

## INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE CRIJ 1301

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### **Course Objectives:**

Criminal Justice is a multi-disciplinary endeavor and any student intending to go into any portion of the field should be able to apply the sociological, psychological, political, criminal law and procedural law aspects in order to achieve success.

This class is structured to provide an overview of the principles, practices, and procedures of the criminal justice system and its components, namely, the police, the courts, and corrections. It is geared to present an introductory examination to the operations and issues of the United States justice system.

An overview of principles of criminal procedure and criminological theory with emphasis on that role of law and those involved in its administration: police, courts and correction and citizens. It includes study of history; organization processes and problems related to law and justice agencies in a heterogeneous, democratic society.

Complementary objectives are to review major theoretical perspective employed to explain criminal behavior, discuss patterns in criminal offending and various types of crimes.

### **Required Textbook:**

Criminal Justice: The Essentials, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.

Authors: Lab, Williams, Burek, King, Buerger

### **BLACKBOARD Account:**

It is mandatory that students activate and use their BLACKBOARD accounts. You will be responsible for checking your class BLACKBOARD regularly during the semester for posted announcements and handouts. Since all class handouts are only available through BLACKBOARD, it is imperative that each student confirms that his or her BLACKBOARD account is working.

### **Tips for successful use of Blackboard:**

I recommend if you are using a Mac computer to use firefox or google chrome. If you are using PC use firefox or google chrome. I also suggest that every time you log onto blackboard you clear web history and cache.

You can also find this information on your blackboard homepage under “tips for students”.

### **Course Requirements:**

Students will be required to read each chapter, participate in discussion and be ready to discuss the current events in criminal justice as they place in our realm. Students are expected to not only attend course activities, but also devote out-of-class time to reading, checking websites, and using other college resources.

### **Quizzes:**

You will have one quiz per week with exception for the exam dates

The quizzes will be open from Tuesday thru Saturday on BLACKBOARD. The quiz will be available from Tuesday at 10:00 a.m to Saturday 10:00 p.m, and students must answer all questions within 20 minutes.

The quizzes will insure that students are reading and evaluation the class material in a timely fashion. The quiz will contain a combination of true/false, multiple choice and short answer questions covering the concepts discussed in the textbook.

### **Make up- Exam/quiz policy:**

Make up exams will only be available for students who have a “ valid” reason for having missed the originally scheduled exam date. I will determine if the reason given is “valid”. Documentation may be required.

### **Weekly Group Discussions**

There will be 1 group discussion exercise per week (total 7 discussions for the semester).  
\* Each module contains group discussion questions and it is your responsibility to select one of the group discussions to discuss, you will typically have 3 or 4 to select from.

Every Sunday at 5:00 a.m I will open discussion tab for week on BLACKBOARD. After careful reading and analysis of the assigned texts, you must individually write a response to the assigned questions. Each discussion will require students to write at least 250 words in response to a question. Each student will also reply to every entry of the other students in the group (at least one extended comment [50 words or more]). The deadline for initial discussion postings and reply-comments will be on Friday’s by 11:00pm.

These discussions postings will focus on your ideas about the readings, not on summaries. Discussions postings will be graded according to the following criteria:

- Does the commentary show evidence of having read the material?
- Does the commentary show evidence of thinking about the reading beyond just summarizing it? (This may include extension to new circumstances extension to new circumstances/other readings, contradictory evidence, internal (in)consistency, and analyses of assumptions.)
- Does the commentary include relevant evidence to support its own argument?
- Refrain from simply stating “I agree” Or “great post”. If this is all you write you will lose points for discussion. If you agree with student clearly state what it is you agree with or disagree with.

The standard practice (“netiquette”) for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature.

**Exams: There will be 2 exams:**

This exam will contain a combination of true/false, multiple choice, fill-in the blank, short answer, and essay questions at a rather high degree of difficulty, and reflects your understanding rather than ability to memorize and/or look up information.

The instructor reserves the right to override any disagreement over right answers.

Exams are open book, and open note.

Exams will be based both on discussions, quizzes and assigned reading materials.

The first exam will be on Tuesday of 4<sup>th</sup> week and the final will be on the 7<sup>th</sup> week. You will have from Tuesday - Wednesday to complete exam and I will open the exam at 5: 00 a.m. and close it at 10:00 p.m. the following day.

Your final will follow the same guidelines as far as only 2 days to take and this may typically be Saturday –Sunday.

**You will have 60 minutes to complete and submit the exam for scoring.**

## **Grading Distribution**

The final course grade will be determined using the following measurements:

Quizzes and Participation -100  
Group Discussions -200  
Exam One -100  
Exam Two -100

The following will be used to assign course letter grades:

A = 500-450  
B = 449-400  
C = 399-350  
D = 349-300  
Below 300 points = F

There will be no curve used in the grading nor will extra work be accepted for credit. I will not discuss examinations and grades over the phone.

## **Academic Honesty:**

Academic dishonesty is a very serious matter in this course. The UTEP Undergraduate Catalog includes this warning “ Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or any attempt to commit such acts.” Students suspected of violations will be referred to the Dean of Students for adjudication.

## **Please Note:**

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request to students with disabilities.

I am not technical support and any problems with Blackboard or your computer crashing, shutting down, freezing I cannot help you. Contact the following for any technical assistance you may need.

## **Technical Assistance:**

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and help desk support at [helpdesk@utep.edu](mailto:helpdesk@utep.edu). You may also contact them toll free: 1-877-382-0491. You may also reach them at 915.747.5257. They are open Monday – Thursday 7 a.m to 9

p.m. Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Sunday from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **Students with disabilities**

Any student with a disability that is within the provisions of the American with Disabilities Act must inform their instructor at the beginning of the term of their special needs, including equipment that they feel are essential for completing the requirements of this course. Students with disabilities must self-identify before any accommodations can be made. The instructor will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations when and where appropriate. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu) or come by room 106 Union East Building.