



Criminal Justice Program

CRIJ 4312.060- (3.0 Credit Hours) Legal Issues in Juvenile Justice

Spring 2026

Location: Online

Class Meeting: Asynchronous online class format.

Instructor: Dr. Paul Thompson

Email: pthompson@uttyler.edu

Office Hours: Virtual – Zoom (by appointment only).

Course Description:

Juvenile offenders are legally distinct from adults and, consequently, are afforded specialized constitutional protections. This course provides a comprehensive analysis of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases that have defined the American juvenile justice system. Beginning with the foundational ruling in *In re Gault* (1967) and progressing through contemporary U.S. Supreme Court decisions, we will examine a different case each week. Our analysis will take a multi-dimensional approach by investigating the background and procedural path of each case to the Supreme Court, followed by a critical review of the legal arguments presented by both the petitioner and the respondent. Furthermore, we will explore the Court's judicial reasoning and prevailing legal theories while evaluating the broader systemic impact these rulings have had on the evolution of juvenile law. To provide a complete legal context, we will also examine relevant state and federal legislation to understand how statutory law intersects with judicial precedent.

Course Prerequisites:

CRIJ 1301 Introduction to Criminal Justice

Course Materials:

There is not a required textbook book for this class, but the reading assignments require access to the internet, which is imperative to the success of this course.

Internet Access:

This course is online therefore you must have reliable internet access. UTT learning management system, Canvas, can only be accessed online. The computer lab is available if you don't have access otherwise – please check the computer lab information for guidance on access this semester.

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- **Analyze Seminal Jurisprudence:** Comprehend the judicial rulings of landmark cases that shaped the development of the juvenile justice system and established the legal protections afforded to juvenile offenders.
- **Evaluate Systemic Impact:** Explain how specific United States Supreme Court decisions have influenced the evolution and broader trajectory of the juvenile justice system over time.
- **Deconstruct Legal Arguments:** Critically dissect the core legal arguments and logic presented within the United States Supreme Court cases studied in this course.
- **Compose Case Briefs:** Synthesize complex legal information by writing professional case briefs on the foundational rulings relating to juvenile justice.

Attendance Policy:

This is an online course. This course offering is in an asynchronous mode, however, there may be sessions offered in asynchronous mode for the review of finals. Class participation is encouraged, which takes place with your consistent logging into the class, discussion participation, completion of assignments, and submission of required work on or before the due date and time. You must stay current if you want to be successful in the course.

Class Participation:

Your active participation will help enrich your course experience. The reading and thinking of course materials will add value to your class participation.

Missed Exams/Late Assignments:

Submitting late assignments is generally not accepted. However, exceptions may be granted for unforeseen and unavoidable traumatic events: 1. If an event is known and unavoidable, contact me within 24 hours of the event. 2. If an event is unforeseen and does not allow for time to contact, then contact me before the due date of the next assignment, with acceptable documentation. Stay informed and aware of the course schedule.

Make-up Tests:

The *University Catalog* does not establish make-up as a student right. Major tests are forecasted; therefore, no make-up opportunities are contemplated. Opportunities to make up missed examinations will be provided only for exceptional reasons and must be

documented (e.g., hospital records, and obituaries). Make-up examinations may be in forms completely different from the original examinations and will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor.

Student Expectations:

- The utilization of critical thinking.
- The discussion of ideas and respecting the ideas of other colleagues.
- Read the relevant information provided throughout this course.
- Prepared to participate in class based on knowledge gained through credible, relevant sources.
- The completion and submission of all assignments before or at the deadline.
- Access and stay current with Canvas.
- Check your email and Canvas Announcements.
- Ask for help, do not wait till the end of the semester. Send questions to pthompson@uttyler.edu.

How to Contact Me:

Email me through my university email account or inbox through Canvas. Email is my preferred method of contact - my email is pthompson@uttyler.edu

Census Date:

January 26, 2026 - Deadline for all registrations and schedule changes. Drops/withdrawals after Census Date and before the Last Day to Withdraw will result in a grade of W.

Last Day to Withdraw:

March 30, 2026 - Last day to withdraw from one or more courses

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information , data, or

copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

You can use AI programs (ChatGPT, Copilot, etc.) in this course. These programs can be powerful tools for learning and other productive pursuits, including completing assignments in less time, helping you generate new ideas, or serving as a personalized learning tool. However, your ethical responsibilities as a student remain the same. You must follow UT Tyler's Honor Code and uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. This applies to all uncited or improperly cited content, whether created by a human or in collaboration with an AI tool. If you use an AI tool to develop content for an assignment, you must cite the tool's contribution to your work.

Citing AI Sources, you must acknowledge your use of Artificial Intelligence programs in your written work using proper APA format. See below.
In-text citation (Copilot, 2024) Reference citation Copilot. (2024). Microsoft Copilot (Sep 1 version) [Large language model].
<https://copilot.microsoft.com/>

[How to cite Chat GPT \(AI\) in APA style.](#)

Course Evaluation Procedures:

Assessments will be conducted to determine your proficiency in the course's concept. Assessment includes; discussion boards, quizzes, case briefs, and exams.

Grading Rubric:

A grading rubric will be provided to you in Canvas for your learning activities.

Evaluation:

1. 20% = Discussion
2. 20% = Quizzes
3. 30% = Case Briefs
4. 30% = Exams

Total 100%

1. Discussions: (20%)

Weekly discussions serve as core learning activities where you will engage in scholarly dialogue with your classmates and instructor. To ensure your contributions meet the course standards, please adhere to the following requirements:

Posting Requirements

- Initial Post: Must be at least one paragraph in length (defined as a minimum of five sentences).
- Engagement: You are required to respond to at least two of your classmates' posts.
- Formatting: All posts and citations must follow APA 7th edition style.

Deadlines

- Due Date: 11:59 p.m. (CST) every Sunday during required discussion weeks. *Refer tp the Course Schedule for specific discussion dates.

2. Quizzes: (20%)

Quizzes are due weekly by 11:59 p.m. CST on Sundays. Each assessment may draw from that week's lectures, readings, syllabus, and specific case studies or topics.* Refer to the Course Schedule for specific quiz dates.

3. Case Briefs: (30%)

The Case Brief is a mandatory written component of this course. All submissions must adhere to APA 7th edition formatting standards and be uploaded to Canvas.

4. Examinations: (30%)

Each module concludes with an examination designed to assess your understanding of the presented material. Over the course of the semester, you will complete a total of four (4) exams.

Final Grading Scale:

- A=90% and above
- B=80-89%
- C=70-79%
- D=60-69%
- F=<60%
- Rounding will be applied.

Course Schedule:

Spring 2026 Course Schedule				
WEEK	DATE	READING SOURCE	ASSIGNMENTS	DUe DATE
1	12-Jan	Syllabus- Introduction	Quiz/Discussion	18-Jan
2	19-Jan	In Re Gault (1967)	Quiz/Case Brief	25-Jan
3	26-Jan	Kent v. United States (1966)	Quiz/ Discussion	1-Feb
4	2-Feb	In re Winship (1970)	Discussion/Exam	8-Feb
5	9-Feb	McKeiver v. Pennsylvania (1971)	Quiz/Case Brief	15-Feb
6	16-Feb	Breed v. Jones (1975)	Quiz/Discussion	22-Feb
7	23-Feb	Eddings v. Oklahoma (1981)	Quiz/Case Brief	1-Mar
8	2-Mar	Thompson v. Oklahoma (1988)	Discussion/Exam	8-Mar
9	9-Mar	Stanford v. Kentucky (1989)	Quiz/Discussion	15-Mar
10	16-Mar	SPRING BREAK	NO ASSIGNMENTS	22-Mar
11	23-Mar	Roper v. Simmons (2005)	Quiz/Case Brief	29-Mar
12	30-Mar	Graham v. Florida (2010)	Discussion/Exam	5-Apr
13	6-Apr	J.B.D. v. North Carolina (2011)	Quiz/Discussion	12-Apr
14	13-Apr	Miller v. Alabama (2012)	Quiz/Case Brief	19-Apr
15	20-Apr	Montgomery v. Louisiana (2016)	Discussion	26-Apr
Final	27-Apr	Final	Final Exam	30-Apr

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER POLICIES And STUDENT RESOURCES:

University policies and student resources are available on the University website and in Canvas under “Syllabus”. (You may copy or print the following information to include in your syllabus or use the links provided below.)

- [University Policy](#)
- [Student Resources](#)

* This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. To ensure success in this course, students are responsible for monitoring the syllabus, course announcements, and assignments regularly. Any updates to the syllabus will be accompanied by a formal notification and the posting of a revised version.