Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
College of Liberal Arts
Department of Social Sciences
FALL 2012

CRIJ 1301.W01 Introduction to Criminal Justice

Professor: Dr. Melissa L. Jarrell

Office: BH-345

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Phone Number: 361-825-2188

E-mail Address: Melissa.Jarrell@tamucc.edu

Required Text:


Course Description:

Introduction to Criminal Justice is an overview course designed to familiarize students with the reality of crime in America and major issues in the American Criminal Justice System. The course will address issues pertaining to the history and philosophy of the American criminal justice system as well as criminal law, policing, courts, corrections, and current issues in criminal justice. Students should gain an introductory as well as a critical understanding of the American Criminal Justice System through lectures, readings, assignments and guest speaker presentations.

Course Objectives:

- Identify the major concepts and components (law enforcement, courts and corrections) of the American Criminal Justice System as well as the major myths and their realities relating to crime and the American Criminal Justice system.

- Understand the steps in the criminal justice process, the major sources of crime data as well as past/current crime trends, the relationship between the U.S. Constitution, U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and the components of the criminal justice system and the historical and current trends within policing, courts, and corrections.

- Define goals of punishment and how the American Criminal Justice system punishes criminal offenders.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of criminal justice in the United States.

**Learning Outcomes** - By the end of the course, you should be able to:
1. Discuss basic concepts and terminology in criminal justice, including the three main components of the criminal justice system;
2. Provide a basic definition of crime, identify different types of crime, describe crime statistics in America, and discuss the causes of crime;
3. Explain the criminal justice process and discuss the role of each component in the system’s response to crime: including the history and structure of policing, the stages of the court process, the structure of corrections and the role of criminal sanctions.

**DISABLED STUDENT POLICY**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in Driftwood 101. Students with a disability which affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

**GRADE APPEAL PROCESS**

**Grade Appeal Process:** As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal.

A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)
2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.
3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.
5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.
7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)
8. Decision by Provost.
9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**ONLINE AT TAMUCC**

Your online class will be using the Blackboard platform. Blackboard is an easy point and click interface. Blackboard is incredibly easy to navigate! To access Blackboard and get around in the course, follow the steps below:

A. Follow the link to TAMUCC island online:
https://iol.tamucc.edu/

B. On the lower right hand side of the screen you will see a log-in for Blackboard. Click on Blackboard and then enter your log-in information. Your log-in is your Banner ID (A number) and PIN. If you have trouble with your log-in, please contact Island Online Support;

- By Phone:
  - 361-825-2825 (Local)
  - 1-866-353-2491 (Long Distance)
- By E-mail:
  - islandonline@tamucc.edu
- Hours of Operation:
  - 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. Everyday (U.S. Central)

C. Once in Blackboard, all of the classes you are currently taking will be listed in the middle of the screen. Look for *Intro to Criminal Justice CRIJ-1301-W01*.

D. The first thing you will see in Blackboard is a welcome announcement from your instructor.

E. The course content is found by clicking on the tabs on the left hand side of the screen.

Some of the most important tabs are:
Syllabus: Click on this link in order to access the syllabus.

Announcements: I will post announcements frequently throughout the course.

Grading:

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<tr>
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<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Punishment Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments (2 x 30 points each)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussions (14 x 10 points each)</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points Possible</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
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A = 90-100% 450-500 points
B = 80-89% 400-449 points
C = 70-79% 350-399 points
D = 60-69% 300-349 points
F = 59% and below 299 and below

No extra credit will be given. No exceptions!!!
NOT be tolerated. Make sure to use APA-style documentation. Outside sources MUST be documented!

Your paper must be a MINIMUM of SIX pages. The purpose of the paper is to objectively discuss the arguments for and against capital punishment. These arguments should be drawn from textbook information, PP slides and extra resources. In the final paragraph of the paper, you may give your opinion (“Are you for or against the death penalty?”) and explain your reasoning.

1. Define capital punishment. (10 points)
2. Objectively discuss the positions for and against the death penalty. (60 points)
3. State your opinion and why you have this opinion. (10 points)
4. Include citations and references (APA)! (10 points)
5. Format/writing/organization (10 points)

Assignments (60 points)
Assignment guidelines are discussed in detail below. Assignments must be typed and turned in to the Blackboard dropbox as an attachment on the due date by 11:59pm. Document sources used in APA (citations and references) for assignments that require outside sources.

Assignment #1: Elements of a Crime: Due at the end of Week 4 (September 16)
Find a news story on a recent crime. Describe the case: the crime committed, offender characteristics, victim characteristics, victim/offender relationship and other factors relevant to the case. Discuss how (or if) this case demonstrates all three elements of a crime: mens rea, actus reus, and concurrence. Return to Chapter 4 in the textbook and consider if any of the other five elements of crime (causation, harm, legality, punishment, necessary attendant circumstances) are present in the case you selected. Document sources used in APA in the form of in-text citations and references.

Assignment #2: Court Procedures: Due at the end of Week 9 (October 21)
Select a past or current high-profile case (i.e. O.J. Simpson, Casey Anthony, etc.). Provide an overview of the case and include the court system involved (state or federal). Explain the procedures that occurred during the court case and why they occurred. Be specific and use examples to illustrate your points. Finally, explain one actual or potential ethical or diversity issue that might have affected the outcome of the case. Be specific! Document sources used in APA.

Discussions (140 points)
Each week, students are required to participate in class discussions. Participation in weekly discussions is very important as they make up over 25% of your total grade in the course. Each week, one discussion topics will be presented. You are required to post ONE response to the discussion topic and respond to at least ONE other student post. Initial responses to the questions must be posted by WEDNESDAY of each week.
Responses to student posts should be posted by SUNDAY of each week. All students are expected to participate in the threaded discussions. The **quality of your posts and responses** will be evaluated to determine your weekly discussion grade (10 points possible each week).

Discussion posts and responses should be **thorough, critical, and well written**. Make sure to provide complete references (in APA) for authors you cite in the body of your response, including the textbook. Make sure references are correctly cited in APA, including websites. You need to provide the correct website link in APA so that it is easy for your classmates (and me) to locate. Whenever possible, apply textbook concepts to real world issues. I encourage you to provide examples and experiences from the real world; your own experiences, something you read in the news, etc. A more familiar, conversational tone is acceptable (unlike papers which require a more academic or professional tone). However, make sure to **proofread your responses** prior to posting. Look for spelling and grammatical errors. You are encouraged to critically examine what you read!

**Week 1 Discussion:** Introduction: Please introduce yourself to your fellow classmates. Share some information about yourself including your major, where you're from, and your career goals.

**Week 2 Discussion:** Are there any disparities in how the media report and represent crime and the actual statistical evidence shown in the Uniform Crime Reports (i.e. myth versus reality)? How accurate are TV crime shows? Explain your answers.

**Week 3 Discussion:** Why do you think that crime rates are down? Why is it difficult to use official statistics to make universal claims about crime trends and patterns? Explain your response.

**Week 4 Discussion:** What are the elements of a crime? Provide a summary of the crime that you selected for your assignment and provide a brief discussion of how the elements of a crime are present in this case.

**Week 5 Discussion:** Select one of the following Supreme Courts cases associated with law enforcement: Miranda v. Arizona, Mapp v. Ohio, or Terry v. Ohio. Describe the case and how it affected the criminal justice system and in particular, law enforcement.

**Week 6 Discussion:** As a police chief, what programs or methods would you utilize to combat police brutality and corruption? Explain in detail.

**Week 7 Discussion: no discussion (Exam 1)**

**Week 8 Discussion:** What is your reaction to the documentary? What is plea bargaining and what are the pros/cons associated with plea bargaining?
Week 9 Discussion: Select one of the following Supreme Court cases associated with the right to counsel: Gideon v. Wainwright, Argersinger v. Hamlin, or Powell v. Alabama. Describe the case and how it affected the criminal justice system, in particular, the court system.

Week 11 Discussion: Are you for or against the Death Penalty? Explain why you support or do not support capital punishment.

Week 12 Discussion: How do you feel about community-based correctional programs? Do you think these types of programs should be expanded or cut?

Week 13 Discussion: What are the general characteristics of prison life? How might we do a better job of rehabilitating criminal offenders?

Week 14 Discussion: Provide a brief description of two issues, challenges, or trends related to the juvenile justice system. Describe one change you would make to the juvenile justice system as a professional within the system (police officer, judge, lawyer, probation officer, etc). Be specific and use examples to support your position.

Week 15 Discussion: Discuss three things you learned or learned more about over the past semester. Have any of your opinions about crime and the criminal justice system changed over the course of the semester?

Week 16 Discussion: no discussion (Exam 2)

Concluding Remarks
If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, do not hesitate to give me a call/send me an e-mail. I am available to assist you with information pertaining to this course and to the criminal justice system in general.

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<tr>
<th>Week 1: Wednesday, August 22 to Sunday, August 26</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review: Syllabus and Course Room</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discuss:</strong> Please introduce yourself to your fellow classmates. Share some information about yourself including your major, where you're from, and your career goals. Post your introduction and respond to at least one classmate (10 points)</td>
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<th>Week 2: Monday, August 23 to Sunday, September 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review: PowerPoint slides “Steps in the Criminal Justice System”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discuss:</strong> Crime and the Media (10 points): Are there any disparities in how the media report and represent crime and the actual statistical evidence shown in the Uniform Crime Reports (i.e. myth versus reality)? How accurate are TV crime shows? Explain your answers.</td>
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<th>Week 3: Monday, September 3 to Sunday, September 9</th>
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*Read: Chapters 2 and 3*  
*Discuss:* Crime rates (10 points): Why do you think that crime rates are down? Why is it difficult to use official statistics to make universal claims about crime trends and patterns? Explain your response.

**Week 4: Monday, September 10 to Sunday, September 16**  
Review: PP Slides “Criminal Law”  
*Read: Chapter 4*  
*Discuss:* Elements of a Crime (10 points): What are the elements of a crime? Provide a summary of the crime that you selected for your assignment and provide a brief discussion of how the elements of a crime are present in this case.  
*Assignment:* Elements of a Crime (30 points)

**Week 5: Monday, September 17 to Sunday, September 23**  
Review: PP slides “Policing in the U.S.”  
*Read: Chapters 5 and 6*  
*Discuss:* Supreme Court Cases (10 points): Select one of the following Supreme Courts cases associated with law enforcement: Miranda v. Arizona, Mapp v. Ohio, or Terry v. Ohio. Describe the case and how it affected the criminal justice system and in particular, law enforcement.

**Week 6: Monday, September 24 to Sunday, September 30**  
*Read: Chapters 7 and 8*  
*Discuss:* Corruption and Brutality (10 points): As a police chief, what programs or methods would you utilize to combat police brutality and corruption? Explain in detail.

**Week 7: Monday, October 1 to Sunday, October 7**  
Review: Exam 1 Study Guide and Chapters 1 through 8  
*Complete: Exam 1 by Sunday, October 7 at 11:59pm (100 points)*

**Week 8: Monday, October 8 to Sunday, October 14**  
Review: PP Slides “The Court System”  
*Read: Chapter 9*  
*Watch: “The Plea” on Frontline PBS*  
*Discuss:* Plea Bargains (10 points): What is your reaction to the documentary? What is plea bargaining and what are the pros/cons associated with plea bargaining?

**Week 9: Monday, October 15 to Sunday, October 21**  
Review: PP Slides “The Criminal Trial”  
*Read: Chapter 10*  
*Discuss:* Supreme Court Cases (10 points): Select one of the following Supreme Court cases associated with the right to counsel: Gideon v. Wainwright, Argersinger v. Hamlin, or Powell v. Alabama. Describe the case and how it affected the criminal justice system, in particular, the court system.  
*Assignment:* Court Procedures (30 points)

**Week 10: Monday, October 22 to Sunday, October 28**  
Review: PP Slides “Sentencing and Appeals” and “Punishment”  
*Read: Chapter 11*  
*Discuss:* Punishment (10 points): What kinds of behaviors did you get in trouble for as a child? Who “punished” you? Was any particular punishment successful? Was any
particular punishment unsuccessful? Explain your answers.

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<th>Week 11: Monday, October 29 to Sunday, November 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review: PP Slides “Capital Punishment”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss: Capital Punishment (10 points): Are you for or against the Death Penalty? Explain why you support or do not support capital punishment.</td>
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<td>Paper: Capital Punishment due by Sunday, November 4 at 11:59pm (100 points)</td>
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<th>Week 12: Monday, November 5 to Sunday, November 11</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review: PP Slides “Jails and Detention”</td>
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<td>Read: Chapters 12 and 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss: Probation and Parole (10 points): How do you feel about community-based correctional programs? Do you think these types of programs should be expanded or cut?</td>
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<th>Week 13: Monday, November 12 to Sunday, November 18</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review: PP Slides “The American Correctional System”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read: Chapter 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss: Prison Life (10 points): What are the general characteristics of prison life? How might we do a better job of rehabilitating criminal offenders?</td>
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<th>Week 14: Monday, November 19 to Sunday, November 25</th>
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<tr>
<td>Read: Chapter 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss: Juvenile Justice (10 points): Provide a brief description of two issues, challenges, or trends related to the juvenile justice system. Describe one change you would make to the juvenile justice system as a professional within the system (police officer, judge, lawyer, probation officer, etc). Be specific and use examples to support your position.</td>
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<th>Week 15: Monday, November 26 to Sunday, December 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review: Exam 2 Study Guide and Chapters 9 through 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss: What did you learn? (10 points): Discuss three things you learned or learned more about over the past semester. Have any of your opinions about crime and the criminal justice system changed over the course of the semester?</td>
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<th>Week 16: Monday, December 3 to Tuesday, December 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Complete: Exam 2 by Tuesday, December 4 at 11:59pm (100 points)</td>
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