**Criminology Comprehensive Exam POLICY**

**Doctoral Program in Criminology**

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

**University of Texas at Dallas**

**April 2023**

**Instructions**

You have six (6) hours to complete the Policy portion of the comprehensive exam. Your answer will be evaluated on its 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 (4/30/2023). Please do not incorporate any identifying information on what you submit.

We wish you success!

**POLICY QUESTIONS**

**Answer ONE of the following:**

Question 1

The American criminal justice system has seen tremendous innovation over the past few decades. Identify and describe three criminal justice innovations, one each in policing, courts, and corrections. Then, discuss the degree to which the three innovations were effective or ineffective, citing appropriate evidence to support your conclusions.  Make sure you define your metric of effectiveness (for example, recidivism, general deterrence, etc).  Also, be sure to address key conceptual and methodological issues that are relevant in studying the effectiveness of each innovation.

Question 2

Mass incarceration has been one of the foremost policies used to reduce crime over the past 50 years. Explain the trend in incarceration rates over the last 50 years, both nationally and at the state level. Also, choose three factors that have been described as “causes of mass incarceration.” Be sure to explain them in detail and how they contributed to prison population growth. Furthermore, review the literature assessing whether sending people to prison (in contrast to other punishments) reduces crime. What are the methodological strengths and weaknesses of this literature? Be sure to explain the types of study designs used to assess this question and what the primary findings are.