

CRIJ 1310: Fundamentals of Criminal Law

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Office Hours: By appointment only

CRN: 24430

Course Overview and Objectives:

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.

Required Textbook:

Schmallegger, F. (2022). Criminal Law Today, 7th Edition. Boston, MA: Pearson

Class Format:

This course is NOT self-paced. Instead, this course is based on weekly modules that open each Monday at 12:00 am and close the following Sunday at 11:59 pm (Mountain Standard Time). Due to this being a “half-mester” course, the course content will be fast paced. Due dates will be listed within each of the modules. 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!

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.

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.

Requirements:

Exams: Your grade in this class will be based on a syllabus quiz, introductory discussion board, 3 exams and 12 discussion boards. Exams are to be taken on the week stated in the syllabus. Make-up exams may only be acceptable under extreme circumstances, such as a medical or personal emergency. I must warn you, however, that I base these decisions on a very narrow definition of extreme. The student must provide me with proper documentation to qualify for a make-up (documentation does not, unfortunately, guarantee that a make-up will be given). Missed exams will be assigned a grade of zero (0). All makeup exams, if granted, must be completed within one week of the original exam date. Each exam is worth 100 points for a total of 700 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 90 minutes (1 hour and 30 minutes) to complete the exam once they begin. **The Syllabus quiz will be available at the start of the class and will be due on Thursday at 11:59 PM of the welcome week.** Exams will be available on Monday at 12:00 AM and will close at 11:59PM on Sunday (Mountain Standard Time).

Discussion Boards: 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 and responding to two peers. There is no word minimum or maximum. Discussion boards will be graded based on the context of the answers and responses. Responses should contribute to the conversation. It should NOT be a simple “I agree/disagree.” **Discussion board grades will be made up of two separate parts. Students must first submit their original post by Thursday at 11:59 PM. For every day that the post is late one point will be deducted. Students must then respond to at least 2 peers by Sunday at 11:59 PM. For every missing response 1.5 points will be deducted. There will be 12 chapter discussion boards and one introductory discussion board, and each is worth 10 points (130 points total). Make-up assignments may only be acceptable under extreme circumstances and all makeup assignments, if granted, must be completed within one week of the original assignment date.**

FINAL GRADE CALCULATION:

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

Exam 1	100 Points
Exam 2	100 Points
Exam 3	100 Points
Syllabus Quiz	50 Points
Introductory DB	10 Points
Discussion Board 1	10 Points
Discussion Board 2	10 Points
Discussion Board 3	10 Points
Discussion Board 4	10 Points
Discussion Board 5	10 Points
Discussion Board 6	10 Points
Discussion Board 7	10 Points
Discussion Board 8	10 Points
Discussion Board 9	10 Points
Discussion Board 10	10 Points
Discussion Board 11	10 Points
<u>Discussion Board 12</u>	<u>10 Points</u>
Total Points	480 Points

Final Grade Distribution:

480-432	Points=A
431-384	Points=B
383-336	Points=C
335-0	Points=F

Please note:

I have right to make any changes to the course or syllabus and any changes will be announced ahead of time in an announcement and/or email. 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:

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.

Accommodations and Support Services:

If a student needs an accommodation, then the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) 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.

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings	Assignments
1	Jan 17-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • History of Criminal Law • Criminal Liability 	Syllabus, Chapters 1 & 2	Syllabus Quiz, Introduction, Discussion Board 1 & 2
2	Jan 23- 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Concept of Crime • Inchoate Offenses and Parties to Crime 	Chapters 3 & 4	Discussion Board 3 & 4, Exam 1
3	Jan 30- Feb 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justifications as Defenses • Excuses and Insanity 	Chapters 5 & 6	Discussion Board 5 & 6
4	Feb 6- 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homicide • Assault, Sex Offenses and Other Crimes 	Chapters 7, & 8	Discussion Board 7 & 8 Exam 2
5	Feb 13- 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property and Computer Crimes • Crimes Against Public Order 	Chapters 9 & 10	Discussion Board 9 & 10

6	Feb 20- 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Morality• Terrorism	Chapters 11 & 12	Discussion Board 11 & 12
7	Feb 27- Mar 4	-	-	Final