

CRIJ 5360: Independent Study

CRN: 15279

Fall 2023

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 independent study will involve specialized readings in corrections, focusing on protective custody policies and practices in correctional settings. The student will examine protective custody policies and practices through a deep dive into the empirical literature as well as through studying existing policies in place in correctional agencies across the country. Deliverables from this independent study will include research and policy syntheses.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- Gain a deep understanding of the literature on protective custody policies and practices in correctional settings
- Identify the major tenets, strengths, and limitations of protective custody policies
- Develop recommendations for improving protective custody policies and practices as well as identify directions for future research

REQUIRED MATERIALS

This is an independent study where the student will be conducting a comprehensive read of the literature and existing policies, which will involve research and policy searches, under my supervision.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

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

- Attendance: 10 points x 10 meetings = 100 points
- Research Synthesis = 100 points
- Policy Synthesis = 100 points

TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE = 300

Grade Distribution:

300-270 = A;

269-240 = B;

239-210 = C;

209-180 = D;

179 and Below = F

Attendance (100 points; 10 points x 10 meetings): This independent study requires attending weekly meetings to discuss progress and receive instruction and feedback toward course goals. Attendance will be counted beginning in Week 2. Note: The lowest score will be dropped

(accounting for one absence without penalty). The dates and times of these meetings, along with course deadlines, are listed on the course schedule at the end of this syllabus.

Research Synthesis (100 points):

The student will write a research synthesis on the state of the empirical literature on protective custody policies and practices. This review will be comprehensive across studies and correctional settings and will conclude with a detailed section on gaps in the state of research along with future directions. This synthesis should be 7 to 10 pages (double-spaced, excluding title and reference pages, using APA format). Further instructions will be provided during weekly meetings.

Policy Synthesis (100 points):

The student will write a policy synthesis that describes similarities and differences in protective custody policies across state prison systems in the United States. This review will conclude with recommendations to improve policy and practice in this area. This synthesis should be 7 to 10 pages (double-spaced, excluding title and reference pages, using APA format). Further instructions will be provided during weekly meetings.

EXTRA CREDIT

There will be no extra credit available in this course.

UTEP EDGE

This course is designed with the UTEP Edge in mind. The student will engage in activities during the course of the independent study that involve critical thinking and solving complex problems. The student will leave this course confident in their knowledge of protective custody, with enhanced communication skills, leadership experience, and a greater awareness of particular justice policies and how they are responded to by individuals, groups, and the larger society.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard 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 Blackboard; 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. In the event that it becomes necessary, we will use Zoom for virtual class meetings. This software can be accessed through our course shell and/or through an emailed link. 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.

All assignments will be submitted through designated links in Blackboard and must be submitted in either Word or PDF format.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is 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 and in my office 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.

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

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

If you have a documented emergency and will miss a meeting, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss arrangements. As discussed above, participation points are assigned for each class meeting.

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/class 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 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, 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](#).

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

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

Technology Resources

- [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)

***Meetings will take place at 2:30pm every Friday.

	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
Week 1 9/1	Course expectations and discussion of research and policy searches		
Week 2 9/8	Discussion of readings		
Week 3 9/15	Discussion of readings		
Week 4 9/22	Discussion of readings		
Week 5 9/29	Discussion of readings		
Week 6 10/6	Discussion of readings		
Week 7 10/13	Discussion of readings **Research Synthesis due by 10/12 at 11:59pm		
Week 8 10/20	Discussion of readings		

Week 9 10/27	Discussion of readings
Week 10 11/3	Discussion of readings
Week 11 11/10	Discussion of readings
Week 12 11/17	No meeting (ASC Conference)
Week 13 11/24	No meeting (Thanksgiving holiday)
Week 14 12/1	Discussion of readings
Week 15 12/8	***Policy Synthesis due by 12/7 at 11:59pm