

# ***THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM IN CALIFORNIA: A VIEW FROM INSIDE***

**David Lovell**

**Date: Monday, February 29, 2016**

**Time: 12:00 – 1:15**

**Location: 2372 Social Ecology II**

When California's Public Safety Realignment took effect late in 2011, it was the most sweeping statewide change in policy in decades but by no means the first. The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), under various incarnations, had been primarily a regulatory, funding, and training agency for local criminal justice providers. It was given a research mission by the legislature in 2013, and early in 2015 its first report was issued. BSCC was required to develop a set of six to twelve "performance metrics" by which the outcome of a community correctional system could be assessed.

Resisting some of the assumptions behind this request, we developed a diagram of functional relationships among primary components of community-level criminal justice operations such as crimes, arrests, numbers incarcerated, and community-level contextual factors such as poverty and unemployment. We found that total levels of incarceration in prisons and jails, which peaked at over 250,000 in mid-2007, declined just as much before Realignment took effect as since then. There was wide diversity in circumstances, methods, and outcomes across California's 58 counties, with total incarceration rates in 2014 ranging from 200 to 1400 per 100,000. There was a very strong county-by-county correlation between poverty and incarceration rates. The statewide long-term decline in reported crime has continued while average daily incarceration counts have declined by 40,000. We plan to present an updated version with recent findings on crimes, arrests, and incarceration levels. Finally, we will consider the task of conducting state-guided policy research in the political environment that has been created, in California as elsewhere, over the past four decades. We look forward to stimulating an active conversation and learning from our colleagues at Irvine.

**David Lovell** holds a PhD in philosophy and an MSW. He has worked as a teacher, counselor, consultant, and researcher within several corrections systems. He has previously been research faculty at the University of Washington and served as Co-Investigator, then Principal Investigator, with the University of Washington-Department of Corrections Mental Health Collaboration. Since 2011, he has been in California, where he served as criminal justice analyst with Napa County and where he currently serves as Research Director with the Board of State and Community Corrections in Sacramento.

Please RSVP by February 22, 2016: [http://cls.soceco.uci.edu/RSVP\\_David-Lovell-Talk](http://cls.soceco.uci.edu/RSVP_David-Lovell-Talk)