University of Texas at El Paso
CRIJ 4318: Violence in America
CRN# 26091
SPRING, 2021 (Online)

Instructor: Scott Christopher Mann
Department of Criminal Justice

Virtual Office: Discussions Forum link: 24/7 asynchronous (public view) / up to 48 hours to respond
Mail Box link: 24/7 asynchronous (private) / up to 48 hours to respond

Cell Phone: (915)540-2295
Email: scmann@utep.edu

Communication:

Instructor Virtual Office hours:

By appointment. You can schedule a one-on-one meeting with me through Blackboard Collaborate located in your course “Instructor Virtual Office” link, where we will have a virtual workshop on the first week of class to go over the course and syllabus. If you wish to speak to me one-on-one virtually, send me a course message in the “Mail Box” link to set up a time convenient for you.

Feedback:

Students will receive feedback in various ways, through the discussion forum, the grade book for exams and a grading rubric for the term paper and discussions. You may E-mail me using the Mail Box in Blackboard, or the virtual instructor’s office in the Discussions forum. I will respond to all student communication to me within 24-48 hours. If in the case of an emergency, contact me by telephone/text. If texting, please let me know which class you are in.

Course Description:

This course will cover fundamental and advanced topics in the study of violent crime.

Course Objectives:

- Identify different types of aggression and violent behavior;
- Explore and describe historical trends and recent patterns of violent crime;
- Describe the biological, psychological and sociological explanations of violence;
- Associate violence and criminal street gangs;
- Interpret the association between illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms and violence; and,
- Recommend appropriate recommendations to mitigate violence through effective crime control measures.
Student Learning Outcomes:

**SLO 1:** Demonstrate an applicable knowledge and ability of criminological theory to apply such theories to special types of criminality, and compare and contrast competing theoretical arguments in the context of violent crime.

**SLO 2:** Demonstrate familiarity of existing models of violence control and the social structures which influence such deviant behaviors.

**SLO 3:** The ability to apply basic legal research skills to identify and compare current court rulings on criminal justice policy.

**SLO 4:** Workable knowledge of the process and application of academic research, and the ability to apply such research into criminal justice policy.

Required Text Book:


ISBN:

Paperback 9781506349060
Electronic Version 9781506349084

Your Facilitator’s Educational Philosophy

My philosophy of teaching is based on a belief that learning needs to be student centered and that students need to be equal partners in the learning process. The goal of my teaching is active and cooperative learning. I find that when I can convey my own enthusiasm for the criminal justice profession, it is often contagious enough that students become engaged in the learning process. Through academic research, I encourage students to tackle problems creatively, which helps them to learn to think outside conventional boundaries and to seek the deeper meaning of a concept or finding. These efforts foster personal and intellectual fulfillment. My emphasis is on helping the student to learn, rather than just dispensing knowledge to them. My role involves using my expertise to put the necessary information in the hands of students so they are well equipped to find and answer their own questions.

What you need to Do First

On week 1, you need to navigate through the system and get familiar with it. Technical problems need to be handled by the DE office and tech support. Also, there are some graded assignments that you MUST complete on week one.
1) Go to the Learning Modules link – you will only see Module 1.
2) Get your book. You will start using it right away.
3) In the Discussion Board, introduce yourself and begin meeting others in the class (non-graded activity).
4) Your first graded group discussion will be available on SUN week 2.
5) Go to the Module Assignments link - You will have a short quiz on Chapter 1 (Alvarez & Bachman, 2016) due on Saturday of week 2.

Class CORE Assessments

7 Weekly Collaborative Group Discussion Board Questions (20 points per discussion = 140 points)

During this course, you will have 7 weekly collaborative group questions to answer in the Discussion Board. There is one weekly discussion (SUN-SAT) per module. A new learning module will open every other week. You will be required to respond substantively to the question by mid-week and respond substantively to two others within the discussion forum by SAT (end of week). This requires a minimum of three substantive posts that must be spread out among two days during the week. You will not be able to see other posts in the forum until you have submitted your original response to the question.

Each weekly discussion will be worth up to 20 points. Your collaborative group discussions are theoretical in nature and mostly related to the issues to be covered in your academic research paper. Please note that both quantity and quality are important considerations when it comes to participation, and substantive posts need to move the discussion forward. For example, a message that restates the post to which you respond, or that essentially says, "I agree," and repeats another’s comments do not constitute participation because it does not add anything new of substance to the discussion. Likewise, off-topic posts do not constitute participation because they do not relate to the original discussion. Discussion posts need to have a ‘meaty’ combination of your insights on the topics and objectives, specific examples from your experience, and support from the course readings or other scholarly sources. Think of substantive like a formula: Your Insight (Example from your Experience or opinion) + Research Support = Substantive

All weekly discussions will open on Sundays (12am) and close on Saturdays (11:59pm). Since discussions are used as a gauge of one’s participation and attendance, there are no make ups for prior week’s missed discussions. Please do not notify me that you did not know, or were mistaken. Print the syllabus and keep it next to your computer if you need to. Please review the Discussion Board Rubric to see how I will be grading this assignment.

Two Multiple-Choice Exams (100 points each = 200 points)

Exam 1 (Modules 1-4) = 100
Exam 2 (Modules 5-7) = 100

There will be a timed 90 minute exam worth 100 points each at the end of modules 4 and 7 (See Calendar). The exam questions will be drawn directly from your quizzes. The Exam 1 will open on Sunday (Midnight) and closed on Saturday (11:59pm). Exam 2 will open on SUN and close on THU ON WEEK 15.
Seven quizzes (20 points each = 150 points)

Quiz 1 (Module 1: Chapter 1) = 7
Quiz 2 (Module 2: Chapters 2 and 3) = 28
Quiz 3 (Module 3: Chapters 4 and 5) = 24
Quiz 4 (Module 4: Chapter 6) = 19
Quiz 5 (Module 5: Chapters 7 and 8) = 39
Quiz 6 (Module 6: Chapters 9 and 10) = 37
Quiz 7 (Module 7: Chapter 11) = 5

There will be 7 timed quizzes. All quizzes and exams are multiple choice questions. You will have two attempts to take the quizzes. Depending on the amount of questions, the time set for the quizzes vary. If you get kicked out of the exam because of internet problems, log back in and continue. If you are not happy with your quiz score, take it again. The system will keep the highest score. I will not reset a quiz attempt for you.

Academic Research Paper (110 points)

Your research paper is due on Sunday of week 13 (See syllabus calendar). You will submit the paper by attaching it as a Microsoft Word file to the Assignment forum. I will not accept any late research papers. After the due date, the submission link will close. I encourage you to turn it in early. If it is not submitted through the Blackboard Paper Assignment forum as an attached file as instructed, I will not grade it. In other words, do not email it to me, or submit it in any other manner as required.

PAPER TOPIC AND TITLE: Gun Violence in America

Write a 1500-word (minimum) paper (6 quality references minimum) on the topic above. Research gun crime and violence over the past few years in order to establish a perspective on the trends. Examine the current political arguments over the 2nd Amendment and policies exercised differently by various jurisdictions. Take a position on the best solution moving forward in reducing gun related violence in America.

All research and sources will be cited within the body of the paper with the appropriate use of in-text citations. The paper will be no less than 1500 words and have a minimum of 6 academic quality references. The grading rubric for this assignment may be viewed in the Research Paper submission link in Blackboard.

Websites such as Wikipedia, blogs, and social networking forums (e.g., Facebook) are not to be used. Depending on your topic, they may be good places to start. However, there is nothing authoritative about these websites and therefore should not be cited in an academic paper. Information obtained from official websites, such as state/federal governments or government agencies, is acceptable and may be used as sources sparingly. I have provided you with an APA formatted paper shell and a presentation on citing and references in your research paper assignment link. Please review the Research Paper Rubric to see how I will be grading this assignment.

Extra Credit:

There will be no extra credit offered in this course. I encourage quality, not quantity, so please do not ask.
Course Requirements:

Seven graded weekly collaborative group discussions 140 points
Seven Module Quizzes 150 points
Two exams 200 points
One academic research paper 110 points

Grading: 600-point scale

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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>540-600</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>480-539</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>420-479</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>360-419</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-359</td>
<td>F</td>
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NOTE: Grades are assigned according to the total points earned. There will be no rounding, curving, or extra credit.

Online Netiquette:

No Yelling please. Typing IN ALL CAPS IS INAPPROPRIATE. Sarcasm can (and will) backfire on you. Attempt to find your own answers. Always make an effort to use proper punctuation, spelling and grammar. Don’t get cute with text colors. Last and most importantly, be kind. Even though other students cannot see you, your name is attached to that comment and your classmates and instructors will remember it if you’ve been rude.

Class participation and due dates:

This online course is seven weeks in length. Due dates will be strictly enforced. If you miss a week of discussions, this is no different than missing class. You cannot make it up. I will open your short essays a week early (before we cover the module) so you can begin working on it early. I will not accept late work on the Module Assignments (2 quizzes and 2 short essays). You will be given an entire week to sit down during a time of your choosing to take the 2 quizzes and the mid-term and final exam. They are timed and will force submit when the time expires. If you get kicked out by an Internet glitch, log back in and continue. There will be no make ups. If you have a special issue, you need to contact me in advance – not after the fact. I will not accept a late submission on the research paper. After the due dates, the essays, quizzes, discussion and exam links will be locked.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes cheating on an exam, turning in someone else’s assignment from a previous class, or plagiarism. This includes paraphrase or direct quotation of work of another person without fully and
properly crediting the author with citations and reference page; or using materials prepared by another person/agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. For students 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.

Writing center:

The University Writing Center is located in Library, Room 227. It is a great place to receive help with editing your written papers, and with APA style assistance. They are open M-Th 9:00-5:00 pm, Fr 9:00-2:00 pm, and Sundays 12:00-5:00pm. Appointments are recommended well before the deadline, but they will take walk-ins.

UTEP Drop Policy:

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.

1. Students who drop a course before the “official census date,” the course will not appear on the transcript, and doesn’t count toward the 6-course drop limit.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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. Complete withdrawals from all classes in the same semester do not count against the 6 drop limit.

Online / Technical support:

I will be setting up a Mail Box link in Blackboard. You can use this as a primary source of communication with me during the course. If you are having trouble with this course or its material, you should contact me via
email to discuss the issues while you work it out with UTEP. I do not work for IT or Distance Learning at UTEP. As a student in this course, you can get help from the following resources:

**Cynthia Marrufo, Criminal Justice Counselor (crimjust@utep.edu):**
[www.calendly.com/cbmarrufo](http://www.calendly.com/cbmarrufo)

As a student in this course, you also have access to support from University Technology Services
- for Blackboard and computer issues.
- Blackboard Support: [http://at.utep.edu/bbc/](http://at.utep.edu/bbc/)
- Technical Support from Technology Support:

**Collaborative Discussion Original Post Example (pay attention to APA citation & Reference formatting):**

Cesare Beccaria wrote a book *Of Crimes and Punishments* (1819) where he argued that all individuals wish to be exempt from the “compacts that bind the rest of mankind” (Jacoby, et al., 2012, p. 406). People generally prefer to serve their own best interests. Because of the natural state of war, men must bind together in order to defend themselves. Laws and punishments are necessary to keep the interests of the group united together under a common purpose. Therefore, the laws created form a contract that binds these people together.

For this system to work, Beccaria argued for a system of detailed written laws describing the deviant behaviors that constitute crime and the associated punishments. Beccaria further argued that in order to deter crime, the punishment should fit the crime by severity of the punishment paralleling the severity of harm. Also, the punishment should be severe enough to outweigh the benefit or pleasure obtainable from the crime. Finally, Beccaria argued that in order to deter crime, the punishment needed to be certain. Criminals need to believe that it would be likely they would be caught and punished. Also, the punishment given needed to occur soon after the commission of the crime. Becarria focused on “sound judgments and fixed laws” to guide the application of penalties and punishments.

Gina Lombroso-Ferrero (1911) wrote a book summarizing her father’s research on the biological traits of the “Criminal Man”. Original research focused on anthropology, but later expanded to children, heredity, race, and most importantly, social causation of crime (Jacoby, et al., 2012). This evolved later into the Positivist School of Thought. A major problem with Lombroso’s criminal anthropology was the assumption that certain physical characteristics were indicative of biological inferiority.

Reference:


**Calendar and Assignments:**

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<tr>
<th>Mondays/Week</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Introductions Discussion</td>
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| JAN 19-23    | As American as Apple Pie.  
  Read Chapter 1 – *Violence: The Enduring Problem* |  |
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>JAN 24-30</th>
<th>Group Discussion 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>(SUN – SAT)</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>SUN – SAT</td>
<td>Module 2 Explaining Violence</td>
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<td>Read chapters 2 and 3 – <em>Violence: The Enduring Problem</em></td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>FEB 7-13</td>
<td>Mod 2 Quiz Due SAT</td>
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<td>SUN - SAT</td>
<td>Module 1 Quiz Due SAT</td>
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<td>SUN – SAT</td>
<td>Module 3 Assault and Murder</td>
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<td>Read chapters 4 and 5 – <em>Violence: The Enduring Problem</em></td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>FEB 21-27</td>
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<td>SUN – SAT</td>
<td>Module 2 Quiz Due SAT</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>FEB 28-MAR 6</td>
<td>Group Discussion 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUN – SAT</td>
<td>Module 4 Rape and Assault</td>
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<td>Read Chapter 6 – <em>Violence: The Enduring Problem</em></td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>MAR 7-13</td>
<td>Mod 4 Quiz Due SAT</td>
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<tr>
<td>(MON – SAT)</td>
<td>(SPRING BREAK MAR 14-20)</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>MAR 21-27</td>
<td>Group Discussion 5</td>
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<td>(MON – SAT)</td>
<td>Module 5 Violence in the Streets</td>
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<td>Read Chapters 7 &amp; 8 – <em>Violence: The Enduring Problem</em></td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>MAR 28-APR 3</td>
<td>Mod 5 Quiz Due SAT</td>
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<td>(MON – SAT)</td>
<td>Exam 1 (Mods 1-4)</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>APR 4-10</td>
<td>Group Discussion 6</td>
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<td>(MON – SAT)</td>
<td>Module 6 Terrorism and Genocide</td>
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<td>Read Chapters 9 &amp; 10 – <em>Violence: The Enduring Problem</em></td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>APR 18-24</td>
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<td>Module 7 Violence Prevention</td>
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<td>Read chapter 11 - <em>Violence: The Enduring Problem</em></td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>APR 25-MAY 1</td>
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