Fairness in sentencing is defined by four key concepts...

- **Equity**: Consistency in sentence specification
- **Uniformity**: Lawbreakers with similar offenses receive similar sentences
- **Proportionality**: Correlation of sentence severity with sanction assigned to offender
- **Certainty of Release**: The sureness of incarceration expiration date

**Puzzle**: Following implementation, is the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission effective in providing fairer sentences to convicts and allowing for manageability of prison populations?

**Lit Review**: The first 10 years following implementation translated to success. Goodstein (1983) and Knapp (1982) found that the system effectively allowed for a marked increase in sentence fairness. Dailey (1993, 1998) indicated continued guidelines success through weathered political climates. Marvell (1995) was the first to illustrate effectiveness of guideline impact on prison capacities with 95% capacity. Frase (1995, 2005) had extensive research on both fairness and prison capacity.

**Method**: By researching the effectiveness of the prior indeterminate sentencing system alongside the determinate system, I will be able to understand the differences in sentence disparity and view the altered incarceration rates. My independent variable is the presence of guidelines. My dependent variables are sentence fairness and incarceration rates.

**Conclusion**: The effectiveness of the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines are measured by comparing the effectiveness of the determinate system following implementation and the indeterminate system previously in place. Research on equity, uniformity, proportionality, and certainty of release indicate an increased fairness to convicts sentenced under the guidelines. Furthermore, the prison capacities increased at a slowed rate following implementation, effectively allowing for a better prison system.