

CRIJ 3389 – Criminal Justice Ethics
CRN 14172
Fall 2023

PROFESSOR:

Hernandez, Alma Angelica
Department of Criminal Justice
E-mail: aahernandez4@utep.edu

CLASS DATES:

August 28 to December 7, 2023
Final Due by December 14, 2023

OFFICE HOURS:

Virtual Office Hours are by appointment. I can be contacted via UTEP email and can meet with students via phone and zoom. Please allow 24 hours to respond on weekdays and 48 hours over the weekend.

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:

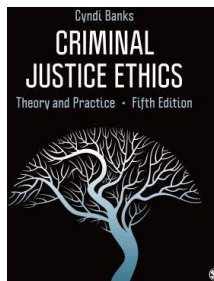
The course will explore the articulation between criminal justice and ethics and will present ethical theories that will be applied to the elements of criminal justice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Define ethics and explain the primary role of ethics in the criminal justice system in the U.S.
- Think critically and constructively and discuss pressing issues in the U.S. criminal justice system, such as policing and corruption, its relevance to our lives, and the utility of crime research.
- Identify and discuss issues law enforcement professionals face in the everyday practice of criminal justice.
 - In doing so, challenge your beliefs and the social context from which these beliefs occur.
- Identify and describe issues of racial discrimination in the U.S. criminal justice system.
- Develop our ability to point to moral (ethical) reasoning in justifying behavior by applying analytical skills and reasoning capabilities in law enforcement practices
- Analyze a variety of ethical dilemmas and make decisions about appropriate resolutions.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Banks, C. (2018). Criminal justice ethics: Theory and practice. Sage Publications. (5th Edition).



GRADING:

Your grading will be based on the following point criteria:

Syllabus Quiz	(10 pts)	10 Points*
Weekly Discussions	(40 pts X 10)	400 Points
Quizzes	(100 pts X 3)	300 Points
Final Proposal	(100 pts)	100 Points
Final Ethics Paper	(200 pts)	200 Points

GRADING SCALE: 1000 possible points

NOTE: Grades are assigned according to the total points earned.

*** Extra credit points**

Refer to Blackboard for more information regarding the grading criteria for each assignment

The letter grade for the class is determined by the number of points you accumulate during the semester, so every point will count. Your points will be recorded in the “My grades” section of Blackboard. Every assignment a grade will be recorded by the point values—not percentages.

DETAILS OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I. Final Ethics PAPER:

Each student will be required to choose a movie from the list provided that presents one or more major ethical dilemmas and submit a paper that analyses the dilemma(s) using ethical systems and concepts from the course. Movies must have the instructor's approval. The purpose of the paper is not a review of the movie, rather an exercise in practical application and analysis that shows learning and understanding. The idea here is to show that you understand the ethical systems and concepts from the book and can use that knowledge to analyze ethical dilemmas not previously discussed. I am looking for learning and understanding of the concepts and ethical systems; therefore, the more concepts and ideas identified from the text and class discussions there are, the better your paper will be. The Final Ethics Paper is due on **Thursday 12/14/23**. **Refer to Blackboard for more information regarding your Final Paper and grading rubric.**

Here is a list of movies (including documentaries and series) that may be used for the ethics paper. The list is certainly not all inclusive and may be added to.

The Central Park Five

Just Mercy

Indictment: The McMartin Trial

Dear Zachary

The Accused

Making of a Murderer (Netflix series)

Kids for Cash

OJ: Made in America
When They See Us (Netflix)

Note: Because this is an upper-level course, if you have a criminological film of your choosing that you would rather suggest for your final ethics paper, please send me an email (aahernandez4@utep.edu) with one paragraph (about 5 sentences) explain why it is relevant to the class. Please do so between the first few weeks of this course. Last day to request another title is **10/05/23**. I will confirm if your request accepted within 48hrs.

II. Final Proposal

Throughout the class, you are expected to devote time towards completing the Final Ethics paper. An initial rough draft is due on **Sunday 10/08/23** in which you will identify the movie you choose from the list. This assignment is designed to get you started so that you don't leave all the work for the last week of class. Watching the movie around the mid-point of this course should help you get started in identifying the ethical dilemmas and concepts that you will discuss in the final paper. **Refer to Blackboard for details, instructions, and grading rubric.**

III. Discussion Participation

You will be required to submit weekly discussions that must be answered thoroughly and completely. The class schedule lists a total of ten discussions that serve as the participation and active engagement components of the online classroom. Your participation in our discussion forum should be scholarly and thorough.

In terms of expectations, you are ***required to respond to the main discussion topic as well as respond to two students/peers' discussion posts*** in a manner that provokes thought. You must respond with more than "Good job," or "I agree." Your response to your peers during discussion posts should provide evidence that you read and reflected on the class material. In addition, discussions for this class should not focus solely on opinions. They are about arguments that are informed by the reading materials that have been assigned. Thus, I encourage you to guide your discussion-based Bloom's Taxonomy of higher order thinking and keep in mind that the point of discussions is not to reach definitive answers, but to keep the conversation going (please see the figure below as well as the section on).

ONLINE ETIQUETTE AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:

You must maintain an academic attitude and uphold UTEP policies. Being disrespectful, using profanity or unprofessional behavior will not be tolerated. All your online communications must be composed with fairness, honesty, and tact.

Please carefully read the following rules for online etiquette and effective communication:

Language: Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language, all capital letters, and the excessive use of

exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

Respect: A Web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom are likely to be inappropriate in a Web-based course as well. Treat your professor and your fellow students with respect. Remember that members of the class and I will be reading any postings.

Be Forgiving: If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the professor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the professor.

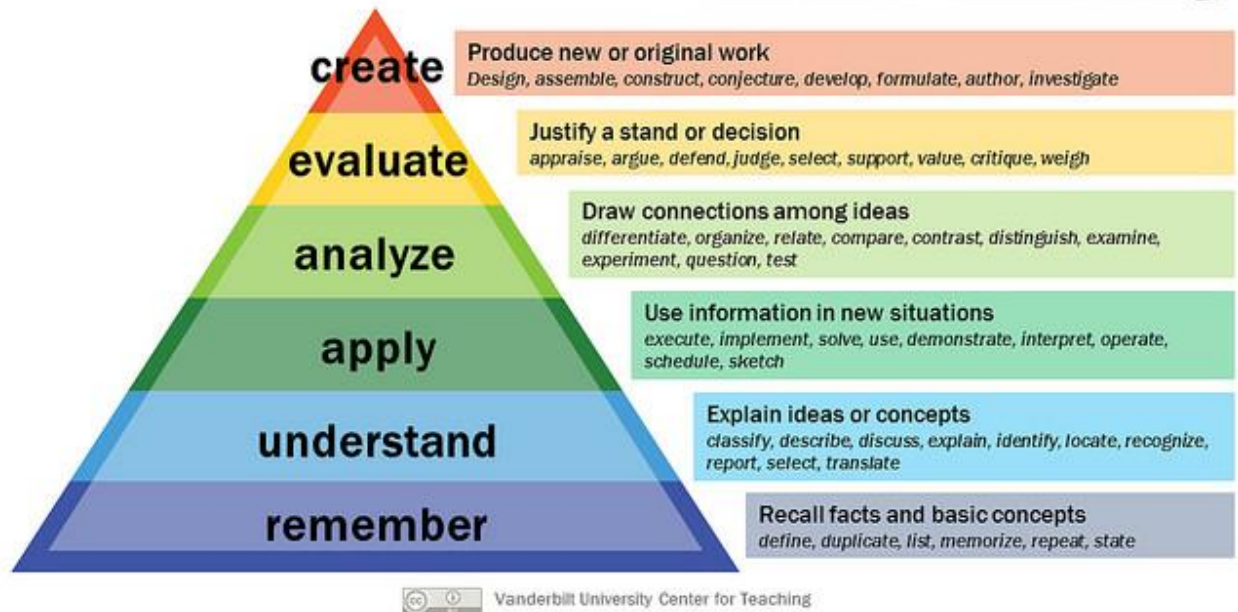
This is Permanent: Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.

Edit Your Work: The grammar, spelling, and punctuation of a message are part of the grading criteria – you should not expect your professor and peers to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word processor before posting them.

Test for Clarity: Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.

Follow the Parameters/Stick to the Point: Follow the posting requirements and parameters set up by your professor. Contributions to a discussion should have a clear point, and you need to stick to the subject. Do not waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents. Also keep in mind that no credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates' comments carefully and thoughtfully.

Bloom's Taxonomy



LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Due dates specified in this syllabus. Plan accordingly. You can submit all assignments early. Weekly Modules will be made available every Sunday and you will be able to access them at any time. Late assignments will be deducted 10% for each day the assignment is late. Assignments submitted more than 2 days late, will not be accepted.

IV. **QUIZZES:** There will be three quizzes, worth 100 points each (See our class schedule for quiz dates)

- **Quizzes** will consist of a combination of Multiple choice, True/False, and/or Essay questions.
- **Quizzes must be submitted in Blackboard by the due date listed on our class schedule.**

MAKE-UP QUIZ POLICY:

- Each student is expected to take the quizzes as scheduled.
- **To make-up a quiz, students MUST email me (aahernandez4@utep.edu) prior to taking it late to confirm new submission deadline and ensure it is graded after the due date. Student must have a verifiable excuse and it is the instructor's discretion as to what is a valid excuse.**
- Students are allowed one make-up quiz for the entire semester.

EMAIL PROTOCOL

When e-mailing me, please put the course and section number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name that you are registered under. This will help me locate you and get you an answer in a timely manner.

V. Important University Policies

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty includes cheating on an exam, turning in someone else's assignment from a previous class, or plagiarism: "(1) use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without fully and properly crediting the author with citations or biographical reference; (2) unacknowledged use of work/materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials; (3) unacknowledged use of original work/material that has been produced through collaboration with others without release in writing from collaborators."

I take cases of alleged academic dishonesty seriously. For students who are found to have allegedly engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, the case will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). While the case is being investigated by OSCCR, an "I" (Incomplete) will be assigned until the case is resolved. If the student is found by OSCCR to have engaged in misconduct, sanctions may include a failing grade on the assignment or exam in question, a failing grade in the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University. See <http://www.utep.edu/dos>

UTEP DROP POLICY:

According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, "When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of "W" before the course drop deadline and with a grade of "F" after the course drop deadline." See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. Therefore, if I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24 hours advance notice via email.

OR

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the Registrar's Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

TECHNOLOGY POLICIES & TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS

For all technological, hardware, software problems, lost files, and/or questions with Blackboard, as well as difficulties you are having during an exam, contact Technology Support Help Desk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Tech support is set up to specifically address technical questions and problems about Blackboard. Professors are not technical support staff.

Phone: 915.747.4357 or toll free: 1-877-382-0491

E-mail: helpdesk@utep.edu

Website: <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74092>

In Person: UTEP Library, Room 300

CHECK YOUR TECHNOLOGY

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Phone: 915.747.4357 or toll free: 1-877-382-0491

E-mail: helpdesk@utep.edu

Website: <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74092>

In Person: UTEP Library, Room 300

COVID-19 ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may contact Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

VI. Class Schedule

MODULE	REQUIRED READINGS	GRADED ASSIGNMENTS	WEEKLY BLACKBOARD DISCUSSIONS	NOTES
Week 1 <i>Introduction: Ethics in Criminal Justice</i> 08/28/23 to 09/23/23		Complete Syllabus Quiz Discussion #1: Introduce yourself to class and answer the discussion question. -I expect everyone to introduce themselves to break the ice and facilitate further discussion. -	DQ #1 Initial response to instructor's post due by Thursday 08/31/23 (11:59 pm) Respond to another student's response by Sunday 09/03/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard for class module, course readings, discussion guidelines, Final paper instructions, and class modules
Week 2 <i>Ethics in Criminal Justice</i> 09/04/23 to 09/10/23	Chapter 1	Discussion #2	DQ #2 Initial response due by Thursday 09/07/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2- Student response due by Sunday 09/10/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 3 <i>Policing & Corruption</i> 09/11/23 to 09/17/23	Chapter 2	Discussion #3	DQ #3 Initial response due by Thursday 09/14/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2- Student response due by Sunday 09/17/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 4 <i>Ethical Issues in Policing</i> 09/18/23 to 09/24/23	Chapter 3	<u>Quiz 1 due by Sunday 09/24/23 (11:59 pm)</u>	No Discussion	Refer to Blackboard to view class module, readings & Quiz 1 instructions

Week 5 <i>Racial Discrimination in Criminal Justice System</i> 09/25/23 to 10/01/23	Chapter 4	Discussion #4	DQ #4 Initial response due by Thursday 09/28/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2-Student response due by Sunday 10/01/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 6 <i>Judges, Lawyers, and Ethics</i> 10/02/23 to 10/08/23	Chapter 5	Discussion #5 <u>Ethics Paper Proposal by Sunday 10/08/23 (11:59 pm)</u>	DQ #5 Initial response due by Thursday 10/05/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2-Student response due by Sunday 10/02/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 7 <i>The Purpose of Criminal Punishment</i> 10/09/23 to 10/15/23	Chapter 6	<u>Quiz 2 - due by Sunday 10/15/23 (11:59 pm)</u>	No Discussion	Refer to Blackboard to view class module, readings & Quiz 2 instructions
Week 8 <i>Corrections</i> 10/16/23 to 10/22/23	Chapter 7	Discussion #6	DQ #6 Initial response due by Thursday 10/19/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2-Student response due by Sunday 10/22/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 9 <i>Corrections Cont.</i>	Chapter 8			Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings

10/23/23 to 10/29/23			No Discussion	
Week 10 <i>Ethics of Criminal Justice Policy Making</i> 10/30/23 to 11/05/23	Chapter 9	Discussion #7	DQ #7 Initial response due by Thursday 11/02/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2- Student response due by Sunday 11/05/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 11 <i>Role of Media</i> 11/06/23 to 11/12/23	Chapter 11	Discussion #8	DQ #8 Initial response due by Thursday 11/09/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2- Student response due by Sunday 11/12/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 12 <i>Current Issues: Role of Media Cont.</i> 11/13/23 to 11/19/23		Discussion #9	DQ #8 Initial response due by Thursday 11/16/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2- Student response due by Sunday 11/19/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 13 <i>The importance of character</i> 11/20/23 to 11/26/23	Chapter 14	No Discussion <u>Quiz 3 is available & due by 12/07/23 (11:59 pm)</u>	No Discussion	Refer to Blackboard to view class module, readings & Quiz 3 instructions

-Happy Thanksgiving Holiday-				
Week 14 11/27/23 to 12/03/23 <i>Current Issues</i>	TBD	Discussion #10	No Discussion	Refer to Blackboard to view class module & readings
Week 15 12/04/23 to 12/07/23 <i>Short last week of class: Lessons Learned/What can we do today?</i>		Discussion #10 <u>Quiz 3 is due by 12/07/23 (11:59 pm)</u> Last day of class is Thursday 12/07/23 (11:59 pm)	DQ #10 Initial response due by Wednesday 12/03/23 (11:59 pm) Student-2-Student response due by Sunday 12/07/23 (11:59 pm)	Refer to Blackboard to view Final Paper Submission Instructions
Week 16 <i>Finals Week</i> 12/11/23 to 12/14/23		Final Paper due on Thursday 12/14/23 (11:59 pm)	No Discussion	Refer to Blackboard to view Final Paper Submission Instructions

***I reserve the right to add assignments if necessary and amend the schedule to suit the needs of the class.**

VII. Resources, References, Etc.

[Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics](#)

[Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING CRITICAL THINKING

- **Cultivate a Healthy Skepticism.**
 - Critical thinkers do not take information at face value or trust their gut reaction. They ask questions and investigate claims to determine if there is sufficient evidence.
- **Be Open-Minded and Humble.**

- If you find information that undermines your values, you may be reluctant to give it credence. However, critical thinkers understand that they do not have all the answers. They seek out other perspectives and do not immediately discount information that contradicts their assumptions.
- **Keep a Reflective Journal.**
 - Critical thinkers are honest with themselves. They are quick to point out their own biases and understand how they may be influenced by their past experiences or feelings. To facilitate this honest reflection, keep a journal where you record your thoughts, values, and beliefs, and how they change as you encounter different people and situations.
- **Follow the Critical Thinking Process.**
 - When faced with a problem or question, work through the steps of the critical thinking process (described below). Once you have done so repeatedly, it will start to become second nature. For the first few times, you may want to write out the steps and your responses to the reflective questions for each step.

The Critical Thinking Process*

1) **Select the problem or question you want to answer.**

2) **Identify assumptions.** An assumption—meaning something that you automatically accept as true, based on your upbringing, values, or beliefs—can be immediately apparent to you or hidden. To determine what these assumptions are, talk to others, view video programs, read texts, and free write in a journal on the problem or question. How you respond reveals your assumptions.

- **Reflective questions for this step:**
 - What do I assume to be true about the problem?
 - What do I assume to be true about the people affected by the problem?
 - What do I assume to be the correct solution?
 - Why?

3) **Check accuracy and validity.** At this stage in the process, conduct research to see if your assumptions are correct. The type of research depends on the type of problem you want to solve.

- **Reflective questions for this step:**
 - What research can I do to test my assumptions?
 - Is this research credible?
 - How does the research support or refute my assumptions?

4) **Find alternative perspectives.** This step is an extension of Step 3. Part of critical thinking is discovering perspectives that contradict or clash with your own. These perspectives can show how your original thinking was flawed or incomplete. To discover a true solution, it is important to investigate many different viewpoints during the research phase.

- **Reflective question for this step:**
 - In what way(s) do I need to adjust my thinking?

5) **Take informed action.** The next step in the process is to decide or pursue a solution, based on the thorough research you conducted.

- **Reflective questions for this step:**
 - What is the best course of action for this problem?
 - Why?

6) **Analyze the action.** After any decision or solution has been applied, it is a good idea to analyze that action to determine if it had the desired effect.

- **Reflective questions for this step:**
 - What were the results of the action?
 - Were those results intended? If not, what were the flaws in my reasoning that may have led to an inappropriate action?
 - What about my thinking process do I need to change for next time?

*Adapted from Brookfield, S. (2007). Developing critical thinkers. Retrieved from <https://www.mnsu.edu/grants/ipesi/Stephen%20Brookfield%20Mankato%20Pkt.pdf>