

# CRIJ 4318: Violence in America

**Professor:** Dr. Egbert Zavala  
**Email:** egbertz@utep.edu  
**Phone:** (915) 747-6218

## **Required Textbook:**

Riedel, Marc and Wayne Welsh. (2016). *Criminal Violence: Patterns, Explanations, and Interventions*. (4<sup>th</sup> Edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

## **Course Overview & Objectives:**

This course will cover fundamental and advanced topics in the study of criminal violence. By the end of the course, you will be expected to fully understand: (a) the different types of aggression and violent behavior, (b) historical trends and recent patterns in violence, (c) the biological, psychological, and sociological explanations of violence, (d) the contexts and settings of violence (i.e., the home, school, workplace, etc.), (e) gangs and violence, (f) drugs, alcohol, firearms, and violence, and (g) violent crime control.

## **Class Format:**

This course is NOT self-paced. Instead, this course is based on weekly modules that open each Monday morning at 12:30am and close the following Saturday at 11:59PM (Mountain Standard Time). If students fail to submit any required work before the module closes they will receive a grade of zero (0) for that assignment—no exceptions!

Because this course is in a compressed (four weeks) format, the pace is very fast. In fact, it is about double the pace of a typical 16 week class in terms of readings, exams, quizzes, etc. It is thus easy to get behind and, if you do, it may be difficult (if not impossible) to catch up. You must hit the ground running and not let up for seven weeks. If you do this, there is no reason you cannot earn an “A” in the course and get a great deal out of it. If you slack off, even for one week, you will set yourself up for a difficult struggle and severely hinder your ability to get a good grade in the course (or even pass it at all).

As outlined in the syllabus below, each weekly module will focus on two chapters from our textbook. For each of these chapters, I will prepare a chapter outline that is intended to provide guidance and structure to students as they read the chapter. Students should read this outline before reading the chapter. Students are also

encouraged to read the conclusions at the end of each chapter and to pay close attention to the “key terms” that are found in the textbook for each chapter. Students may wish to print the outline as this information will become inaccessible once a given module closes.

All exams and written assignments are “open book” and “open notes,” meaning that students can use any class materials they wish when completing these assignments. However, they cannot “collaborate” in any way with any person (whether they are a fellow student or not) when completing the assignments. Doing so constitutes cheating and will be dealt with per the policy on academic dishonesty specified later in the syllabus.

Students will be able to communicate with me and each other to ask questions, share concerns, raise ideas, etc. through “Dr. Z’s Corner.” This is an open forum discussion board where students can post general questions, comments, and ideas for each other and me. I will access “Dr. Z’s Corner” at least once each business day and post any needed responses. The postings on “Dr. Z’s Corner” will be continuously available to students throughout the semester. Finally, never post exam questions on “Dr. Z’s corner.” Posting exam questions before everyone has taken the exam will be considered an act of cheating.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

**Exams:** Students will complete chapter exams consisting of 10 multiple choice and true/false questions. Each exam is worth 20 points for a total of 160 points. Again, a grade of zero (0) will be assigned to each exam not submitted by the time the respective weekly module closes. Students will have 60 minutes (1 hour) to complete the exam once they begin. Exams will be available on Monday and will close at 11:59PM on Saturday (Mountain Standard Time).

**Written Assignments:** Students will be given a written assignment on the week stated in the syllabus. These assignments consist of answering a specific question regarding one chapter for that week. Answers are limited to no more than 500 words. There will be 2 written assignments and each is worth 20 points (40 points total).

**FINAL GRADE CALCULATION:**

Your final grade in this class will be determined based on the exams and written assignments.

Chapter 1 Exam	20 Points
Chapter 2 Exam	20 Points
Assignment 1	20 Points
Chapter 3 Exam	20 Points
Chapter 4 Exam	20 Points
Chapter 5 Exam	20 Points
Chapter 6 Exam	20 Points
Assignment 2	20 Points
Chapter 7 Exam	20 Points
Chapter 8 Exam	20 Points
<hr/>	
Total Points	200 Points

**Final Grade Distribution:**

200-180 Points=A

179-160 Points=B

159-140 Points=C

139-120 Points=D

119-0 Points=F

**Please note:**

There will be no curve used in grading, no grades will be dropped, and there will be no extra credit. Do not contact me at the end of the semester regarding extra points for a particular letter grade. Your grade is an accomplishment, not a gift!

**Important Reminders:**

The exams are timed, meaning that once you begin the exam you will have a limited amount of time to complete and submit your work. The exams will automatically close and submit at the end of the time limit if you haven't already submitted it yourself. Do not wait until the last minute to begin exams. This way, if you do experience any difficulties with submissions, they can be corrected before the module closes.

**Technology Issues**

I will not provide you with technical assistance. Rather, you should familiarize yourself with the assistance available to you whenever you have problems. You should also ensure that you have the appropriate hardware and software.

**Academic Dishonesty Statement:**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

**Disabled Student Statement:**

If a student needs an accommodation, then the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Center for Accommodations and Support Services.

**A Final Note:**

1. I will provide you clear instructions on class expectations.
2. I will check my email and will answer back to you as soon as possible.
3. I will check “Dr. Z’s Corner” each business day and make any needed responses at that time.
4. I will provide graded feedback on your performance in a timely manner.
5. I will keep you informed about your graded progress in the class at all times and will make time to discuss your concerns when needed.
6. I am open to suggestions about improvement of the class and class related activities.
7. I will do all I can to ensure your learning and success in this class
8. If any changes in the course are to be implemented, I will ensure that the class is notified in a timely manner.

9. Read all postings on the bulletin board and all emails from me.

10. I strongly recommend that you check the course at least three times a week at minimum to keep up. Email messages are sent to your UTEP email address, so you will want to check your UTEP email several times a week, preferably each business day.

11. Online learning is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience.

Week	Dates	Readings	Assignment
1	June 7-12	Ch. 1: Violence and Criminal Violence  Ch. 2: Measures of Violence	Chapter 1 Exam  Chapter 2 Exam  <i>Assignment 1</i>
2	June 14-19	Ch. 3: Violence in Other Times and Places  Ch. 4: Homicides and Assaults	Chapter 3 Exam  Chapter 4 Exam
3	June 21-26	Ch. 5: Robbery  Ch. 6: Rapes and Sexual Assaults	Chapter 5 Exam  Chapter 6 Exam
4	June 28-July 3	Ch. 7: Hate Crimes  Ch. 8: Intimate Violence	Chapter 7 Exam  Chapter 8 Exam  <i>Assignment 2</i>