

JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS, ADMINISTRATION, AND LEADERSHIP

Comprehensive Exam Sample Study Questions

September 7, 2007

1. The administration of justice in the U.S. is often characterized as quite varied because there are so many different systems at the local, state, and federal level. But some have argued that these different systems of justice are highly similar. Write an essay that considers these opposing viewpoints. You may consider all component parts of the justice system, or you may focus on only one (e.g., police, courts, or corrections).

- a. What evidence is available to support or refute each view, and based on the evidence what is your judgment of the proper way to characterize the administration of justice in the U.S.?
- b. Based on your response to (a), consider two theories that might be used to account for the nature and extent of variation in the administration of justice in the U.S. Compare the utility of these theories for accounting for what you have described in (a).

2. The organization theory literature has experienced a significant paradigm shift over the past half century. While much of the research from the late 1950s to the early 1970s focused on the constraints faced by organizations and their leaders, later research began to recognize the power of strategic choice and human agency. Characterize the debate in the general organization theory literature and draw a parallel to research on criminal justice organizations and their capacity for change.

3. Some prisons are both safe and orderly for staff and inmates while others are not. Drawing on a blend of research and theory from both criminal justice and organization science, what are the best ways to produce safe and orderly prisons?