



**Syllabus:** Fundamentals of Criminal Law

**Course Number:** CRIJ 1310.01

**Semester & Year:** Spring 2020

**Instructor Information**

Name: Stephen Gass

Office: SSB Office D

Class: SSB Room 14

Telephone: 903-823-3235

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Office Hours:

MW 7:30 - 8:00am, 12:30 - 1:30pm

TR 7:30 - 8:00am, 11:00 - 12:30pm

T 5:00 - 6:00pm

F 8:00 - 10:00am

Other hours by appointment

**Textbook Information**

Texas Criminal Law: Principles and Practices 2e, ISBN# 978-0-13-351257-1, Jerry Dowling

**Student Learning Outcomes for the Course**

CRIJ 1310 Fundamentals of Criminal Law is a study of the nature of criminal law; philosophical and historical development; major definitions and concepts; classification of crimes; elements of crime and penalties using Texas statutes as illustrations and criminal responsibility.

**Student Requirements for Completion of the Course and Due Dates**

Instruction for this course will be accomplished through lecture, audio/video presentations, discussions and student participation. Students should read the text for the course prior to arrival in class, be attentive and take notes during lecture. Student participation is essential to the learning process, and students are expected to answer questions and engage in professional debate. See the listed class schedule for assignment and test due dates. Notes will occasionally be allowed for exams, however no notes will be permitted for makeup exams. Tests not made up within seven days will result in a ten point reduction in grade for the exam. Students are required to have Scantron sheets and #2 pencils for tests.

Students are required to submit a **hand-written** essay including an introduction, body and closing paragraphs in response to the Films on Demand video "**It's a Free Country: Constitution USA with Peter Sagal**". The essay must be a minimum of one full page in length. The video can be accessed from the link on the course home page. However, if you are unable to open the link it can be accessed from Films on Demand at <http://digital.films.com> using the USER ID: texarkana and PASSWORD:

texas, and searching for the video title. The essay will be due on Monday of the following week in class. Please refer to Syllabus for date of assignment.

Students are required to complete a **typed** Informative Essay about a substantial contemporary criminal justice issue that will be submitted as an assignment through the course homepage. The essay must be four to six double spaced pages long and consist of at least five or six paragraphs including an introduction, body and closing paragraphs. The essay must contain information from a minimum of three cited sources including but not limited to peer-reviewed articles, books and a maximum of one website. At least one source must be a peer-reviewed article. Do not use Wikipedia as a source. The essay will be graded on content and a demonstration of investigative effort in developing and expressing the factual information on the issue. Do not merely write a paper about your opinion on a subject. The topic for the assignment must be approved by Friday, February 07, 2020, before starting the essay. For guidance refer to Course home page handout titled **CRIJ Investigative Essay Assignment – Research**. The final copy must be submitted for grading no later than Friday, April 24, 2020 at 11:55pm.

Students are required to submit five (5) brief responses to a Contemporary Criminal Justice issue during this semester through the course homepage. The response must be a minimum of a full paragraph in length and state both the issue being reported and the response of the student to the subject. Sources to consider using are newsprint, magazines, professional journals, television and/or radio news programs and internet news sites. A copy of the article must be submitted through attachment with the response or the article or news program must be cited. The five required responses must be completed in the first ten weeks of the semester so watch for due dates. As a **bonus** students may submit up to six (6) more responses, however under no circumstances will more than one response be accepted per week.

**You have the following possibilities for earning points:**

(1) 14 Chapter tests (100 points each) -	1,400 total points
(2) Video: It's a Free Country: response essay -	100 total points
(3) Informative Essay	100 total points
(4) 5 Contemporary Issues response (20 points each) -	100 total points
(5) Final Exam (100 points) -	<u>100 total points</u>
	1,800 total points

## **Bonus**

- Up to **six** Contemporary Issues response (10 points each)
- Lecture notes folder (maximum of three points per exam)
- Movie with response questions
- Prison tour (on availability)

## **Grading Scale**

<b>Grade</b>	
<b>A</b>	90-100
<b>B</b>	80-89
<b>C</b>	70-79
<b>D</b>	60-69
<b>F</b>	59-below

## Class Schedule

Holiday: MLK holiday January 20, 2020    Spring Break March 16-20, 2020

Week	Dates	Material to be covered
1	1/21 – 24/2020	Mon. Holiday Wed. Go over syllabus and begin Chapter 1
2	1/27 – 31/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 1 Wed. Chapter 1 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 2
3	2/03 – 07/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 2, <i>It's a Free Country: Constitution USA video</i> Wed. Chapter 2 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 3
4	2/10 – 14/2020	*Mon. finish Chapter 3, Wed. Chapter 3 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 4
5	2/17 – 21/2020	Mon. Independent study, work on Research Essay Wed. Chapter 4 <u>test</u> in Testing Center – due 2/21/2020
6	2/24 – 28/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 5, Wed. Chapter 5 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 6
7	3/02 – 06/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 6, Wed. Chapter 6 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 7
8	3/09 – 13/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 7, Wed. Chapter 7 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 8
9	3/16 – 20/2020	Campus closed: Spring Break
10	3/23 – 27/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 8, Wed. Chapter 8 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 9
11	3/30 – 4/03/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 9, Wed. Chapter 9 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 10
12	4/06 – 10/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 10, Wed. Chapter 10 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 11
13	4/13 – 17/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 11, <u>test</u> in Testing Center Wed. begin Chapters 12 and 13
14	4/20 – 24/2020	Mon. finish Chapters 12 and 13, Wed. Chapters 12 and 13 <u>test</u> and begin Chapter 14 <b>Research Essay due 4/24/2020 by 11:55pm</b>
15	4/27 – 5/01/2020	Mon. finish Chapter 14, Wed. Chapter 14 <u>test</u> and begin Chapters 15 and 16
16	5/04 – 08/2020	Mon. finish Chapters 15 and 16, Wed. Chapters 15 and 16 <u>test</u>
17	5/11 – 15/2020	Mon. Final exam review <b>Wed. Comprehensive exam, 8:00am – 10:30am</b> Graduation – Thursday, May 19, 2020 @ 7:00pm

## Attendance Policy

Success in this course depends on your regular attendance and participation in class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period and students will be dropped from the course due to excessive unexcused absences. A student may be dropped from this course after their third absence. Three tardies constitute

one absence. Any student arriving more than fifteen minutes late for class or leaving early will be considered absent if prior approval has not been obtained by contacting me in my office by telephone at 903-823-3235 or email at [stephen.gass@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:stephen.gass@texarkanacollege.edu) prior to the beginning of class. Approval will only be given in the case of unavoidable emergencies and you may be required to provide written proof.

A student absent due to school trips and/or school business will not have the absence counted against the student's allowable number of absences. A student absent for military duty or for recognized Holy Days will not have the absence counted against the student's allowable number of absences in accordance with the Texarkana College Student Handbook. In these circumstances students will be expected to satisfactorily complete the assignment and/or examination within a reasonable time after the absence. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Instructor of their intended absence. The Texarkana College Student Handbook can be accessed for guidance at [www.texarkanacollege.edu](http://www.texarkanacollege.edu).

Do not stop attending class without formally withdrawing from the course by the institution's published Last Day to Drop for this semester. Texarkana College policy states that if a student does not attend class and does not withdraw from the class, the student will receive a grade of **F** in the class and this could affect your current or future financial aid eligibility. The last date you attend will be reflected on the final grade sheet resulting in the reimbursement of grant and scholarship funds.

### **Make-up Policy**

Any assignment and/or examination that is made up due to an excused absence is expected to be satisfactorily completed by the following Thursday of the missed assignment date.

### **Class Conduct Policy**

Cellular telephones and beepers must have the ringer turned off and not be visible in the class unless an emergency situation exists. This situation must be discussed with the instructor prior to class. If a student is caught text-messaging in class, the student may be dropped from the class. If a student's cell phone rings in class, the student will receive a warning and may be dropped from class after the second offense. Use of a cellphone in class is disruptive to the learning environment and a distraction to students in the classroom. Cellular telephone or electronic devices including smart watches should not be visible during any exam. In the case of an emergency family and friends can call the Texarkana College Police Department at 903-798-3330 and you will be contacted at the classroom and notified of the emergency. Use of laptops or tablets is not allowed in class as it is a distraction to those around you.

The classroom should be treated as a professional environment and distractions should be kept to a minimum. Students should make arrangements with the instructor in advance if they need to leave class before dismissal or arrive late for

class. Students that have made arrangements to leave class early should sit as close to the door as possible. There will be a zero tolerance policy for any behavior that is disruptive to classroom learning. Professional debate is encouraged to enhance the learning environment however rude and vulgar behavior will not be tolerated. This includes ANY use of vulgar language or rude behavior toward instructor or any other student in the class. The field of Criminal Justice often involves topics that some might find controversial including but not limited to political and religious beliefs. Topics discussed in class are for an educational purpose and students must remain civil and respectful. Students asked to leave the class for improper behavior will be dropped from the course.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

Scholastic dishonesty, involving but not limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of records will make the student liable for disciplinary action after being investigated by the Dean of Students. Proven violations of this nature will result in the student being dropped from the class with an "F".

This policy applies campus wide, including TC Testing Center, as well as off-campus classroom or lab sites, including dual credit campuses. This information can be found in the Texarkana College Student Handbook at [www.texarkanacollege.edu](http://www.texarkanacollege.edu).

### **Disability Act Statement:**

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Larry Andrews at 903.823.3283, or go by the Recruitment, Advisement, and Retention Department located in the Administration building for personal assistance.

If you have an accommodation letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need for this class. *It is best to request these changes at the beginning if not before the start of class* so there is ample time to make the accommodations..

### **Financial Aid:**

**Attention!** Dropping this class may affect your funding in a negative way! You could owe money to the college and/or federal government. Please check with the Financial Aid office before making a decision.

### **Basic Needs Security Statement:**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing enough food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in this course or ability to remain in school, is urged to contact Tonja Blase, Director of Student Retention, at 903.823.3349 for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so.