CRIJ 3310.002: 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.

**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:**

Abadinsky, Howard _Law Courts, and Justice in America_ (7th ed., 2014 or most recent).

**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:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dossier</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100%</td>
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1. The examinations will be objective. The lowest scoring of the four tests will be dropped from the calculation of the student’s grade.

2. The dossier will consist of news items of current events with legal significance obtained from reputable sources with an explanation of how the items in the dossier illustrate some of the concepts presented in the course. Dossiers may be collaborative; up to seven students may work together on the assignment. The dossier may be submitted as a blog or on paper. Detailed instructions for the dossier will be issued in January.

The Dossier will be due on the last class day. NO LATE DOSSIERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

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. Excessive absences will count adversely towards your grade.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism*

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an F in the course and referral to the Office of Student Life.

Disabilities Accommodations***

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 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.Ramirez@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 361-825-3466.

*Statement of Academic Continuity*

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

*Dropping a Class*

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 5th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**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**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *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. 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at:
For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website,
http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Classroom/professional behavior

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Miscellaneous: Smart Phones should be kept on mute during the class session. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOT BE VISIBLY DISTRACTED BY YOUR SMART PHONE. OBVIOUS DISTRACTION WILL IMPAIR YOUR PARTICIPATION SCORE. 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.

Schedule of Topics and Readings:

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<tr>
<th>Date (week of):*</th>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Reading:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>The Nature of Law</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Class will not meet Monday the 21st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>The Sources of Law</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Lawyers &amp; Police</td>
<td>Chs. 4,5</td>
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<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Exam #1 Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Current events/dossier workshop</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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Feb 25  Court Structure  Ch. 6
Mar. 4  The Judiciary  Ch. 9
Mar 11  Spring Break
Mar. 18  Plea Bargains/settlements  Ch. 11
Mar. 25  Exam #2  Wednesday
Apr 1  Civil & Criminal Trials  Chs.10,12
April 8  The Appellate Process;  Ch 7
April 15  Exam #3 Wednesday
April 22  Judicial Review and the U.S. Constitution  Ch. 8
Apr 29  Law and Politics: The Legislative Process
May 1  Last Class Day: Dossiers due.

Final Exam as scheduled on SAIL