

**CRIJ 1301: Intro to Criminal Justice**  
CRN: 32029  
Summer 2024

Professor: Dr. Melinda Tasca  
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Office Hours: Virtually and in office (EDUC 111-Q) – By appointment

**Course Information:** What this class is about and what we will do

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course serves as a foundation for understanding the criminal justice system. Students will be introduced to key concepts related to crime and justice with a focus on the nature and extent of crime, policing, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice. This course also covers historical and contemporary issues faced by the criminal justice system.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

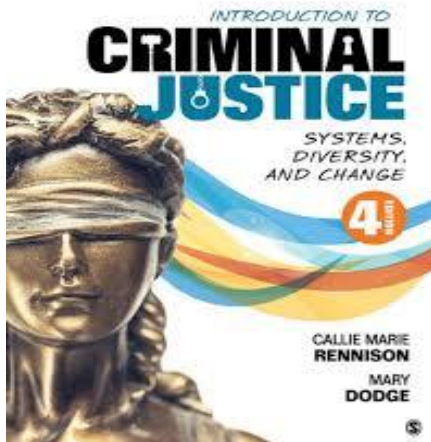
At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate the foundations of criminal justice, including definitions, theories, typologies, measurement issues, and the law.
- Understand the development of policing organizations and strategies and the challenges faced by police.
- Explain the structure, actors, and processes of courts at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Identify the goals, methods, and effectiveness of various forms of corrections.
- Be knowledgeable about important criminal justice issues and their impact on society.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Books:

**IMPORTANT:** The Sage Vantage digital version of this text is required for this course. You have the option of purchasing the digital only version or the bundle that includes both the digital and loose-leaf versions. Both are available through the UTEP bookstore. **Note: There are no exceptions here as you will not be able to access course content in Blackboard without having purchased one of these digital Sage Vantage book options.**



## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

All assignments are due electronically through BlackBoard. Your grade in this course will be determined by a variety of assignments, which include:

12 Chapter Quizzes (15 points each)	=	180 points
2 Discussion Board Assignments (50 points each)	=	100 points
2 Video Activities (10 points each)	=	20 points
<b>TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE:</b>		<b>300 points</b>

### Grade Distribution:

300 - 270 = A  
269 – 240 = B  
239 – 210 = C  
209 – 180 = D  
179 and below = F

Course Delivery: The content for this online course is divided into weekly folders. Only one weekly folder will be open at a time. A new weekly folder will open every Tuesday at 12:01am. Graded assignments are due by 10pm on Mondays. I will post announcements/send emails on a regular basis to keep the class informed on course-related issues.

Reading: I expect you to carefully read all assigned materials (see course schedule). Since the textbook is embedded in the Blackboard course via Sage Vantage, all course readings are also available to you within the course itself. Additionally, you have access to flashcards for every chapter in Blackboard to assist you in your preparation for course assignments and quizzes. See the “Chapter Readings” and “Student Study Resources” links in Blackboard.

Lectures: To correspond with the readings, I provide PowerPoint lectures that cover key points. The lectures, however, are in no way a substitute for completing the readings. Rather, they serve to help you synthesize and understand content from each chapter. These lectures can be found within the “Weekly Modules” folder in Blackboard.

Chapter Quizzes: There will be 12 chapter quizzes administered in this course (one quiz per covered chapter). Each quiz consists of 15 multiple-choice questions. Questions are worth 1 point each (15 points total per quiz). Important notices regarding quizzes:

- Chapter quizzes can be found in the “Weekly Modules” folder in Blackboard.
- There are no time limits for these quizzes.
- You have two attempts to complete each quiz. If you use your second attempt (optional), your highest score will count as your final score.
- Importantly, you must contact **Sage Vantage Technical Support** right away if any technological issues arise. Contact information is provided in Blackboard and at the end of the syllabus.

Discussion Boards: There will be two discussion board assignments this semester (100 points total). Each discussion board is worth 50 points (45 points for your original response and 5 points

for responding to one classmate). Links to these Discussion Boards can be found in the “Weekly Modules” folder. Requirements are as follows:

- Posts should be roughly 2 to 3 paragraphs in length and must address all aspects of the questions completely and clearly.
- Peer responses should be roughly 3 to 4 sentences.
- Check for spelling/grammar
- Be respectful to one another
- Discussion board activities are intended to get you to think critically about key issues in the criminal justice system.

**Video Activities:** There are two video activities required for this course (10 points each). This assignment entails watching a short video on pressing criminal justice system issues and responding to three questions. Links to these activities can be found in the “Weekly Modules” folder. Contact **Sage Vantage Technical Support** right away if any technological issues arise when completing these activities. Contact information is provided in Blackboard and at the end of the syllabus.

### **EXTRA CREDIT**

**Course Evaluation Response Rate of at Least 70% (10 points):** If at least 70% of the students in the class complete the Course Evaluation, which becomes available near the end of the semester, then all students will receive 10 extra credit points. To let you know how this works, you will receive email reminders about evaluating the course at least twice. After the course evaluation period is over, I will receive an email from UTEP stating what percentage of students in the class completed the course evaluation. If this figure is at or above 70% then all students in the class will receive the points. So, please complete the course evaluation when it becomes available and urge your classmates to do the same.

### **UTEP EDGE**

This course is designed with the UTEP Edge in mind. In our class, you will engage in activities during each week that involve critical thinking, applying knowledge to new situations, and solving complex problems. You will leave this course confident in your knowledge of criminal justice, with enhanced communication skills and a greater global awareness of crime and justice and how it is responded to by individuals, groups, and the larger society.

### **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system in conjunction with the Sage Vantage platform. **As noted above, you must purchase a digital Sage Vantage version of the required textbook to access most of the content in this course in Blackboard.** 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. 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 Sage Vantage Technical Support or the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students (contact info is provided in Blackboard and at the end of this syllabus). Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. These individuals are much better equipped than I am to assist you!

### **Course Communication: How we will stay in contact with each other**

- **Office Hours:** I am available to meet virtually by appointment. Reach me by email to request an appointment.
- **Email:** I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please reference the course.
- **Announcements:** Check your UTEP email and Blackboard for announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.
- **Q & A Discussion Board:** You will find a link in Blackboard to the Q & A Discussion Board. This is a place to post course-related questions and I will respond in a timely manner to all posts. I encourage all students to subscribe to this thread as another student may have posted a question that you also have. You will be able to see my responses to questions there. Note: Questions that are personal in nature should be emailed to me directly.

### **NETIQUETTE AND SEMINAR DISCUSSION GUIDELINES**

As we know, sometimes when discussing hotly debated topics, whether in-person or online, it is possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean. Therefore, please keep these ground rules in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. All communication should reflect polite consideration of other ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate comments will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else, address the ideas, not the person.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all discussions and postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted in these online spaces is intended for classmates and the professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

### **Course Policies: What do you need to do to be successful in the course**

#### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Course requirements are due on a weekly basis (e.g., quizzes, discussion boards, video activities). Students should be actively engaged in the course every week. If you have a documented emergency that will cause you to miss a deadline, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss arrangements.

## **COURSE DROP POLICY**

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please first 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.

## **EXTENSIONS AND MAKE-UP WORK**

Requests for extensions and make-up work will be granted only in the case of a *documented* event/circumstance. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—if you require an extension/make-up assignment. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

## **ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES**

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work in a separate file as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course site in Blackboard, please contact Sage Vantage Technical Support or the UTEP Help Desk.

## **INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY**

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, 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. Students 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](#).

## **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 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 as ones' own. 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. 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, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

## GUIDANCE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### AI prohibited

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), is **not allowed** for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

### Using AI for brainstorming

Some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), can be beneficial during the early brainstorming stages of an activity, and you are welcome to explore them for that purpose. However, keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often “hallucinate” or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use.

That said, you are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. Consider how this will affect your credibility as a writer and scholar before doing so. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

## PLAGIARISM DETECTING SOFTWARE

Your course work will be submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. Links to Scholastic Integrity policies are provided above.

## COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

### **Course Resources: Where you can go for assistance**

#### Technology Resources

To report an issue with [SAGE Vantage, Tech Support Help, and Resources](#), visit

- <https://sagevantage.softwareassist.com>
- Call 1 (800) 818-7243 ext. 7080 or 1 (805) 410-7080

#### Live Support Available

- Monday - Friday, 8:00 A.M. - 11:00 P.M. US EST
- Saturday & Sunday: 11:30 a.m. – 8:00 P.M. US EST

- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, 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.

#### Academic Resources

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

#### Individual Resources

- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.

### Weekly Calendar (Subject to Change)

\*Note: This is an online course. Weekly modules open on Tuesdays at 12:01am. Requirements are **due every Monday by 10:00pm**.

	Topic	Readings/Lectures	Assignments Due
Week 1 7/10 – 7/15	Introduction to Crime and the CJ System; The Nature and Extent of Crime	Chapter 1 Chapter 2	*** <i>Due 7/15 by 10pm</i>  Two Quizzes: Chapters 1 & 2
Week 2 7/16 – 7/22	Policing; Organization, Responsibilities and Challenges; Police and the Rule of Law	Chapter 4 Chapter 5 Chapter 6	*** <i>Due 7/22 by 10pm</i>  Three Quizzes: Chapters 4, 5, 6 Video Activity Discussion Board
Week 3 7/23 – 7/29	The Court Process; Prosecution, Defense and Pretrial; Criminal Trial and Sentencing	Chapter 7 Chapter 8 Chapter 9	*** <i>Due 7/29 by 10pm</i>  Three Quizzes: Chapters 7, 8, 9 Discussion Board
Week 4 7/30 – 8/5	Correctional Responses; Institutional Corrections; Prison Life and Life after Prison; Juvenile Justice	Chapter 10 Chapter 11 Chapter 12 Chapter 13	*** <i>Due 8/5 by 10pm</i>  Four Quizzes: Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13 Video Activity