

SW311 - INTRODUCTION TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



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| Course Number: | SW 311 | Instructor: | Michael Lauderdale, PhD Clara Pope Willoughby Centennial Professor of Criminal Justice in Social Work |
| Unique #: | 62375 | Office: | SWB 3.113J |
| Semester | Spring 2011 | Office Phone: | 471-9246 |
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| Time: | Tues. And Thurs. 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. | Access: | <i>http://www.courses.utexas.edu/</i> |
| | | Office Hours: | Friday 9 to 11 a.m. Other times by Appointment |

Course Description: America is unique among countries with its emphasis on the role and independence of the citizen. Much of the foundational philosophies of the country's founders stressed breaking free from the class and religious strictures of Europe and placing a great emphasis on the freedom of the individual. The Constitution carefully restricts the power of the central government relative to states and communities and this is reflected in the criminal justice system.

These philosophies of our history teach that our government derives its authority from the consent of the governed and this unique characteristic is evident in the study of the criminal justice system. The system only comes into being on rare occasions as opposed to being a visible and enduring presence in our lives.

During the last few years no part of American life has generated more concern than rising rates of crime, particularly violent crime and crimes by adolescents and children. This course examines responses to crime and the characteristics of the criminal justice system in the United States, its various components and current challenges to the system today. Attention is paid to the evolution of the system and comparison of problems and approaches both historically and cross-culturally. Particular emphasis is placed upon aspects of the system under change including various approaches to policing, victim assistance, sentencing and incarceration alternatives and the expanding role of community in protection, policing, and corrections.

The course will stress efforts at prevention, community involvement, and alternatives in corrections. The educational experience provides students with the opportunity to be aware of personal values; and analyze ethical dilemmas and the ways in which these affect victims, offenders and all citizens. The course includes theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological, and legal domains across the life span; the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organizational, and community); and the ways in which social systems promote or deter people in their involvement with the criminal justice system. Guest speakers will be drawn from various components of the system including the police, the courts, and the correctional institutions.

Class material will include an overview of the professions in the field and information about career opportunities.

Prerequisites: Admission to and in good standing at the university.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester the student should be able to:

1. Examine the role of the citizen in issues of civil conduct and responsibilities.
2. Identify and describe the major components of the criminal justice system.
3. Explain the functions of each component and identify the professional roles of persons working in the system.
4. Discuss the various challenges to the general system, identify problems in each component, and be able to relate these challenges to broader social and economic issues.
5. Discuss issues in the distribution of justice and the role of the criminal justice system in American society.
6. Be able to identify the differential impact of the criminal justice system in terms of gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic class.
7. Identify areas of responsibility for individuals in criminal justice both in terms of employment and each person's role in lessening the rate and severity of crime.

Specific Student Responsibilities:

1. Attend class regularly. Attendance will be taken and counts toward final grade.
2. During class time, no telephones or computers or pagers or iPod devices or reading material other than text and notes. You will see some material that cannot be copied or photographed.
3. Hats and caps off during class.
4. No food or drink during class.
5. Check class Blackboard site weekly at <http://courses.utexas.edu>
6. Come prepared to class to participate. Instructor will ask questions about material including Blackboard postings and you will want to be prepared.
7. Guest speakers may include the Chiefs of Police of UT and APD, counselor from the Gardner-Betts Youth Detention Center, DEA Special Agent, Representative from the FBI, member of the AG's Gang Intelligence Unit, representatives from the District Attorney and State Courts and the Warden and staff of TDCJ's Walls Unit. With these guest speakers and your trip you will be representatives of our University and I will expect you to be ready with appropriate questions.
8. Huntsville Travel-There will be additional dress requirements for those traveling to Huntsville as well as needing to show photo identification. You will be spending part of the day in the prison in the same locations as guards and inmates. While you will be safe, there are clear precautions you will be required to take to ensure your safety and to not disturb prison operations. This trip is contingent upon the Instructor receiving outside funding for buses to Huntsville and permission from the Huntsville Unit.

Course Requirements: Attendance will be taken via a daily signup sheet. It is each student's responsibility to sign the sheet. All students must secure access to the Blackboard internet site and complete each of the required exercises. Any assigned homework or extra participation must be turned in at the time scheduled or no credit will be permitted. There will be four exams: First, Midterm, Third and Final. The exams will cover reading assignments and lecture material. Material in each exam will be cumulative. No makeup or skipped exams will be permitted unless there is an official excused absence and with prior agreement from the Instructor. Schedules and coverage of material may be changed at the discretion of the instructor based upon course progress; however no exam shall be moved to an earlier than scheduled date. Requirements, important dates, and grade components are summarized as follows.

| Exam | Date | Percentages |
|---|------------|-------------|
| First Exam | February 3 | 15 |
| Mid-term Exam | March 24 | 25 |
| Third Exam | April 28 | 35 |
| | | 10 |
| Participation and Attendance includes a summary paper from the Huntsville trip if offered in lieu of Final Exam | As noted | 15 |

Grading of Exams and any other Assignments: Exams will be objective and multiple choice. Any other assignments are to be turned in at the due time and there will be no allowance for alternatives or time extensions.

Opportunity for Participation: Students are expected to relate class material to current issues of criminal justice in the community and the media. The instructor will regularly call for illustrations of topics from the class and students will be expected to relate topics to current issues. In addition to print and electronic media, the World Wide Web is an important source of such information. The syllabus provides a few illustrative Web sites and the various campus computer laboratories have fast access to such Web sites. Students who have individually funded user accounts from the Computer Center also have such access from personal computers.

Class Field Trip to Huntsville: The Instructor will give weight to student attendance and participation. Much of the focus of the class is on participation in society. Students that have fewer than 2 absences will get special consideration for this trip. Based upon attendance and participation some students will be chosen to travel by bus to the Walls Unit of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in Huntsville, Texas. The Unit was established in 1846 and provides both a historical and contemporary picture of the final social action the society may take against an offender: incarceration and possibly execution. The trip represents the capstone of the course and will require a summary paper, but you will be excused from the Final Exam. Students, whose scores and attendance, do not meet the criteria for travel to Huntsville will take a final exam instead. The exam will be given in accordance with the official university calendar.

Computation of Final Grade: The final grade will be based upon where a total falls in this percentage range:


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| A | 90-100 |
| B | 80-89 |
| C | 70-79 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | Below 60 |

Class Format: Initial topic coverage will be by lecture. It will be necessary to have read assigned material before class. Grades will be based upon all aspects and assignments in the class. Always be prepared for the class with reading and homework assignments completed before the class. The Instructor reserves the right to change dates of examinations and conditions for earning volunteer and participation credit as assessment of class progress is made and opportunities for student participation are secured. However no examination will occur at a date earlier than that listed in this syllabus.

Required Texts:

Cole, George F. and Smith, Christopher E.(2009). The American System of Criminal Justice (Eleventh Edition) Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth Publishing Co. If you can find older editions back to 2004 or so, buy it and save the money. It should be sufficient.

Schedule of Topics

| Month | Day & Date | Topic | Reading Chapter |
|-----------------|--|---|------------------------|
| January | Tues. 18 | Crime and Justice America Overview of course, assignments, schedules and responsibilities Definitions of Crime and Criminal Justice; Civil Wrongs and Criminal Acts; How Much Crime is There and the Risk of Being a Victim of a Crime. | 1 |
| | Thurs. 20 | Victimization and Criminal Behavior Conceptual and Empirical Definitions of Crime and Measures and Distributions of Incidence; Official Measures of Crime; Risk of Victimization Trends in Crime | 2 |
| | Tues. 25 | Elements in the Criminal Justice System, The Federal, State and Local Structures, How Decisions are made in the System, Careers in Criminal Justice | 3 |
| | Thurs. 27 | Foundations of Criminal Law, Criminal Law versus Civil Law, Issues of Justice, cont. Equity and Truth, The Impact of Social Class, Age, Ethnicity Theories of Crime Causation, Social Structure, Opportunity and Crime; Differential Distribution of Crime and Justice | 3 |
| February | Tues. 1 | The Basis of Criminal Law, Uses of Criminal Law, The Criminal Defense Review | 4 |
| |  Thurs. 3 | First Examination Lectures and Chapters 1-4 History and Role of the Police, Police Structure, Modern Concepts in Policing, Various Types of Police | 5 |
| | Tues. 8 | Characteristics of the Police, Police and the Rule of the Law | 5 |
| | Thurs. 10 | Changing Roles and Relationships with the Police | |
| | Tues. 15 | Police Operations: Selection and Training | 6 |
| | Thurs. 17 | Organization of the Police | 6 |



Tues. 22 The Courts: Civil and Criminal, Level of Jurisdiction: State and Federal 7 & 8

March

Thurs. 24 The Prosecution and The Defense 9

Tues. 1 Pretrial Procedures, Indictment, 10

Thurs. 3 The Concept of Bail

Tues. 8 Plea Bargaining

Thurs. 10 Court Decisions



Tues. 15 Spring Break

Thurs. 17



Tues. 22 The Courts and the Criminal Trial The Jury, Post-trial Processes 11



Thurs. 24 **Mid-Term Examination Lectures and Chapters 6-10**

Tues. 29 Sentencing

12

April

Thurs. 31 The Corrections Model: Alternative Assumptions about Corrections 13

Tues. 5 Community Corrections: Probation and Intermediate Sanctions 14

Thurs. 7 Prisons: Types and Structure 15

Tues. 12 Prison Society 15

Thurs. 14 Community Treatment and Community Jails 16

Tues. 19 Prison Society 16

Thurs. 21 Field Trip to Huntsville, Texas to State Prison Headquarters

Tues. 26 Parole 16

Thurs. 28 Review

May

Tues. 3 Third Exam

Thurs 5 Gangs Violence Summary for Semester, Alcohol and Drugs in Communities and Schools 17

Final Official University Schedule

Exam

Illustrative WEB sites and their relevance for Chapters from the Text:

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/youthviolence/sgsummary/summary.htm>

<http://www.oag.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/prevention/index.html>

<http://tdcj.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/welcome.html>

<http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/99cius.htm>

<http://www.tjpc.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.ncjrs.org/>

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/>

<http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/>