



EAST TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

CJ 1301-01E CRN 21178
INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Course Syllabus: Spring 2025
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 10:00am-10:50am
Ferguson 313

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: J. Alex Purdon, Ph.D.

Office Location: Ferguson 229

Office Hours: 11:00am-12:00pm (M/W/F) or by virtual appointment.

Office Phone: (903) 886.5332

University Email Address: James.Purdon@tamuc.edu

Communication Response Time: Emails are answered within 24 hours Monday-Friday during business hours (9am-5pm).

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required Text

Owen, S. S., Fradella, H. F., Burke, T. D., & Joplin, J. (2024). *Foundations of criminal justice* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a historical and philosophical overview of the American criminal justice system, including the nature, extent, and impact of crime; criminal law; and justice agencies and processes. In addition, the course focuses on the philosophical, ethical, and practical underpinnings, which shape the operation of the criminal justice system. In exploring these areas, the course addresses the history, theory, research, legislation, and policy implications related to criminal justice.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the history and philosophy of the American criminal justice system.
2. Explain the nature and extent of crime in America.
3. Analyze the impact and consequences of crime.
4. Evaluate the development, concepts, and functions of law in the criminal justice system.
5. Describe the structure of contemporary federal, state, and local justice agencies and processes.
6. Define critical terms and concepts, including deviance, crime, criminal justice, criminology, law, and justice.
7. Critique the various perspectives on law, morality, and justice.
8. Analyze different viewpoints on deviance, crime, and social control.
9. Summarize the major theoretical approaches to crime causation.
10. Delineate how competing perspectives of justice shape criminal justice system policies and outcomes.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

- **Computer System:** Windows or Macintosh desktop or laptop computer purchased within the last 5 years. Chromebooks and mobile devices may not provide full online access.
- **Operating System:** Windows-based computers must be running Windows 10 or newer. Macintosh computers must be running OS 10.13 (High Sierra) or higher.
- **Required Software:** Microsoft Office 365; Adobe Acrobat Reader DC
- **Web Browser:** Use a recently updated internet browser.
- **Learning Management System (LMS):** See below for requirements.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES OR TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

1. **Review the Syllabus and the Course Schedule** to keep up to date on requirements for the course.
2. **Read announcements and check email!** I will send updates about the courses through D2L, so check regularly.
3. Create a **personal organization system** to keep track of specified due dates.
4. **Communicate regularly** with your instructor and peers.
5. **Create a study and/or assignment schedule** to stay on track.
6. Set aside **regular times** in which you can do your classwork with minimal interruptions or distractions. Avoid multitasking while studying.
7. Learn about and use the student resources available to you! You can get free assistance from the [A&M-Library](#), [IT Support](#), [the Writing Center](#), and more.

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ASSESSMENTS

Attendance

Attendance is an essential part of the learning process; thus, students are expected to attend class regularly. This ensures students stay engaged with the course material through the instructor's interactive lectures, benefit from in-class discussions and activities, and learn from guest speakers from the field. Class attendance is worth 10% of the total grade.

While some absences are unavoidable, you are responsible for making up missed absences and notifying the professor. Students are allotted three (3) unexcused absences before seeing a reduction in their class attendance score. Missing more than 25% of the class will result in a failing grade or removal from the class.

Class Participation

Class participation is an essential part of the learning process. Students are expected to have completed all required readings and to be prepared to contribute to class activities and discussions. The goal of class participation is to engage critical thinking, practice communication, and develop collaborative skills, all essential elements for professional success. Thus, participation will be assessed based on the frequency, relevance, and quality of the contributions to class discussions, group activities, and online platforms. Mere attendance alone without active engagement will result in a poor grade. The instructor reserves the right to implement class participation strategies if participation falls below expectations. Class participation is worth 5% of the total grade.

Case Study Presentation

Students will prepare and deliver a 10-minute professional presentation on a criminal case they are researching. This presentation should cover relevant items such as background facts of the case, the outcome of the case, and how each pillar of the criminal justice system (i.e., police, courts, and corrections) was involved in the case. Students are encouraged to use any relevant aids to facilitate the presentation, such as visuals (i.e., Adobe Acrobat, PowerPoints, GoogleSlides, or Prezi), **brief** segments or video clips (less than 1 minute), and pictures. The presentation is worth 10% of the total grade.

Exams

There will be three (3) exams over the course of the semester that coincides with the three parts of this course. These exams include a variety of objective questions, such as true/false and multiple choice, as well as written components, such as short-answer and/or full-length essay questions. Exams are graded based on completeness, accuracy, and coherency. Importantly, exams are "**open-note**" and "**open-book**" — meaning that students may refer to their textbook, their notes, and conduct independent research during the exam. However, students may not confer in any way—electronically, by phone, or in person—with anyone else. Also, do note, **all exams are timed**. Each of these exams will open over D2L and students will have a week to complete each exam. Each exam are worth 15% of the total grade.

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Movie Reflection

Students will need to choose a movie or crime-drama of their choice and critique the show on the accuracy of the portrayal. In particular, students will analyze the show based on the principles learned in class (e.g., how policing is portrayed in the show compared to how policing actually functions). I have created a short recommendation list on D2L for potential movies/shows that students might be interested in reviewing. This paper should include the name of the movie/show, a short summary of the episode, and a comparative analysis on the movie/show. This assignment should be two (2) pages in length, double-spaced, 12-point font, and Times New Roman. This assignment is worth 10% of the total grade.

Policy Project

Students will need to select, research, and analyze a criminal justice policy. This paper should include an introduction to the policy, discuss arguments in favor and against the policy, and conclude the paper with which argument is more persuasive. Students will need to use official governmental statistics and/or primary sources (i.e., peer-reviewed journal articles) in writing this paper. In other words, this is not an opinion piece, but rather one that is informed and supported by empirical evidence. The final paper should be between three (3) and four (4) pages in length, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, and conform to APA norms. This assignment is worth 10% of the total grade.

Weekly Quizzes

To make sure students keep current with the assigned reading, students must complete weekly quizzes on D2L. These quizzes may contain open-ended questions (i.e., short answer) or objective questions (i.e., multiple choice or true/false questions) and are due at the end of every week. Quizzes are “**open-book**”—meaning that students may refer to their textbook, the online lectures, articles, and notes while taking the quizzes. But do note, **all quizzes are timed**. And even though these quizzes are “open book,” students may not confer in any way—electronically, by phone, or in person—with anyone else while taking any quiz. Missed quizzes will be counted as a zero (0) for unexcused absences. If the absence is for good cause (see the late assignment policy below) then you will be given an alternative assignment. Importantly, I will only count the top ten (10) quizzes, and drop the rest. In total, weekly quiz is worth 10% of the total grade.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale (see Table 1):

Table 1: Grade Cut-Offs		
Grade	Points	Percentage
A	450-500	90.00% – 100%
B	400-449	80.00% – 89.99%
C	350-399	70.00% – 79.99%
D	300-349	60.00% – 69.99%
F	Below 300	Below 60.00%

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades (see Table 2):

Table 2: Assessments and Their Values		
Assignment	Points	Percentage
Attendance	50	10%
Participation	25	5%
Case Study Presentation	50	10%
Movie Reflection	50	10%
Policy Project	50	10%
Weekly Quizzes (lowest 3 will be dropped)	50	10% (1% each)
Exams 1-3	225 (75 each)	45% (15% each)

Grades can be accessed on D2L.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Communication will be held either in-person, email, or through D2L.

What to call me – Please refer to me as Professor or Dr. Purdon.

Look for the answer first. When questions arise during the course of this class, please remember to check these two sources for an answer *before* you contact me:

- Course Syllabus
- Announcements in D2L

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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Attendance and Participation

Class attendance is a vital part of class participation, and ensuring your success in this course. Come prepared to participate and attend regularly. Missing more than 25% of the class will result in a failing grade or removal from the class.

Excused absences for classes will be given without penalty to the grade in the case of any of the following reasons: (1) Participation in a required/authorized University activity; (2) Verified illness; (3) Death in a student's immediate family; (4) Obligation of a student at a legal proceedings in fulfilling responsibility as a citizen; and (5) Others determined by individual faculty to be excused (e.g., elective University activities, etc.).

Citation Style

Students are required to use the citation style and format of the American Psychological Association (APA). Review the *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.) or similar APA Citation Style online resource. It is acceptable to cite legal materials (cases, statutes, regulations, etc.) in accordance with the style specified in *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (21st ed.) in all papers.

Extra credit

No individualized extra credit work will be permitted in my class. Why? Extra credit is unfair to the students who do their work diligently all semester long. However, extra credit may be offered to the whole class for a variety of activities that go beyond what is anticipated in the syllabus. For instance, your first extra credit opportunity will be to email me within the first week of class, notify me that you read the syllabus, and are ready to begin the semester. Your reward will be 3 extra credit points on your first exam for completing this activity.

Late or Missed Assignments

Written assignments are to be submitted on the due date by the times specified (Central Time). Late submissions can be accepted for good cause if: (1) an extension was granted by the professor in advance of the due date; or (2) documentation of an unforeseeable excused absence (as assessed in the professor's sole discretion) is provided (see excused absences above). Late submissions without good cause will be reduced by a full letter grade (i.e., 10%) for each calendar day the assignment is late.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

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UNIVERSITY SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES-- ADA STATEMENT

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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

CAMPUS CONCEALED CARRY STATEMENT

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M University Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

EAST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information

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regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

AI Use IN COURSES

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

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COURSE SCHEDULE

ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS	PERCENTAGE	DUE DATE
WEEK 1: Introduction and Foundations of Criminal Justice		01/13-01/17
Readings: Syllabus and Introduction	--	--
Readings: Chapter 1	--	--
Weekly Quiz 1	1%	01/17
WEEK 2: Policing		01/20-01/24
MLK, Jr. Day – Campus Closed	--	01/20
Readings: Chapter 12	--	--
Weekly Quiz 2	1%	01/24
WEEK 3: Courts		01/27-01/31
Readings: Chapter 13	--	--
Weekly Quiz 3	1%	01/31
Week 4: Corrections		02/03-02/07
Readings: Chapter 14	--	--
Weekly Quiz 4	1%	02/07
Assignment 1: Movie Reflection	10%	02/07
WEEK 5: Law and Morality		02/10-02/14
Readings: Chapters 2 and 3	--	--
Weekly Quiz 5	1%	02/14
Assignment 2: Exam 1	15%	02/14
WEEK 6: Theories of Deviance and Social Control		02/17-02/21
Readings: Chapter 4	--	--
Weekly Quiz 6	1%	02/21
WEEK 7: Theories of Criminal Behavior		02/24-02/28
Readings: Chapter 5	--	--
Weekly Quiz 7	1%	02/28
WEEK 8: Concepts of Justice		03/03-03/07
Readings: Chapter 6	--	--
Weekly Quiz 8	1%	03/07
Week 9: SPRING BREAK March 10-14		
WEEK 10: Concepts of Justice Policy		03/17-03/21
Readings: Chapter 7	--	--
Weekly Quiz 9	1%	03/21
Assignment 3: Exam 2	15%	03/21

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WEEK 11: Presentations		03/24-03/28
Assignment 4: Day 1	10%	03/17
Assignment 4: Day 2	10%	03/19
Assignment 4: Day 3	10%	03/21
WEEK 12: Criminal Procedure		03/31-04/04
Readings: Chapter 9	--	--
Weekly Quiz 10	1%	04/04
WEEK 13: Criminal Law		04/07-04/11
Readings: Chapter 10	--	
Weekly Quiz 11	1%	04/11
WEEK 14: Punishment		04/14-04/18
Readings: Chapter 11	--	
Weekly Quiz 12	1%	04/18
WEEK 15 Social Justice Issues		04/16-04/25
Readings: Chapter 8	--	
Weekly Quiz 13	1%	04/25
Assignment 5: Policy Paper	10%	04/25
WEEK 16: Special Topics/Catch Up		04/28-05/02
Readings: TBA	--	--
WEEK 17: FINAL EXAM/EXPERIENCE		
Assignment 6: Exam 3	15%	05/05 10:30-12:30

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