



## Course Syllabus

**Course Title:** Introduction to Criminal Law and Justice

**Term and Year:** TBD

**Course and Section Number:** CRJ 263

**Time and Place:** TBD

**Number of Credit Hours:** Three (3)

**Instructor:** TBD

**Office Location/Hours:** TBD

**Office Phone:** TBD

**Email:** TBD

**Course Description:** This course will cover the scientific study of the criminal justice systems. Learners will assess crime from a social view to identify nature and extent of crime, causes of crime, impact of crime on society and prevention of crime.

**Learning Outcomes:** Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the basic concepts and principles of criminal law.
2. Explain the elements of criminal liability and defenses.
3. Evaluate the nature of liability for specific criminal offenses.
4. Examine criminal cases and how the courts interpret criminal law.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Required Text:**

Strom, L. (2012) *Introduction to criminal law* (v. 1.0).

**Course Requirements:** Canva and audio and video recording software to utilize Panopto.

**Attendance/Participation:** All students are expected to log in to their courses regularly throughout the week to receive instruction, materials, and updates from the instructor. It is your responsibility to check in and submit your assignments, complete your discussion board postings, and finish quizzes and exams by the due dates each week.

If you do not participate in the course each week, you will be counted absent. Simply logging in is not enough; you must submit/complete an assignment, post to a discussion board, or other similar assignment tasks to avoid being counted absent. Instructors are required to submit attendance the Monday following each week of class.

Once you are marked absent three (3) weeks during a course you will be dropped from the course with a "W". If you are an international student in a class with a seated requirement, you will be administratively dropped if you do not attend all portions of the seated requirement. Only in the event of rare and unusual circumstances, with formal documentation will you be allowed to continue after your allotted absences.

Attendance is reported to the Financial Aid Department and may result in the loss of any financial aid refund you are expecting if you have not been participating in your courses.

Students are required to actively participate in weekly readings, videos or podcast, discussion forums, writings, and assignments. Students are required to post their own professionally written responses to forum discussions by Wednesday of each week and respond (a minimum of 100 words) to at least two classmates' posts per forum by Saturday of each week. Students can work in advance of the schedule; however, late assignments will not be accepted. University attendance requirements state that once a student misses three sessions of any one class, prior to the withdrawal deadline, the student will be dropped from the course with a "W". Only in the event of rare and unusual circumstances, with formal documentation, will a student be allowed to continue.

### **Grading/Evaluation:**

The undergraduate course grading scale is as follows:

90-100% A	75-79% C+	60-64% D
85-89% B+	70-74% C	59% and below F
80-84% B	65-69% D+	

Assignment point totals:

Discussion Forums (14 worth 20 points each) = 280

Assignments: (6 worth 20 points each) = 120

Mid-Term/Final Assignment (50 points each) = 100

### **Other Policies:**

#### **Academic Misconduct:**

The University prohibits all forms of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct refers to dishonesty in examinations (cheating), presenting the ideas or the writing of someone else as one's own (plagiarism) or knowingly furnishing false information to the University by forgery, alteration, or misuse of University documents, records, or identification. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: permitting another student to plagiarize or cheat from one's own work, submitting an academic exercise (written work, printing, design, computer program) that has been prepared totally or in part by another or artificial intelligence, acquiring improper knowledge of the contents of an exam, using unauthorized material during an exam, submitting the same paper in two different courses without knowledge and consent of professors, or submitting a forged grade change slip or computer tampering. The faculty member has the authority to grant a failing grade in cases of academic misconduct as well as referring the case to Student Life.

#### **Plagiarism:**

You are expected to submit your own work and to identify any portion of work that has been borrowed from others in any form. An ignorant act of plagiarism on final versions and minor projects, such as attributing or citing inadequately, will be considered a failure to master an essential course skill and will result in an F for that assignment. A deliberate act of plagiarism,

such as having someone else do your work, or submitting someone else's work as your own (e.g., from the Internet, fraternity file, etc., including homework and in-class exercises), or submitting work completed by artificial intelligence, will at least result in an F for that assignment and could result in an F for the course.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) is prohibited:** All work submitted by students in this course must be generated by the student. Students may not have another person or entity contribute to an assignment for them, which includes using AI. Students may not incorporate any part of an AI-generated response in an assignment, use AI to formulate arguments, use AI to generate ideas for an assignment, or submit work to an AI platform for improvement. Using an AI tool to generate content may qualify as academic misconduct in this course.

OR

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) is allowed:** Students may use AI tools on instructor-identified assignments in this course. To adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work. Using an AI tool without proper attribution may qualify as academic misconduct in this course. It is the responsibility of the student to verify the accuracy, reliability, and ethical implications of AI-generated content.

**Electronic Devices:**

Use of electronic devices including smart watches and cell phones is prohibited during exams or quizzes unless directly allowed by the instructor.

**Additional Information:** Refer to Student Resources within the Moodle course for information on: student and instructor expectations, accessibility and accommodations, and mental health or self-care.

Week One: Introduction (LO1)	
Learning Activities and Materials	Assessments

**Read:**

1. [Chapter 1: Introduction to Criminal Law \(v. 1.0\)](#) (LO1)
2. [Chapter 2: Introduction to Criminal Law \(v. 1.0\)](#) (LO1)

**Watch:**

1. [How forgiveness can create a more just legal system](#) (14:44) (LO1)

**Discussion Forums:**

1. Using proper APA formatting, respond to the following: The purpose for punishing individuals convicted of a crime has long been the subject of much debate. Although no single purpose totally dominates correctional philosophy, at times, different purposes have been more influential than others. What purpose do you find most persuasive and why? (LO1)
2. According to the Martha Minow in her TedTalk (2019), the law leans so severely towards punishment these days. She cites several examples of how the increased use of restorative justice programs could create a more just legal system. Using at least three objective, reliable sources research and describe three potential pros and three potential cons to the speaker's argument. (LO1)

**Learning Styles Alternatives:** If you would like to create an audio clip or a visual instead of writing a response for this post, that is acceptable as long as it meets the discussion forum brief.

**Assignment 1:**

Select a problem, challenge, or obstacle you view within the U.S. legal system.

Then, evaluate the potential causes needed to produce or sustain the identified problem, challenge, or obstacle.

In an infographic, detail a minimum of three potential solutions to overcome the previously identified problem, challenge, or obstacle. Support your position with a

	minimum of three properly cited resources. <b>(LO1)</b>
<b>Week Two: Constitutional Protections (LO1)</b>	
<b>Learning Activities and Materials</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Chapter 3: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> <b>(LO1)</b></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Chapter 4: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> <b>(LO1)</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Watch:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">A juror's reflections on the death penalty (15:51)</a> <b>(LO1)</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Discussion Forum:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using proper APA citation, identify and explain at least three arguments for and against capital punishment. Based on this analysis, do you think life without parole is viable alternative to the death penalty? Why or why not? <b>(LO1)</b></li> <li>2. The "Good Samaritan" doctrine and the "American bystander rule" are different approaches to defining the legal duty to rescue strangers or call for help. Using reliable, primary sources and proper APA citations, identify at least two pros and two cons for each. Which of these two approaches best serve society based on your analysis? <b>(LO1)</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Learning Styles Alternatives:</b> If you would like to create an audio clip or a visual instead of writing a response for this post, that is acceptable as long as it meets the discussion forum brief.</p> <p><b>Assignment 2:</b></p> <p>In an infographic, define freedom of speech in the U.S. and identify at least one argument for and arguments against the U.S. courts' current position on freedom of speech. Provide at least one example for each identified argument. <b>(LO1)</b></p>
<b>Week Three: Criminal Defenses (LO2,4)</b>	
<b>Learning Activities and Materials</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Chapter 5: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> <b>(LO2)</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Discussion Forums:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify at least three arguments for and against "Stand Your Ground"</li> </ol>

<p>2. <a href="#">Chapter 6: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> (LO2)</p> <p><b>Listen:</b></p> <p>1. <a href="#">John Hinckley Jr. and the Insanity Defense</a> (31:08) (LO4)</p> <p>2. <a href="#">Criminal Law - Part Two: The Two Essential Elements - Mens Rea and Actus Reus</a> (38:48) (LO2)</p>	<p>laws. Based on your analysis, how effective are these laws? (LO2)</p> <p>2. Using proper APA citation, briefly summarize the verdict in the John Hinckley case and his subsequent commitment to a mental hospital (rather than prison). Explain what decision you would reach if you were the judge in this case based on the facts and application of the insanity defense? (LO4)</p> <p><b>Learning Styles Alternatives:</b> If you would like to create an audio clip or a visual instead of writing a response for this post, that is acceptable as long as it meets the discussion forum brief.</p> <p><b>Assignment 3:</b></p> <p>In an infographic, define use of force by identifying and explaining at least three U.S. Supreme Court cases related to use of force and identify at least one potential cause of excessive use of force. (LO1)</p> <p><b>Mid-Term Assignment:</b></p> <p>Create a podcast (Audio Recording via Panopto) of at least five (5) minutes in duration analyzing the principle of Mens Rea based on, in part, the video: Criminal Law - Part Two: The Two Essential Elements - Mens Rea and Actus Reus. Within your analysis, include: A summary of the meaning of Mens Rea; define and provide examples of the different intents of Mens Rea; a brief summary of the Model Penal Code levels of culpability; the differences between malum in se, malum prohibitum, and strict liability; and how Mens Rea and Actus Reus interact. (LO2)(LO4)</p>
<b>Week Four: Parties to Crime (LO3,4)</b>	
<b>Learning Activities and Materials</b>	<b>Assessments</b>

<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Chapter 7: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> (LO3)</li> <li>2. <a href="#">Chapter 8: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> (LO3)</li> <li>3. <a href="#">Chapter 9: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> (LO3)</li> </ol> <p><b>Watch:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Tison V Arizona Final</a> (6:42) (LO4)</li> <li>2. <a href="#">Inchoate Offenses: Module 2 of 5</a> (16:47) (LO3)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Discussion Forums:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accomplice liability becomes an especially important legal issue in death penalty cases. If you were a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, what position would you take in the Tison v. Arizona case and why? (LO3)(LO4)</li> <li>2. Watch the video associated with this week's Learning Activities and Materials and respond to the following using APA Formatting: If you had to remove one inchoate offense from existence, which one would you remove and why? (LO3)</li> <li>3. Using proper APA citation, identify which of the six laws described in Chapter 9 you would eliminate and explain why you would eliminate this law. (LO3)</li> </ol> <p><b>Learning Styles Alternatives:</b> If you would like to create an audio clip or a visual instead of writing a response for this post, that is acceptable as long as it meets the discussion forum brief.</p> <p><b>Assignment 4:</b></p> <p>Utilizing the textbook and at least one independent example, create an infographic responding to the following analysis of the law of murder: A summary of the history and evolution of the law regarding murder; the elements of murder; a brief description of the kinds and degrees of murder. (LO3)</p>
<b>Week Five: Sexual Offenses (LO3,4)</b>	
<b>Learning Activities and Materials</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Chapter 10: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> (LO3)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Discussion Forums:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What evidence, if any, exists to support minors having the right to</li> </ol>

<p>1. <a href="#">Chapter 11: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> (LO3)</p> <p><b>Watch:</b></p> <p>1. <a href="#">What About Legalization?</a> (4:56) (LO3)</p> <p>2. <a href="#">Theft at Walmart Self Checkout in Kenner, Louisiana</a> (2:48) (LO4)</p>	<p>consent to sexual activity? Based on your research, should states allow minors to consent to sexual activity? (LO3)</p> <p>2. Using proper APA citations, research and explain at least three arguments for and against the decriminalization of prostitution. What impact, if any, would the legalization of prosecution have on sex trafficking? (LO3)</p> <p>3. Watch the video associated with this week's Learning Activities and Materials and respond to the following using proper APA formatting: Research and explain at least two arguments for and against Theft having different categories based on monetary values. Should this practice continue? Why or why not? (LO3)(LO4)</p> <p><b>Learning Styles Alternatives:</b> If you would like to create an audio clip or a visual instead of writing a response for this post, that is acceptable as long as it meets the discussion forum brief.</p> <p><b>Assignment 5:</b></p> <p>The age of legal consent varies from state to state in the U.S. and is most commonly sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen. Identify a problem, challenge, or potential obstacle you view with varying ages of legal consent.</p> <p>Then, evaluate the potential causes needed to produce or sustain the identified problem, challenge, or potential obstacle.</p> <p>In an infographic, detail a minimum of three potential solutions to overcome the previously identified problem, challenge, or potential</p>
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	obstacle. Support your position with a minimum of three properly cited resources. <b>(LO4)</b>
<b>Week Six: Crimes against public and government (LO3,4)</b>	
<b>Learning Activities and Materials</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Chapter 12: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> <b>(LO3)</b></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Chapter 13: Introduction to Criminal Law (v. 1.0)</a> <b>(LO3)</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Watch:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">The RICO Act (1989)</a> (20:51) <b>(LO4)</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Discussion Forum:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Security and order are important values for everyone. Americans, however, also value freedom and due process. Is it possible to maximize both of these goals at the same time? If and when that isn't possible, which goal should take priority and why? <b>(LO3)</b></li> <li>2. Watch the video associated with this week's Learning Activities and Materials and respond to the following using proper APA formatting: What are the criticisms of the RICO Act and is the act being used too broadly? Why or why not? <b>(LO3)(LO4)</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Learning Styles Alternatives:</b> If you would like to create an audio clip or a visual instead of writing a response for this post, that is acceptable as long as it meets the discussion forum brief.</p> <p><b>Assignment 6:</b></p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of sit-lie laws within the U.S. and identify the relevant arguments for and against such laws.</p> <p>In an infographic, define sit-lie laws, identify the relevant arguments for and against, and identify potential alternatives to such laws. <b>(LO4)</b></p> <p><b>Final Assignment:</b></p> <p>Create a PowerPoint Presentation with audio utilizing Panopto and proper APA formatting responding to</p>

	<p>the following analysis: Research and identify a specific criminal event. Using properly cited examples, describe a criminal law associated with this event by including: 1. a brief history of the law, 2. how the courts have interpreted the law over time, 3. the elements of the law, 4. the types of successful defenses against prosecution, and 5. any relevant variations of the crime. <b>(LO3)(LO4)</b></p>
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### References:

- Barkemeyer, C. (2022) *Theft at walmart self checkout in kenner, louisiana*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZkyNcMikTw&t=6s>
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- ItsOnlyaPlanet (2020) *Criminal law - part two: the two essential elements - mens rea and actus reus*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMlf9ybxkDk>
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