

SW311 - INTRODUCTION TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



Course Number: SW 311

Instructors:

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Unique #: 60290
Semester Spring 2002

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Time: Tues. And Thurs. 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Office Hours: Friday 9 to 11 a.m. Other times by Appointment

Course Description: 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. 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 and in good standing at the university.

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

1. Identify and describe the major components of the criminal justice system.
2. Explain the functions of each component and identify the professional roles of persons working in the system.
3. 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.
4. Discuss issues in the distribution of justice and the role of the criminal justice system in American society.
5. 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.

Course Requirements: Attendance at all classes is expected and students should be prepared to participate. Lack of attendance and failure to participate will affect adequate progress through the course. Class

roll will be taken and absences can result in lowering of grade. Persons coming to class late will be counted as absent. Any assigned homework or extra participation must be turned in at the time scheduled or no credit will be permitted. There will be three exams: First, Midterm, and Final. The exams will cover reading assignments and lecture material. Material in each exam will be cumulative and the Final Examination will be comprehensive. No makeup or skipped exams will be permitted. 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.

Requirement	Date	Percent of Grade
First Exam	February 19	20
Mid-term Exam	March 26	25
Final Exam	Official University Schedule	35
Participation and Attendance	As noted	20

Final Exam Schedule: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/schedules/spring/fr-final.html>

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: Opportunities may be provided during the semester for volunteer work within the criminal justice system as well as special exercises. Additional handouts will describe these opportunities. These opportunities will count toward the Participation and Attendance Credit area. 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.

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

Letter Grade	Percentage of Total Available Points
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, (2001). *The American System of Criminal Justice* (Ninth Edition) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

Schedule of Topics

Month	Day & Date	Topic	Reading Chapter
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January	Tues. 15	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. 17	Conceptual and Empirical Definitions of Crime and Measures and Distributions of Incidence; Official Measures of Crime; Risk of Victimization Trends in Crime	2
	Tues. 22	Elements in the Criminal Justice System, The Federal, State and Local Structures, How Decisions are made in the System, Careers in Criminal Justice	2
	 Thurs. 24	Foundations of Criminal Law, Criminal Law versus Civil Law, Issues of Justice, cont.	3
	Tues. 29 Thurs. 31	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. 5	The Basis of Criminal Law, Uses of Criminal Law, The Criminal Defense	3
	Thurs. 7	History and Role of the Police, Police Structure, Modern Concepts in Policing, Various Types of Police	4
	 Tues. 12	Characteristics of the Police, Police and the Rule of the Law	4
	Thurs. 14	Changing Roles and Relationships with the Police	5
	Tues. 19	First Examination Lectures and Chapters 1-5	
	Thurs. 21 Tues. 26	Police Operations: Selection and Training Organization of the Police	5 6
March	 Thurs. 28	The Police Upclose: <i>Officers</i> of the Austin Police Department	6
	Tues. 5	The Courts: Civil and Criminal, Level of Jurisdiction: State and Federal	7
	Thurs. 7	The Prosecution and The Defense	7 & 8
	Tues. 12	Spring	9
	 Thurs. 14	Break	
April	Tues. 19	Pretrial Procedures, Indictment, Plea Bargaining, The Concept of Bail	
	Thurs. 21	The Courts and the Criminal Trial	10
	Tues. 26	Mid-Term Examination Lectures and Chapters 6-10	
	 Thurs. 28	The Jury, Post-trial Processes	11
	Tues. 2	Sentencing	12
May	Thurs. 4	The Corrections Model: Alternative Assumptions about Corrections	13
	Tues. 9	Community Corrections: Probation and Intermediate Sanctions	14
	Thurs. 11	Prisons: Types and Structure	15
	Tues. 16	Prison Society	16
	Thurs. 18	Community Treatment and Community Jails	17
	Tues. 23	Release and Supervision in the Community-Parole and Recidivism and Changes and Challenges in Criminal Justice	17
	Thurs. 25	Juvenile Justice: The role of family, neighborhood and schools; Gangs	18
		Violence, Alcohol and Drugs in Communities and Schools	18
	Tues. 30	Prevention and Development	18
	Thurs. 2	Summary	

**Official University Schedule for Final Examination
All Chapters and Lectures**

TTH 9:30 Friday,
- 11:00 am May 10 9:00 - 12:00 noon

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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