



## **CJ 568 (01.W): SEMINAR IN CORRECTIONS**

FA 2026 Subterm II  
10/19/2026 through 12/11/2026

**Online**

### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

|                                  |                                                                      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Instructor:                      | Mike Tapia, Ph.D.                                                    |
| Office Location:                 | Ferguson 231                                                         |
| Office Hours:                    | M/W/F 3:00pm – 5:00pm                                                |
| University Email Address:        | <a href="mailto:michael.tapia@etamu.edu">michael.tapia@etamu.edu</a> |
| Preferred Form of Communication: | email                                                                |
| Communication Response Time:     | Normally within 24-48 hours                                          |

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

No Required Textbook: All Readings are found online  
and posted in Weekly Discussion Areas on D2L.

\*\*\*\*\*All readings for this course are obtained by students in Online Library Searches\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*Per the instructions in the “*Summaries of Readings*” section below\*\*\*\*\*

### **Course Description**

We'll study the history, philosophy, and practice of corrections in America, and where possible, Texas. This course examines theories of crime and punishment as well as the legal and administrative issues surrounding institutional and community-based corrections. We mainly use the most current and important published academic research in the subfield to do so, supplemented by fellow students' narrated slideshow presentations on correctional topics of their choice. We will cover management & supervision issues, eligibility for various correctional programs, and evaluate the research on their effectiveness. We will try to compare local and regional variations in correctional practice in the southwest and across the nation where possible. The course culminates in the writing of a term paper based on published academic research in this subfield.

### **Student Learning Objectives & Outcomes**

- 1) To learn about advanced concepts & theories of correctional practice;
- 2) To explore the nuances in institutional and community based corrections and their effectiveness;

- 3) To identify the various social forces related to correctional practice and its trends;
- 4) To understand how human behavior for both youth and adults is viewed & treated by the justice system.
- 5) To evaluate the classical and modern research in this subfield for use in assignments and a final term paper.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING**

1. **Reading Summaries:** To facilitate online class discussions, and to develop your skills in critically reviewing published research for your term paper, you are required to summarize two (2) journal articles this term. As part of your participation grade for Week 1, sign up for any two readings on the Summaries Reading List on D2L, first-come first served. There are about 120 readings to choose from.

Check the updated list for availability on D2L before making your selections. Then, for ones that have not been taken, email the instructor with your selections and attach downloaded .pdf copies of the articles. He will update the list on D2L and re-post it. Summaries are due on Sunday evening before the week the reading is scheduled for discussion.

\* **Readings** are searched & located by students using the TAMUC Library Homepage or Google/Google Scholar online. Since you have the full citation for your chosen readings, use the "One Search" feature of the TAMUC Library homepage at: <https://inside.tamuc.edu/library/index.php> and type in the journal title (appears in italics on the reading list). Select the Year, then search for the Volume & Issue number, and locate the full text link for downloading. Once you obtain a copy of the reading, email it as a .pdf attachment to your instructor.

Alternatively, conduct your own searches "from scratch" or however you are used to searching for research literature on your own. The only requirement is that it results in relevant (corrections related) articles from peer reviewed scientific / academic crime Journals. I will notify you if it is not suitable for the course.

Again, part of your participation grade for the first week of class is to make your two (2) reading selections as described above.

Again, reading summaries are due on Sunday evening before the week the reading is scheduled for discussion. Each summary is worth 10% of your course grade. See the *Summaries Assignment Handout on D2L for details*. Hit each bullet point on the summaries guidelines to earn a good grade.

2. **Groupwork Presentation & Writeup:** To get you thinking critically about issues related to corrections, you'll work in small groups (pre-assigned alphabetically by the instructor) to brainstorm and develop an audio-narrated slideshow presentation (via powerpoint recording, a 'prezi', 'audacity', VideoNote, or Canva, etc.). You will send it to me for uploading to D2L for the class to view and post comments on. During weeks 2, 3, & 4 groups will present on a topic or theme(s) of their choice from course materials and/or outside sources. Browse the entirety of the syllabus, slides, speaker videos & reading list, and look to your prior CJ, Corrections, or Criminology courses to get ideas for topics. The quality of your presentation & write-up accounts for 20% of your course grade. (See the *Presentations handout on D2L for details*). Sample presentations from prior semesters are also available.

3. **Class Participation via 'Discussions' on D2L.** This course is a seminar, where theories, concepts, issues, and ideas are presented then debated and developed. Therefore, weekly online discussions of the readings, student summaries, student presentations, and other materials is essential. Early in the week, I post a series of 'Discussions' in D2L for student comment. Your job is to comment with valuable insights and **provide files or internet links to relevant, outside research publications to support and supplement your comments**. Superficial comments like "good job", "I liked the reading/summary", and purely opinionated comments are not credited. General notes about the quality of class participation in Discussions are posted periodically on D2L throughout the term. Discussion comments are graded on a scale of 0-1.25 each week for a total maximum of 10 points for the term. As such, the quality of your Class Participation constitutes 10% of your course grade.

\*\*\*\*\*To earn your Week 1 Participation Grade\*\*\*\*\*:

- a. Review all material on D2L and Circulate a Personal Bio per the professor's emailed instructions so he and other classmates can know who is in the class and in their small group.
- b. Review the reading list & select 2 readings as described above or conduct your own search for more recent studies in those areas
- c. Locate your two readings using the instructions provided above & email those .pdf files to your instructor
- d. He will place them on the reading schedule, place your name **below the reading**, and update that list throughout the first few weeks of class, as your reading selections and files are received.
- e. Review the updated reading schedule on D2L and mark your calendar for the due dates of your 2 reading summaries

4. **Term Paper Drafts & Progress Updates:** At two points in the semester (Sunday 11/8/26 and on Sunday 11/29/26 I post paper draft assignments, grade them, & provide feedback. For the first assignment (due 11/8/26), provide the following:

- 1) a general statement of your work and how it is progressing to date;
- 2) key concepts in your topic
- 3) summaries of published research on your topic you've found so far (i.e. your two selected readings + others from your own searches)
- 4) identify other key resources for examining the topic
- 5) a crime theory from the slides, your readings or from other CJ courses, describe it, and how it relates to your topic
- 6) problems that you have encountered, or expect to encounter, and
- 7) a works cited/references page.

These write-ups are due on the dates listed above and the written feedback I provide throughout the term should be reflected in your final term papers. These term paper progress updates constitute 10% of your final grade.

5. **Term Paper:** Your primary assignment for the course is to develop a term paper (minimum of 7-8 pp., double-spaced). This is a critical literature review on a relevant topic in corrections. For best results in the class as a whole, make your group project topic and reading summaries topics overlap as much as possible for use on your term paper (i.e. try to make all of your assignments have the same or a similar topic). While you will learn about many topics in corrections via Discussions and others' presentations of material, you will focus and specialize on a single topic for your own term paper. For this reason, doing solo presentations instead of group projects can be discussed.

Towards the end of the paper, include a **research design** section (with bolded text in the title) containing proposed data and methodology subsections. This is where you design a hypothetical study *detailing how you would conduct actual research on the topic by gathering & analyzing data*. You get ideas about how to design research from the readings you summarize. I also provide tips in Assignment descriptions as we progress through the term.

A preliminary description of your paper ideas (2-3 page minimum) will answer the Qs in the assignment due on Sunday 11/8/26. A second, more developed draft update is due Sunday 11/29/26.

### **Final Term Paper Due on Friday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>**

To summarize, course requirements are weighted as follows:

|                                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Journal Article Summaries            | 20%         |
| Groupwork Presentation               | 20%         |
| Participation in Weekly Discussions  | 10%         |
| Term Paper Progress Updates & Drafts | 10%         |
| Term Paper                           | <u>40%</u>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>100%</b> |

Final grades are determined as follows:

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| A = 90%-100% | D = 60%-69%      |
| B = 80%-89%  | F = 59% or Below |
| C = 70%-79%  |                  |

#### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed:**

1. Ability to use Microsoft Word
2. Ability to navigate the D2L Learning System
3. Ability to navigate ETAMU Library Resources to find journal articles/readings per the instructions above
4. Ability to navigate the internet to find journal articles/readings and items for assignments and discussion posts

## Instructional Methods

This is a fully online graduate seminar delivered on the D2L/Brightspace Platform.

## Student Responsibilities and Tips for Success in the Course

1. Read this syllabus and all links/handouts on D2L with great care and pay attention to their details. Mark assignment due dates and other important notes in your personal calendar. Revisit the syllabus periodically and ask questions if you have them.
2. The key to doing well in an online class is to thoroughly and carefully review all content on the D2L course page asap.
3. **The class is designed for you to use your assignments to build towards your final project**, so please start reviewing readings, slides, etc., and brainstorming ideas for your projects a.s.a.p. I am always willing to discuss your ideas.
4. The reading list contains a broad set of items from which to choose to fulfill the summaries assignment - far more readings than we can cover in 8 weeks.
  - Use a handpicked set of readings for your Group Projects, Summary requirements, and Term Paper projects.
5. You should conduct internet searches to contribute high-quality (informative) entries to online Discussions. Do the same for your Presentation.
  - **When selecting readings to summarize in Week 1, realize that you should continue to focus on that same topic for all of your remaining assignments. This will greatly increase your efficiency in the class and the quality of your final paper.**
6. Avail yourself of resources at the ETAMU Writing Center for proofreading and advice: [TAMUC Writing Center](#).
7. Do not plagiarize, (i.e. copy and paste or re-write material verbatim from published research, and present it as your own writing), do not rely on Artificial Intelligence applications like Chat GPT to write papers, or purchase term papers off of the internet to present as your own work. This never ends well for the student or the instructor, as undergoing the academic misconduct process with the university is not a pleasant experience, and it takes valuable time out of everyone's busy schedule. Please see the info on Academic Dishonesty / Integrity on p. 7 below.

## 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](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

## **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](mailto: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, an ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

### **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**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor. His preferred method of contact is email: [michael.tapia@tamuc.edu](mailto:michael.tapia@tamuc.edu), or via D2L's messaging program.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **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.

### **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:

### **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](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

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

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

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce 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 Texas A&M University-Commerce 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 A&M-Commerce 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 campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **East TX A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at East TX A&M 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 regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

### **Detailed Schedule** (Subject to Minor Adjustments)

***Week 1: Course Orientation, Student Self-Intros, Corrections Foundations, Browse & Brainstorm Topics, Pick Two Readings to Summarize later in the Term***

| <u>Date</u>        | <u>Topics / Duties</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10/19:<br>(Mon.)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Carefully read the Syllabus &amp; browse all Course Materials on D2L</li><li>▪ Provide a brief Self Intro/Bio per the instructions on the professor's emailed intro notes</li></ul>                                       |
| 10/20:<br>(Tues)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Browse the Reading List &amp; choose two (2) Articles to Summarize</li></ul>                                                                                                                                              |
| 10/21:<br>(Wed.)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Use TAMUC Online Library resources or Google Scholar to find a copy of your Articles</li><li>▪ Send the Instructor a copy of each article you wish to Summarize</li></ul>                                                 |
| 10/22:<br>(Thurs.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Review Slides on General Overview, Philosophy &amp; History, and Legal Issues in Corrections</li><li>▪ Groups 1, 2, and 3, contact group members to coordinate / brainstorm for the Group Presentation project.</li></ul> |

10/23 – 10/25: ▪ Browse readings & other class materials

(Fri) (Sun.)

- Review the Slides on Sentencing & Classification, Jails, & the Pre-Trial Phase.
- Groups 1, 2 & 3: Communicate with group members to plan your Presentation. Email the instructor with ideas, questions, and issues.

**Week 2: Browse & Brainstorm Group Topics, Revise Reading Selections, Group Presentations 1-3, & Article Summaries on Week 2 topics.**

Date                      Topics / Duties

10/26 – 10/27: ▪ Review Chosen Articles & revise as needed

(Mon. - Tues.)

- Groups 1, 2, & 3 continue collaborating on Presentation
- Review the Slides on Probation, Rehabilitative Treatment, and Intermediate Sanctions

10/28 – 10/30: ▪ Continue to Sign up for Article Summaries or make changes to your selections

(Wed.-Fri.)

- Groups 1, 2, & 3: work on Presentation
- Week 3 Article Summary writers: read your selection(s) & draft your 2-page Summary(ies).

11/1

(Sun.)

- Groups 1, 2, & 3 Presentations Due by 11:59pm.
- Week 3 Article Summaries, Due by 11:59pm.

**Week 3: Discussions of Group Presentations, Summaries, & Prelim. Term Paper Statement Due**

11/2:

(Mon.)

- Presentations for Groups 1, 2, & 3 Posted for Class Discussion
- Week 3 Article Summaries Posted for Class Discussion

11/3:

(Tues.)

- Review Presentations & Reading Summaries, slides, readings, and internet research to inform your Discussion comments.
- Continue to Sign up for Article Summaries (or change selections to better fit your term paper topic).
- Groups 4, 5, & 6: work on Presentation

11/4 – 11/6:

(Wed. – Fri.)

- Work on 2-page preliminary term paper statement: See description on p. 3 above and on handout in D2L

11/8:

(Sun.)

- Groups 1, 2, & 3: Project write-ups due by 11:59pm.
- Week 3 Discussion Posts due by 11:59pm (entire class)
- Week 4 Article Summaries Due by 11:59pm.
- First Draft Term Paper Assignment due by 11:59pm (entire class).
- Groups 4, 5, & 6: Presentations Due

**Week 4: Prison & Parole, Term Paper Assignment 1 Feedback.**

11/9:

(Mon.)

- Review Slides on Prisons & Inmate Characteristics, Prison Management & Programs, Parole & Re-Entry.
- Browse Week 4 Readings

11/10:

(Tues.)

- Groups 4, 5, & 6: Presentations Posted for Class Discussion
- Week 4 Article Summaries Posted for Class Discussion
- Group 7: Work on Presentation

11/11:

- Review Graded First Draft Term Paper Statement & Feedback

(Wed.)

11/12 – 11/13: ▪ Begin revising Term Paper for 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft  
(Thurs. – Fri.)

11/15: ▪ Week 4 Discussion Posts due by 11:59pm (entire class)  
(Sun.) ▪ Week 5 Article Summaries Due by 11:59pm.  
▪ Groups 4, 5, & 6 Write-up Due by 11:59pm.  
▪ Group 7: Presentation Due by 11:59pm.

### **Week 5: Females & Corrections, Group 7 Presentation & Write-up**

11/16 ▪ Week 5 Article Summaries Posted for Class Discussion  
(Mon) ▪ Group 7 Presentation Posted for Discussion

11/17 – 11/20: ▪ Review Slides on Females & Corrections,  
(Tues - Fri.) ▪ Browse Week 5 Readings

11/21 Review 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Assignment (Posted)  
(Sat.)

11/22: ▪ Week 5 Discussion Posts due by 11:59pm (entire class)  
(Sun.) ▪ Week 6 Article Summaries Due by 11:59pm.  
▪ Group 7 Write-up Due by 11:59pm.

### **Week 6: The Death Penalty & Life With Out Parole (LWOP); 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft due**

11/23 ▪ Week 6 Article Summaries Posted for Class Discussion  
(Mon)

11/24 – 11/28: ▪ Review Slides on the Death Penalty and LWOP  
(Tues - Sat.) ▪ Browse Week 6 Readings  
▪ Work on 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft of Term Paper

11/29: ▪ Week 6 Discussion Posts due by 11:59pm (entire class)  
(Sun.) ▪ Week 6 Article Summaries Due by 11:59pm.  
▪ Term Paper 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Assignment Due by 11:59pm

### **Week 7: Juvenile Corrections**

11/30 ▪ Week 7 Article Summaries Posted for Class Discussion  
(Mon)

12/1 – 12/5: ▪ Review Slides on Juvenile Corrections  
(Tues - Sat.) ▪ Browse Week 7 Readings  
▪ Review Feedback on 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft of Term Paper

12/6: ▪ Week 7 Discussion Posts due by 11:59pm (entire class)  
(Sun.) ▪ Week 8 Article Summaries Due by 11:59pm.  
▪ Work on Term Paper Final Draft

### **Week 8: COVID Adaptations, Final Project Due, Final “Exam” Due**

12/7 ▪ Week 8 Article Summaries Posted for Class Discussion  
(Mon)

12/8 – 12/10: ▪ Browse Week 8 Readings

(Tues - . Thurs.)

- Work on Final Draft of Term Paper
- Term Paper Final Draft Due by 11:59pm.

12/11:

(Fri.)

- Week 8 Discussion Posts due by 11:59pm (entire class)
- Week 8 Article Summaries Due by 11:59pm.
- "Final Exam" Due by 11:59pm.

**Final "Exam":** Due Friday, 12/11, 11:59pm.

The final "exam" is a brief reflection regarding

- 1) your final project
- 2) the class as a whole.

Answer these additional Qs:

- 3) What did you learn from writing the paper,
- 4) any regrets,
- 5) different approaches you would've taken,
- 6) what would be the next steps in continuing on with your research?
- 7) did you access the MSAC program orientation page, CJ 500 prior to, or during this course, and if so, did it help you with your research and writing skills?.
- 8) if your schedule & location permitted it, would you like to have taken this class in person?

There is no page requirement for this reflection. It constitutes the last portion of your grade for the Term Paper Progress Updates. Each entry is worth 3.33 points total x 3 ~ 10 pts.