CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN LITERATURE

Course Syllabus

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Office Hours:
Monday 2:45 – 4:15 p.m.
Tuesday & Thursday 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Thursday 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
And by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of selected literary classics that treat of crime and punishment. Literary artists from various cultures have described in quite personal terms the experience associated with committing crime, engaging in outlawed political activity, fighting in the courts, being victims of crime and abuse, living in prison, and reentering civil society following imprisonment. We will place their experiences in historical, political and sociological context. We will use film to enhance our understanding of the literature.

REQUIRED READING

Ted Conover, Coyotes
Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Infidel
David Finkel, The Good Soldiers
James S. Hirsch, Hurricane: The Miraculous Journey of Rubin Carter

CLASS FORMAT

This course centers around four deeply compelling books, the major themes of which will be illustrated through the use of films, lectures, guest speakers, small group exercises, and discussion. Lectures will be devoted to providing historical, criminological, political background material, while class discussion will center on the analysis and criticism of the books. Our small group exercises will enable us to share thoughts and feelings about the writings and films in a relaxed setting. This should contribute to a sense of collaborative intellectual conversation and good feeling!

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Read and analyze literary texts that provide personal accounts of experiences with the criminal justice system.
- Place the personal accounts of experiences in the criminal justice system in sociological, historical, political context.
- See and understand the value of literary accounts in providing a fuller picture of justice and injustice in the world.
## SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>Introductions &amp; Overview</td>
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| January 29 & 31 | *Coyotes*  
About the author  
"Illegal" immigration  
Reading: *Coyotes*, pages 1-64 |
| February 5 & 7 | Film: *El Norte*  
Reading: *Coyotes*, pages 65-125 |
| February 12  | Guest Speaker                              |
| February 14  | *Coyotes*  
Reading: *Coyotes*, pages 126-end |
| February 19  | *Infidel*  
About the author |
| February 21 & 26 | Women & Justice  
Reading: *Infidel*, Chapters 1, 2, 3 |
| February 28  | Reading: *Infidel*, Chapters 4 & 5       |
| March 5      | Film: *Love in Kabul*                     |
| March 7 & 19 | *Infidel*  
Reading: 6, 7, 8, 9  
Film: *Submission* |
| March 11-15 | Spring Break!                             |
| March 20     | First essay due                           |
| March 21     | *The Good Soldiers*  
About the author  
American Prisons on Foreign Soil |
| March 26 & 28 | *The Good Soldiers*  
Reading: Pages 1-116  
Film: *American Prisons, Foreign & Domestic* |
| April 2 & 4  | *The Good Soldiers*  
Reading: Pages 117-219 |
| April 9      | Guest Speaker                             |
| April 11 & 16| *The Good Soldiers*  
Reading: Pages 220-end |
DATE       TOPIC
April 18  Hurricane
           Actual Innocence
April 23 & 25  Hurricane
           Reading: pages 1-107
April 30 & May 2  Hurricane
           Reading: pages 108-193
           Film: The Hurricane
May 7  Hurricane
           Reading: finish
May 9  Second essay due

Schedule Subject to Change

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Students will read the four required books. Two essays, each a minimum of five pages in length, will be assigned. Papers should be computer-processed (double-spaced, 11-13 font), well paragraphed and grammatical. Two take-home examinations will be administered. Each covers two of the assigned books.

Written assignments are due on the following dates:

First essay: March 20 anytime
Second essay: May 9 anytime

In the interest of fairness to all, late papers will not receive full credit.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are reminded of the university’s strict prohibition against cheating and plagiarism. Punishment for same may include expulsion from the university and a grade of F. See attached guidelines for avoiding plagiarism.

ATTENDANCE

Since the course is dedicated to reading fascinating books and talking about them, your presence each class period is essential. In light of the fact that there are no examinations, it’s particularly important that everyone attend class each time to ensure that this class not be viewed as undemanding and undisciplined by the university community.

Your final course grade will be determined as follows:

1. Two essays 25% each = 50%
2. Two take-home examinations 20% each = 40%
2. Participation & attendance 10% = 100%
POLICIES

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
Students are reminded that once they enter the classroom, they are expected to behave courteously and respectfully to everyone. They are expected to turn off cell phones and place them out of sight, refrain from talking to neighbors and eating, and they should not leave the classroom unless absolutely necessary to use the bathroom or in case of emergency. Laptops are to be used only by students with special needs after receiving permission from the professor.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Students are reminded of the university’s strict prohibition against cheating and plagiarism. Punishment for same may include expulsion from the university and a grade of F.

ACADEMIC ADVISING
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

NOTICE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation 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 call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

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.tamu.cc/provost/university_rules/index.htm. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

EXPECTATIONS
Classes will begin at the scheduled time and run the full session. Please be certain to arrive on time and be prepared to stay until class is dismissed. If you have work obligations that interfere with your ability to do this, please change your work schedule or consider dropping the course. Students are expected to avoid private conversations with their classmates during class. As if you were on an airplane, please turn off your electronic devices upon entering the classroom. Attendance will be taken each class. Please arrange with a fellow student to get handouts, notes and assignments if you miss class. Make-up examinations will be given only with a doctor’s excuse or under exceptional circumstances that should be discussed with the professor before the examination. If a true emergency arises and you miss an examination, please notify the professor within 24 hours so that we can arrange an alternate time for you to take an exam.