

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT  
EL PASO**  
**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**Course #:** **CJ 1310:** Fundamentals of Criminal Law (3-0) Focuses on the history and philosophy of modern criminal law, including the structure, definition, and application of statute and leading case law and the elements of crimes and penalties.

**Course Description:** This course will provide students with an overview of fundamental aspects of American criminal law. The course begins by presenting information on principles of criminal law (e.g., what constitutes a crime, distinct levels of crime) and issues of capacity and defenses. After this look at principles of criminal law, the course reviews the legal aspects of several types of crimes (e.g., non-sexual crimes against others, sexual offenses, crimes against property, etc.) We will also examine the costs and benefits of these principles of criminal law and how the law defines each of the types of crimes reviewed.

**Course Title:** **Fundamentals of Criminal Law**

**Course CRN:** 21203

**Term:** SPRING 2023

**Course Meeting Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 pm – 2:50 pm

**Location:** LART 318

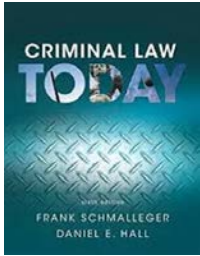
**Instructor:** Luis A. Arias, BA, JD

**Office Location:** EDUC 111

**Contact Info:** Phone # 915.747.7943  
larias2@utep.edu  
Fax # 915.747.5751  
Emergency Contact 915.218.8103

**Office Hrs.:** 9:00 am – 11:00 am Tuesday and Thursday and 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm on Thursday only

**Textbook(s), Materials:** Required: Frank Schmalleger, Daniel E. Hall, J.D., *Criminal Law Today*, 6th Edition, Pearson, 2017, ISBN-13 978-0-13-4293882; Student Loose Leaf w/ Access Card (optional); **Available at UTEP Bookstore.**



**Suggested:** Internet and current news articles

### **Course Objectives**

**(Learning Outcomes):** During the class, the students will be able to identify, understand, articulate, apply, and evaluate the following concepts and/or models:

- a. The sources of criminal law and punishment;
- b. The component parts of the legal definition of a crime;
- c. The limitations on criminal liability;
- d. The limitations on government actions;
- e. The common defenses to include Constitutional-based defenses;
- f. The elements of a wide array of criminal felonies and misdemeanors;
- g. The skills/strategies for looking at and thinking about aspects of American criminal law and its operation; and,
- h. Specific topics.

**Course Activities/Assignments:** Textbook chapter readings and lectures, outside readings, group discussions, oral presentations with PowerPoint, and analytical papers as required by the Professor.\*

**Assessment of Course Objectives:** Students will be required to read course materials assigned by the Professor and complete all individual and group activities as assigned. The course will be divided into a number a clusters or units together with sub-topics, which collectively comprise the subjects. Upon completion of the clusters or units, the student will be able to complete the objectives with a thorough comprehension, explanation, discussion, and application thereof. The students will be administered objective and/or subjective examinations during the class to assess the students' understanding of the subject matter/course material.

1. Students will be administered four to five written tests to measure their understanding of the course content. The examinations will be administered and proportionally spaced out throughout the semester. Examinations will be graded based on class lectures, group discussions, assigned readings from the textbook(s), and/or outside readings. Written objective and/or subjective (essay) tests are valued at 100 points each. All objective examinations may be administered on Blackboard (BB). Learners are required to download and install Respondus Lockdown Browser for examinations.

2. Blue Books are required for essay tests, and a scantron is required for each objective test. It is the students' responsibility to purchase both items. Any extra credit assignments are at the instructor's discretion.
3. Any student who has an "A" average going into the final examination will not be required to sit for the final examination and will receive an "A" for the course. (Optional by Professor)
4. At the instructor's discretion, students may be required to submit research and/or analysis paper(s). The instructor will provide report requirements during the class. Deductions will be made for each error: not following directions, proofreading, formatting, typographical problems including incorrect text, etc. A numeric grade will be assigned.

**Technology Requirements:** Course content maybe delivered via the Internet through the BB 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 BB; 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 at 747-4357 as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of learners. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

**Note:** In the Center for Instructional Design (CID) website, learners can find the [Blackboard Student Orientation](#). **The purpose of this orientation is to help learners navigate a course in Blackboard.**

**Netiquette: the correct or acceptable way of communicating on the Internet**

- Always consider audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.

- Respect and courtesy must be always provided to classmates and to instructor. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a F2F situation.
- BB is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If learners wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

**Writing Center:** The University Writing Center (UWC) is in the Library, Room 227. It is a suitable place to receive help with editing your written papers and with APA style assistance. The UWC is open Monday – Thursday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Friday 9:00 am 2:00 pm, and Sundays 12:00 – 5:00 pm. Appointments are recommended before the deadline, but the UWC will take walk-ins. The UWC telephone number and email address are 747-5112 and [uwc@utep.edu](mailto:uwc@utep.edu).

**Grading Policy:** All grading is at the professor’s discretion and based on traditional academic guidelines:

90- Above - A  
 80- 89 - B  
 70-79 - C  
 60 - 69 - D  
 59 – Below- F

- All class assignments are due when scheduled
- Late submissions will result in grade reduction.
- All written assignments must be submitted in APA format and/or as directed by the Professor without exception.
- Any approved rewrites must be accompanied with the original document.
- There will be four to five class examinations, see supra and infra.
- Students will be tested over all assigned textbook (s) reading assignments, outside reading assignments, class lectures, and/or group assignments.
- All examinations must be taken on the date and beginning time scheduled. There are no make-up examinations, and the student will receive a score of “0” for any missed examinations. There will be no leaving the room when test begins.

**Attendance and Participation Policy:** Class and examination attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to be in class and be on time. Students who miss class are responsible for contacting fellow classmates to obtain notes. I will not allow students to borrow my notes, and I do not give repeat performances of my lectures. This also goes for students arriving late to class or leaving early. **Note:** I do not post my PowerPoints on Blackboard.

Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in all aspects of the learning process. This includes class discussions, written work, and in-class activities. National and local studies have shown a direct correlation between attendance and grade performance. Therefore, attendance is considered mandatory.

Students who miss more than 10% of the regularly scheduled class meetings due to unexcused absences are subject to failing the course, being penalized, and/or being dropped from the course, see *infra*. Students enrolled in MW or TR sections (Fall and Spring semesters and/or Summer sessions Monday – Friday) may not exceed three unexcused absences for the semester.

For the purposes of this course, "excused absences" include verifiable medical or family emergencies, University approved activities (accompanied by a university excuse), illness (yours or a family member's), and other absences as outlined in the University's Academic Catalog "Attendance and Grading" policies and regulations. Students should be prepared to document the reasons for the absence. Students whose absences are not excused will not normally be allowed to make up tests, quizzes, and/or assignments. Students who anticipate having a high number of excused absences should contact their instructor as soon as the situation arises so that they can decide how to manage missed class time.

**Drop Policy:** The course drop policy for this course is the same as the official policy for the University of Texas at El Paso. The policy is set out in the University catalog. The instructor also has discretion in this matter and has the right to drop a student from the course if the student has excessive unexcused absences or is continuously late to class, see *infra*. A student will not be allowed more than three (3) unexcused absences during the semester. If a student accumulates more than three (3) unexcused absences, the instructor has the right to drop the student from the course. Please refer to UTEP Drop Policy:  
[http://engineering.utep.edu/plaza/AcademicForms/Course\\_Drop\\_Form\\_aftercensusday.pdf](http://engineering.utep.edu/plaza/AcademicForms/Course_Drop_Form_aftercensusday.pdf); and  
[http://utepconnect.utep.edu/images/docs/accepted\\_students/learning\\_online/Know\\_University\\_Policy.pdf](http://utepconnect.utep.edu/images/docs/accepted_students/learning_online/Know_University_Policy.pdf).

If unforeseen circumstances happen where a drop is necessary, *students* are responsible for initiating any course drop. It is the student's responsibility to determine how dropping courses may affect financial aid. **Students are limited to dropping no more than 6 courses over their entire academic career of all courses taken at any public college or University in Texas.**

- a) Students who drop a course within the first 2 weeks *before the "official census date,"* the course will not appear on the transcript, and doesn't count toward the 6-course drop limit. **Note:** The Census date is February 1, 2023.
- b) Dropping a course *after the official census date, but before the "course drop date"* will generate a "W" in the course—although the drop shows on your

- transcript, a “W” does not lower your GPA. However, this type of drop counts against your 6-drop limit. **Note:** The course drop deadline is March 30, 2023.
- c) If the course is dropped *after the “course drop date”* or if the student just stops coming/taking tests, etc., UTEP requires the instructor to issue an “F” in the course that permanently remains on the transcript. This type of drop counts against the 6-drop limit.
  - d) UTEP also allows instructors to administratively drop any student because of excessive absences, lack of effort, or disciplinary reasons. In this case, the student will be notified of the course drop through their UTEP email account. A “W” will be issued if the drop occurs before the course drop date, and an “F” will be issued if a student is administratively dropped for disciplinary reasons or after the course drop date. This type of drop counts against the 6-drop limit.
  - e) If circumstances occur where a student must miss an excessive number of classes and/or is unable to submit multiple assignments (e.g., student medical reasons, medical conditions of a family member, death of a family member, active military service), they should first discuss the possibility of withdrawal from all classes with their academic advisor. If a student withdraws completely from all classes, kindly notify Professor Arias at: [larias2@utep.edu](mailto:larias2@utep.edu). Complete withdrawals from all classes in the same semester do not count against the 6-drop limit.

**Academic/Scholastic Integrity:** 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 learners, 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 as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP learners is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

The Professor takes cases of alleged academic dishonesty seriously. For learners who are found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, 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>

Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. For learners who are found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, sanctions may include a failing grade on the assignment or examination in question, a failing grade in the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University.

**Civility Statement:** The Professor will endeavor to provide a classroom environment appropriate for academic knowledge, discourse, and debate. For this to occur, each learner must be prepared with all the reading assignments and participate actively in class. We will respect what others should say and avoid insults, interruptions, and disrespect. We will avoid becoming politically charged when discussing sensitive topics.

Cell Phones will be turned off or set to vibrate during class. As a matter of courtesy and classroom policy, learners must leave the classroom when accepting incoming calls.

Laptop and recording devices are permitted in classroom to facilitate note taking. No other computer use is approved during class time, to include, emailing and game playing. Using a laptop in the classroom is a privilege, which can be revoked by the instructor. **The use of smart and cell phones, smart watches, and laptops is NOT permitted during examinations.** Learners are not permitted to use headphones during class and examinations. Learners will not be allowed to leave the classroom during F2F or BB examinations.

**Diversity Statement:** We all come to the table with differing experiences and viewpoints, which means that we have so much to learn from each other! To get the most out of this opportunity, it is important that we do not shy away from differences. Rather, we should show respect for differences by seeking to understand, asking questions, clarifying our understanding, and/or respectfully explaining our own perspective. This way, everybody comes away with new perspectives on the issue and respecting others with different values or beliefs. If someone says something that bothers you for any reason, assume that your peer did not mean to be offensive and ask your peer to clarify what he or she meant. Then explain the impact it had on you. If your classmates tell you that something you said or wrote bothered them, assume that they are not attacking you, but rather that they are sharing something that might be important for you to know.

**Student Resources:** UTEP provides a variety of learner services and support:

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled learners.
- [Help Desk](#): Learners experiencing technological challenges (email, BB, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [Math Tutoring Center \(MaRCS\)](#): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- [History Tutoring Center \(HTC\)](#): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- [Military Student Success Center](#): UTEP welcomes military-affiliated learners to its degree programs, and the Military Student Success Center and its dedicated staff

(many of whom are veterans and learners themselves) are here to help personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.

- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

**Disability Statement:** If a learner has or suspects he/she has a disability and needs an accommodation, he/she should contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu) or go to Room 106 Union East Building. The learners are responsible for presenting to the instructor any DSS accommodation letters and instructions.

**Accommodations Policy:** The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to learners, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Learners requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

**COVID-19 Accommodations:** Learners are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure, or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations. Learners who are considered elevated risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered elevated risk may contact [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities. Learners are advised to minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection.

**COVID-19 Precautions:** Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to [covidaction@utep.edu](mailto:covidaction@utep.edu), so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID 19 testing.

You must STAY AT HOME and REPORT if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at [screening.utep.edu](http://screening.utep.edu). If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on



their behalf by sending an email to [COVIDaction@utep.edu](mailto:COVIDaction@utep.edu). For each day that you attend campus—for any reason—you must complete the questions on the UTEP screening website ([screening.utep.edu](http://screening.utep.edu)) prior to arriving on campus. The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus. Under no circumstances should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting any of the known COVID-19 symptoms.

“The CDC is recommending that people wear masks when inside public spaces where the spread of the virus is “substantial” or “high.”

If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org)

**Military Statement:** If you are a military learner with the potential of being called to military service and/or training during the semester, you are encouraged to contact Professor Arias immediately.

**Blackboard Requirement\*:** We will be using BB during the semester. Make certain you become familiar with the program. Outside textbook reading assignments and/or examinations may be placed on BB. You can access BB from any campus computer or from your home. Please consult the UTEP system or see me if you need instructions on how to use BB. Each learner is required to have a working email address.

**Course Calendar/Assignments/Spring 2023. Please Note:** The Professor has the right to make any changes to the course or syllabus. Students should attend class to stay informed of any changes.

Week One:	Jan 17	Course Introduction; <i>The Night Of</i> : BBC series “Criminal Justice,” HBO production; Conscientiazao; Chapter 1: The Nature and History of Criminal Law
	Jan 19	Chapter 1; <i>The Runaway Trolley</i>
Week Two:	Jan 24	Chapter 2: Criminal Liability and the Essence of Crime ( <i>Nora Nosy Neighbor</i> )
	Jan 26	Chapter 2; <i>Crime and Punishment</i> by Fyodor Dostoevsky Case Study and Discourse
Week Three:	Jan 31	Chapter 3: Expanding the Concept of Crime
	Feb 2	Chapter 3
Week Four:	Feb 7	Unit I Test (Chapters 1, 2, 3) Review
	Feb 9	<b>Unit I Test</b> (Chapters 1, 2, 3)

Week Five:	Feb 14	Chapter 4: Expanding Criminal Liability: Inchoate Offenses
	Feb 16	Chapter 4
Week Six:	Feb 21	Chapter 5: Justifications as Defenses Chapter 6: Defenses: Excuses and Liabilities
	Feb 23	Chapter 5; <i>The Journey or The Case of Speluncean Explorers exercise</i>
Week Seven:	Feb 28	Chapter 6: Defenses: Excuses and Liabilities
	Mar 2	Chapter 6
Week Eight	Mar 7	Unit II Test (Chapters 4, 5, and 6) Review
	Mar 9	<b>Unit II Test (Chapters 4, 5, and 6)</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK MAR 13 – 17 2023</b>		
Week Nine:	Mar 21	Chapter 7: Crimes Against Person: <i>Homicide (Pending: Presentation: EPPD Homicide Unit; Detective Mackenzie or Stephanie Valle Borderland Crimes)</i>
	Mar 23	Chapter 7
Week Ten:	Mar 28	Chapter 8: Crimes Against Persons: Assault, Sex Offenses, and Other Crimes; <i>The A. Flores Case Study</i>
	Mar 30	Chapter 8
Week Eleven:	Apr 4	Chapter 9: Property and Computer Crimes; Unit III Test (Chapters 7, 8, & 9) Review
	Apr 6	<b>Unit III Test (Chapters 7, 8, &amp; 9);</b> <b>Blue Books required for examination</b>
Week Twelve:	Apr 11	Chapter 10: Offenses Against Public Order and the Administration of Justice
Morality	Apr 13	Chapter 11: Offenses Against Public

Week Thirteen:	Apr 18 Trafficking;	Chapter 12: Terrorism and Human
	Apr 20	Chapter 13: Victims and the Law
Week Fourteen:	Apr 25	Chapter 14: Punishment and Sentencing
	Apr 27	Chapter 14: Punishment and Sentencing; Outside reading assignment, quotes in the hat, and roundtable discussion of Albert Camus' <i>Reflections on the Guillotine</i>
Week Fifteen:	May 2	Chapter 14; Roundtable discussion of Albert Camus' <i>Reflections on the Guillotine</i>
	May 4	Review for Final Exam
<b>Week Sixteen:</b>	<b>May 11 3:45 pm</b>	<b>Final: Friday, May 11, 2023, 1:00 pm -</b>