**Criminology Comprehensive Exam POLICY**

**Doctoral Program in Criminology**

**School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences**

**University of Texas at Dallas**

**May 9, 2021**

**Instructions**

You have six (6) hours to complete the Policy portion of the comprehensive exam.

Your answers will be evaluated on their organization, coherence, clarity, intellectual rigor, substantive validity, conceptual development, and application of relevant literature to the question at hand.

Answers must be emailed to [scotch@utdallas.edu](mailto:scotch@utdallas.edu) before 4:00pm today.

We wish you success!

**POLICY QUESTIONS**

**Answer ONE of the following:**

1. In 2005, when Texas was faced with building new prisons to accommodate the projected increase in the prison population, the legislature began examining alternatives to incarceration. These alternatives included programs to divert offenders from prison; increasing the use of parole; and expanding substance abuse, mental health, and intermediate sanction programs and facilities. Considering the recent uptick in violent crime, particularly murder, policymakers and the public may turn against efforts to further reduce the incarceration rate. You have been appointed to a task force to address how we can continue to reduce our reliance on incarceration without jeopardizing public safety or increasing costs. Provide specific recommendations for policies that reduce incarceration rates. Your answer must be supported with the relevant empirical literature. Next, design a longitudinal quasi or non-experimental study (be explicit in the design you select) to assess the effectiveness of one of the policies discussed above, providing a careful explanation of how the design you've selected solves or mitigates key methodological issues found in the prior literature.

2. Crime policy is based on retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, or rehabilitation. At their foundation, all seek to prevent crime or prevent reoffending. Select one policy designed to prevent crime and one policy designed to prevent reoffending or encourage desistance. Discuss the policies, including their theoretical foundations, goals, and the empirical studies which support and refute them. Lastly, design a longitudinal quasi or non-experimental study (be explicit in the design you select) to assess the effectiveness of one of the policies discussed above, providing a careful explanation of how the design you've selected solves or mitigates key methodological issues found in the prior literature.