-7 Submit Action Log
Week 14 (5/4-5/8)	Solutions: Legislative Response	Campaign Evaluation	Work on Campaign Notebook
Final Exam Week	Present Campaigns and Submit Campaign Notebooks		