CRIJ 3310.001: The Judicial Process

Eighty percent of success is just showing up.
-Woody Allen

Punish the guilty; keep the innocent nervous.
-Judge Dredd

Course Description: The course is intended to familiarize students with the role played by the courts and the legal system in American political, social, and economic life. Topics include: The nature, sources and development of law; the various groups who control access to or make use of the legal system; law as a source of social control and political influence; the history, activities, and organization of American court systems and of the legal profession. Both civil and criminal law issues are covered, but emphasis is placed upon criminal law.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Understand the operation and purpose of the courts as they relate to the criminal justice system.

2. Critically analyze popular perception and misperception of the role of the court system, as it relates to the criminal justice system.

3. Apply professional standards of writing, learning, test-taking, and classroom deportment.

Required Text:


Grading: The student’s grade will be based upon the completion of three examinations, a project or paper, and on class participation and short written assignments (reaction papers). The percentages of each of these of the final grade are:

- Exam #1: 20%
- Exam #2: 20%
- Exam #3: 20%
- Final Exam: 20%
- Project/Paper: 10%
- Reaction Papers/Participation: 10%
- Total: 100%
The examinations will be objective. The project/paper will be on a topic of the student’s own choosing related to law and the courts. **The instructor must give prior approval to all topics/projects.** If the student chooses to do a paper, it must be at least fifteen pages typewritten and double-spaced. Alternative projects may be accompanied by a shorter (no less than six pages) typewritten summary. Examples of such alternatives are:

1. A dossier of legal cases or events derived from reputable news sources with an explanation of how the items in the scrapbook illustrate some of the concepts presented in the course. Dossiers may be collaborative; up to five students may work together on one.

2. An interview with a legal professional or litigant known to the student.

3. A presentation to the class on a legal issue of interest to the student.

4. An artistic or graphic presentation of the student’s own devising. This could include charts, graphs, symbolic paintings, or scale maps or models of courtrooms or historical crime scenes.

Detailed guidelines for the project/paper will be distributed in March.

**Make-Up Exams:** All makeup exams will be given the final week of the session. Make-up exams may be in essay format. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule the exam with the instructor.

**Attendance:** Roll will be taken, but does not count directly toward your grade. However, failure to attend frequently results in adverse examination scores.

**Dropping the Course:** Students should be aware that the instructor has no authority to unilaterally drop students from the class.

**Disability Services:** 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.

**Sex Discrimination:** Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi fully complies with Title IX, 20 USC 1681 et. seq., which provides that:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance[.]

All complaints of sex discrimination must be made or referred to the Director of Equal Opportunity for TAMU-CC. Office number: 361-825-2765. Email: Samuel.Ramierz@tamucc.edu
**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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-2455.

**Military Reserve, National Guard, and active duty military personnel** with special circumstances (e.g. upcoming deployments, drill requirements, or disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.

**Veterans and eligible family members:** The TAMU/CC Office of Veterans Affairs is dedicated to assisting veterans and eligible family members with achieving their educational goals efficiently and without impediments. If you are a veteran or eligible family member, please contact the Office of Veterans Affairs at 361-825-2331 for information regarding educational benefits and opportunities. The Office of Veterans Affairs is located on the first floor of the Student Services Center.

**Grade Appeals Process:** Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Academic Honesty:** Cheating or plagiarism will result in failure of the course and referral to the Dean of Students.

**Miscellaneous:** Cell Phones should be kept on mute during the class session. Laptops may be used in class. Students wishing to bring a guest to one of the lectures must first obtain the consent of the instructor. Please note that criminal justice by definition involves the discussion of topics which are not suitable for minors and minors should not be brought to class.

The counseling center is free for all students experiencing emotional issues or stress. 825-2396.

If a hurricane warning is in effect for the coastal bend area, class will not be held.

**Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>The Nature of Law</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>The Sources of Law</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Chapter(s)</td>
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<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Lawyers &amp; Police</td>
<td>Chs. 4,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 24</td>
<td>Court Structure</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<td>Mar. 2</td>
<td>The Judiciary</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
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<td>Mar. 9</td>
<td>Plea Bargains/Settlements</td>
<td>Ch. 11</td>
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<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>Mar. 23</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
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<td>Mar. 30</td>
<td>Civil &amp; Criminal Trials</td>
<td>Chs. 10,12</td>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>The Appellate Process;</td>
<td>Ch 7</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>Exam #3</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>Judicial Review and the U.S. Constitution</td>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Law and Politics: The Legislative Process</td>
<td>Classroom materials</td>
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Last Class Day: Dossiers due.

Final Exam as scheduled on SAIL