Court Systems and Practices

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Course Objective

Court Systems and Practices provides an overview of the American court system, its participants, and overall effects on the criminal justice system. If one thinks of the criminal justice system as a three step process, the arrest, prosecution, and subsequent punishment, then this course focuses on what happens after the arrest and continues through the sentencing phase. Students can expect to learn about federal and state courts and follow a case from its inception to its end. Students will also study and analyze the role(s) that judges, attorneys, and other court participants play within the courts and how those roles affect law enforcement and corrections. Further, students will examine the effect of the courts on the other criminal justice processes in order to predict future outcomes.

Required Textbooks

Courts and Criminal Justice in America
Authors: Siegel, L., Schmalleger, F., Worrall, J.

Crazy: A Father’s Search Through America’s Mental Health Madness
Author: Pete Earley
Moodle Account

It is mandatory that students activate and use their MOODLE accounts. You will be responsible for checking your class MOODLE regularly during the semester for posted announcements, assignment completion, and discussion participation. TIP: I am not tech support. Should you have questions or concerns regarding MOODLE or another technology question, you will need to contact tech support at 1-877-382-0491. (Please see the section on Technical Support at the end of this Syllabus).

Course Participation

As a part of this course, you will be required to complete each Module in its entirety. You will complete quizzes, discussion posts, tests, and other assignments within the specified time frame. Each week begins on Monday morning at 8am MST. Each module will close the following Sunday at 11:55pm MST. Be prepared to spend six to ten hours per week completing the requirements for each module.

Communication Tools

Because this course is 100% online, all communication will be electronically through MOODLE and UTEP email. The following links will aid in our communication with one another and with your communication with your fellow students:

- **Announcements**: I will post updates and reminders in this forum.
- **Discussions**: This forum houses all required class discussions. You will be required to post your response to the question and to other’s responses.
- **UTEP Email**: Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have that do NOT involve technology issues.

Grading Criteria

Grades in this course will be calculated on a 100 point scale:

- 100-90 points: A
- 89-80 points: B
- 79-75 points: C
- 74-70 points: D
- 69 and below: F

**Quizzes**:
- Worth 40% of your final grade
- Most quizzes will have ten (10) questions; however, some may have as many as twenty questions.
- You will have thirty (30) minutes to complete each quiz.

**Discussion**:
- Worth 40% of your final grade
- In order to earn full credit for each discussion post, you will be required to answer each and every component of the question fully and thoughtfully and respond to other posts as directed. Your responses must be substantive and contain textual evidence.
- Responses must be made using complete sentences and proper grammar/spelling. Language commonly used in text messages are not appropriate and will not receive a grade.
- You will respect your classmates’ opinions. While I encourage you to support your opinion(s) and engage in meaningful discussion and debates, derogatory comments will not be tolerated.

- Rubric for Discussion Posts

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Did not complete the assignment or did not answer the prompt and/or the response was riddled with errors.</td>
<td>Somewhat responded to the prompt but did not use textual evidence and/or had multiple grammatical/spelling errors.</td>
<td>Adequately responded to the prompt using some textual evidence with a few grammatical/spelling errors.</td>
<td>Completely responded to the prompt using textual evidence with little to no grammatical/spelling errors.</td>
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Final Exam:
- Worth 20% of your final grade.
- Your final will be comprehensive and be composed of one hundred questions for which you will have a three hour time limit.

Course Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Date begins</th>
<th>Date Closes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>June 8, 2015, 8am</td>
<td>June 14, 2015, 11:55pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>June 15, 2015, 8am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>June 22, 2015, 8am</td>
<td>June 28, 2015, 11:55pm</td>
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<td>Module 4</td>
<td>June 29, 2015, 8am</td>
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<td>Module 5</td>
<td>July 6, 2015, 8am</td>
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<td>Module 6</td>
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<td>Module 7</td>
<td>July 20, 2015, 8am</td>
<td>July 27, 2015, 11:55pm</td>
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Academic Dishonesty

The UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures defines plagiarism as “the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own academic work offered for credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors. It is the official policy of the university that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students.”
Disabilities Statement

If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to identify yourself. If you need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at (915) 747-5148 or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at http://sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS’ staff members can validate and authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Technical Requirements and Support

Course content is delivered via the Internet through UTEP MOODLE. You must have a UTEP email account, have access to a computer and the internet. TIP: MOODLE works best when using Firefox or Google Chrome.

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and help desk support at helpdesk@utep.edu. You may also contact them toll free at 1-877-382-0491. You may also reach them at (915) 747-5257.