



Presenter: Kaitlynn Woolensack

Session & Time: Oral V

Room/Time: GUZ 111 / 4:30-4:50

Discipline: Criminology

Faculty Mentor: William Granados

Digital Portfolio URL:

Title: Street-Level Procedural Justice: Officer Demeanor and Driver Compliance at DUI Checkpoints

Abstract:

This exploratory field study examined procedural justice from the relationship between officer and driver demeanor during DUI checkpoint interactions in a mid-sized western city using Likert scale measurements on three variables: trust, voice and participation, and respect. The hypothesis predicted that driver demeanor would be influenced by initial officer demeanor, given that officers initiate contact and establish the interaction's tone. Observational data were collected during evening checkpoint operations under clear weather conditions with moderate traffic flow. A total of ten officers were observed at random intervals over a five-hour period. Officers were positioned approximately 50-feet apart, creating natural observation points for systematic behavioral coding. Results indicated high overall driver demeanor scores, with trust emerging as a statistically significant variable. The limited variation in responses reflected strong cultural support for police drunk driving enforcement efforts. The correlation

between officer-initiated contact tone and subsequent driver responses supports the hypothesis that officer demeanor significantly influences citizen interactions. This study provides preliminary evidence for the importance of positive police-citizen contact protocols during routine enforcement activities, suggesting that positive officer interactions enhance public cooperation and community relations during DUI checkpoint operations.