



Syllabus: Fundamentals of Criminal Law

Course Number: CRIJ 1310.01W

Semester & Year: Fall 2020

Instructor Information

Name: Stephen Gass

Office: SSB Office D

Class: SSB Room 14

Telephone: 903-823-3235

E-mail: stephen.gass@texarkanacollege.edu

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 Web-based content and activities on the course homepage, audio/video presentations and weekly discussions between students and I posted on the course homepage. Students should read the text for the course prior to making a post or response. Student participation is essential to the learning process, and students are expected to answer questions and engage in professional debate. This course will cover material involving politics and religion. It is important that you understand some topics might be controversial, but are discussed for an academic purpose. Be respectful and professional in your responses. See the listed class schedule for assignment and test due dates. Prior to beginning, the course students will take the introductory quiz. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are accessing the course web-based content from a secure location that will not lose connectivity.

Students will complete all exams through web-based content. All exams will be timed. If you feel you have inadequate time to complete the exam please contact me and arrangements will be made to complete the exam. In the event of losing internet connectivity while completing an exam, you must complete and submit a

LMS Interrupted Test form located in the blue column on the left side of your course homepage. This will notify the Texarkana College Information Technology department of the issue. In addition, you must immediately notify me of the incident. Repeated requests to reopen exams due to losing connectivity will result in a requirement to take exams on the campus. Following Thanksgiving break, all classes at the college will be taught through virtual and/or online course delivery (including final exams) for the remainder of the fall semester, November 30-December 14. No face to face classes will be held on campus during this time.

Students are required to submit an essay that will be submitted as an assignment through the course homepage; 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 a minimum of four complete to six double spaced pages long and consist of at least five or six paragraphs including an introduction, body and closing paragraphs, with works cited page attached. The essay must contain information from a minimum of three cited sources including but not limited to peer-reviewed articles, books and websites. 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, September 11, 2020, through email and failure to obtain approval will result in a ten (10)-point reduction in grade for the assignment. The assignment must be submitted through the course homepage for grading no later than Friday, November 20, 2020. There will be no exceptions made for late submissions.

Students are required to submit five (5) brief responses to a Contemporary Criminal Justice issue during this semester. 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 with the written response or the article or news program must be cited. 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:

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| (1) 15 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)
- Study notes folder (three points per exam)
- Movie with response questions
- Prison tour (on availability)

Grading Scale

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

Class Schedule

Holidays: Labor Day, September 7, 2020 Thanksgiving, November 23-27, 2020

Week	Dates	Material to be covered
1	8/19 – 21/2020	Read Syllabus and complete the Course Introductory Quiz
2	8/24 – 28/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 1 test
3	8/31 - 9/04/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 2 test , It's a Free Country: Video
4	9/07 – 11/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 3 test Research Essay Topic Approval due by 9/11/2020
5	9/14 – 18/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 4 test
6	9/21 – 25/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 5 test
7	9/28 – 10/02/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 6 test
8	10/05 – 09/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 7 test
9	10/12 – 16/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 8 test
10	10/19 – 23/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 9 test
11	10/26 – 30/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 10 test
12	11/02 – 06/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 11 test
13	11/09 – 13/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapters 12 and 13 test
14	11/16 – 20/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Question, Take Chapter 14 test Research Essay due 11/20/2020 by 11:55pm
15	11/23 – 27/2020	Thanksgiving Holiday: Campus closed
16	11/30 – 12/04/2020	Review Lecture Notes and respond to Discussion Questions, Take Chapters 15 and 16 test
17	12/07 – 11/2020	Final Exam due, Monday, December 14, 2020 @ 11:55pm
18	12/14 – 15/2020	Graduation – Tuesday, December 15, 2020

Attendance Policy

Success in this course depends on your regular participation in class through the course homepage. Attendance will be determined through weekly participation in discussion questions and exams. A student will be dropped from the course due to excessive unexcused absences. A student may be dropped from this course after their third absence. If you are expecting to be unable to perform your assignment and exam for a week you should obtain prior approval by contacting me in my office by telephone at 903-823-3235 or email at stephen.gass@texarkanacollege.edu prior to the beginning of the week. 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.

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

The classroom including web-based content and activities on the course homepage and weekly discussions between students posted on the course homepage should be treated as a professional environment and distractions should be kept to a minimum. There will be a zero tolerance policy for any behavior that is disruptive to the learning process. 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, and these topics will be discussed. Topics discussed in class are for an educational purpose and students must remain civil and respectful. Students asked to refrain from continued 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.

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.

Alternate Operations during Campus Closure

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, Texarkana College may need to move to altered operations and course delivery methods. During this time, Texarkana College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online learning management system (Jenzabar or Moodle), online conferencing through TEAMS, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Texarkana College's website (www.texarkanacollege.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, instructor email notifications on the

method of delivery and course-specific communication, and Texarkana College email notifications for important general information.

COVID-19 Online/Virtual Environment Instructional Commitment

The ongoing Covid-19 situation will require that some course materials and instruction are provided through an online and/or virtual format. Even if all or a portion of a class was originally scheduled to meet face to face, social distancing guidelines associated with Covid-19 will limit the number of students who are able to attend face to face classes in person simultaneously. Further, circumstances associated with Covid-19 could cause the college to be forced to shift completely to an online and/or virtual delivery at any time during the semester. While TC faculty members are committed to providing students the option of face to face instruction if possible, students should be prepared to continue their classes in an online and/or virtual environment if necessary. Texarkana College is committed to maintaining engaging, high quality instruction regardless of the delivery format.