Over the last several decades, states have been under increasing pressure to reduce their prison and jail populations, shifting the burden of offender supervision, management, and treatment onto practitioners and professionals in the community. This shift has coincided with a growing awareness that certain types of offenders have unique needs and situations that differ from the “average” offender population. By addressing these factors using more explicit and effortful tactics, better criminal justice and public health outcomes can be achieved. One avenue by which these efforts take place is through the use of specialized court dockets— or specialty courts. This seminar will discuss the various types of specialized criminal court dockets extant in the United States today. Specifically, the seminar will detail the organizational and operational features of these courts and review the evidence on their effectiveness. Students will also hear from specialty court judges and individuals who have been enrolled in a specialty court.

Wrongful Convictions, October 26, 2018
Sarah Manchak, Ph.D., Associate Professor, UC School of Criminal Justice
UG Version: CJ 4125 001 (Class 22511) Graduate Version: CJ 6025 001 (Class 22611)

As of the start of 2018, 2,175 people have been officially exonerated in the United States. Combined, these individuals were incarcerated for 18,750 years for crimes they did not commit. How do such miscarriages of justice like this happen? This seminar will discuss the primary causes of wrongful convictions. Specifically, this course draws attention to errors and systemic procedures and practices that can contribute to wrongful convictions. Students will examine the issues primarily from a psychological/social science perspective but will also be exposed to the legal issues and processes leading up to an exonerating. Through case studies and interaction with a panel of individuals exonerated in Ohio by the Ohio Innocence Project, students will have the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the human side of wrongful convictions.

A History of Mass Murder in America, November 16, 2018
Ken Hughes, M.S., Police Chief (ret.), Forest Park Police Department
UG Version: CJ 4123 001 (Class 22512) Graduate Version: CJ 6023 001 (Class 22609)

This seminar will focus on the history of mass murder in the United States. Topics will include: The Modern Era: schools, churches, public places, and entertainment venues; the motive of the offender, surviving a mass shooting, gun violence, and the Second Amendment. Case studies will include shootings in Las Vegas, Sandy Hook Elementary, San Bernardino, and others. The focus will be on a historical perspective and the propensity for someone to commit random, unprovoked, and premeditated acts of mass murder.

Preventing Gang Violence, January 25, 2019
Daniel Gerard, M.S., Director of Operations, UC Institute of Crime Science
UG Version: CJ 4102 001 (Class TBA) Graduate Version: CJ 6002 001 (Class TBA)

This course examines the current structure and organization of criminal gangs at the local, state, and national levels. Multiple aspects of gangs will be examined, including their recruitment, criminal activities, law enforcement efforts, and state and federal prosecutions. The course will combine academic insight and research findings with experienced practitioners in the criminal justice field. Several local and federal law enforcement officials and prosecutors will describe their work in the apprehension and prosecution of local criminal gang members, including discussions of innovative tactics based on data-driven approaches.

Human Trafficking: An Overview of Forms, Causes, and Policy, March 8, 2019
Valerie Anderson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, UC School of Criminal Justice
UG Version: CJ 4126 001 (Class TBA) Graduate Version: CJ 6026 001 (Class TBA)

This one-day seminar provides an overview of the phenomenon of human trafficking. Human trafficking is a complex social problem that involves the trafficking of persons for sex or labor through force, fraud, or coercion. During this seminar, students will examine different forms of human trafficking, the causes of human trafficking, and current policy responses to human trafficking at local, national, and international levels. And federal law enforcement officials and prosecutors will describe their work in the apprehension and prosecution of local criminal gang members, including discussions of innovative tactics based on data-driven approaches.