

Course Syllabus: CRIJ-2328.001, Police Systems & Practices
Fall 2026 Semester – University of Texas at Tyler

Instructor Information

- **Instructor:** Michael Ferguson, MS
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- **Office Telephone:** 903.730.3927
- **Office Location:** CAS 134
- **Office Hours:** MWF, 9a-9:45a and 11:15a-12p; T/Th, 9:30a-10:45a We can also meet via Zoom rather than F2F if you'd prefer.

Course Catalog Description

This course serves as an introductory examination the structures, functions, and operations of law enforcement agencies in the United States, with emphasis on municipal police departments. The course surveys police operations, staff functions, personnel policies, and current innovations utilized in delivering police services. It covers such topics as police discretion, ethics, police-community relations, and the future of policing in American society. This course serves as a prerequisite to [CRIJ 4333](#), *Advanced Police Systems and Practices*.

Course Rationale

This course will give you a big picture view of how policing in the United States works. You'll get to know the key players, the main events, and the reasons behind how things function. It's designed to give you the essential knowledge you need to grasp the complexities of American policing and understand *why* it is the way it is now.

Course Time and Location

- **Dates:** 08/24/2026 - 12/12/2026
- **Meeting Days:** Tuesday / Thursday
- **Time:** 8:00 AM to 9:20 AM
- **Location:** Ratliff Building South #1031

Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. **Compare and contrast** organizational structures, policies, strategies and tactics employed to ensure police effectiveness, efficiency and equity.
2. **Describe** the selection process for police officers.
3. **Describe** the types of police agencies and explain the role of police in America within the context of a democratic society.
4. **Explain** the historical development of policing.
5. **Describe** means and methods utilized to ensure police accountability.

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Textbooks

Required Textbook

None, as no-cost OER material will be provided via Canvas. The primary OER textbook will be [Fundamentals of Policing](#) by Adam J. McKee, Ph.D.

Recommended Textbook

APA. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN: 978-1-4338-3217-8. **Note that you can get the same basic information for free by using the Purdue University "APA Formatting and Style Guide (7th Edition)" by clicking [HERE](#)**

Technology Requirements

Students must have access to a computer or tablet with internet access to use UT-Tyler's Canvas LMS. Assignments and quizzes will be handled through Canvas. Additionally, students must have access to, and use of, a word processor (e.g., MS Word or Apple Pages) and presentation software (e.g., MS PowerPoint or Apple Keynote). Lastly, students must have access to a mind-mapping application. Work uploaded to Canvas must be in one of the following file formats:

- **Documents:** .docx, .doc, .pages, or .pdf (.pdf is the preferred format)
- **Presentations / graphs:** .docx, .doc, .pptx, .ppt, .key, or .pdf (.pdf is the preferred format)

Attendance

You can't learn if you're not in class. **You must participate in the class to earn credit.** I understand that life happens, but you need to be in class to learn the material we're covering. I will take attendance each class session. Your attendance grade counts as a major exam grade.

Course Assignments / Grade Weighting

It is the student's responsibility to keep track of due dates. Please note that quizzes, assignments, and tests will be available for several days, so missing a due date for any given quizzes, assignments, or tests will translate into a 50% reduction in score. **There will be no extensions to complete the final exam -- if you don't complete the final by the due date, you will receive a score of zero for the final. PLEASE don't "forget" that you have a final exam!**

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- **Anti-Plagiarism Certificate (5%):** You must complete the free, online anti-plagiarism course for which I will provide a link. Upon completion of the two required modules, you must upload a copy of your completion certificate to Canvas. This certificate is worth 5% of your grade and is required for successful completion of the course. *If you have completed the anti-plagiarism certificate course for a previous class, I am happy to accept that in lieu of your retaking the anti-plagiarism certificate course.*
- **Quizzes (50%):** Reading the assigned chapters puts concepts into action. To help with retention and comprehension of the material, you will complete short quizzes each week. Quizzes will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.
- **Activities (25%):** Your class consists of multiple units. You will complete various activities, including in-class discussion, over the course of the semester.
- **Exams (20%):** You will have two major exam grades: the final and your attendance grade. The comprehensive final will consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions taken from the material covered during the semester. Your attendance average will be based on your attendance in class.

Assignments

More detailed instructions, including grading rubrics, are provided to you on the respective assignment page in Canvas.

1. Reflection Paper: *Miranda v. Arizona* 384 U.S. 436 (1966)
2. Minimum Hiring Standards at Your Hometown LEA
3. Case Brief: *Tennessee v. Garner* (1985)

Census Date

The census date for this summer class is **09/08/2026**. Drops/withdrawals after Census Date and before the Last Day to Withdraw will result in a grade of W. Courses dropped prior to Census Date will not appear on the student's record or the transcript.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Most assignments in this course will permit using artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT or Copilot. When AI use is permissible, it will be documented in the assignment description, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. When using AI tools for assignments, add an appendix showing:

1. the entire exchange (e.g., prompts used), highlighting the most relevant sections;
2. a description of precisely which AI tools were used,
3. an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g., to generate ideas, elements of text, etc.); and

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4. an account of why AI tools were used (e.g., to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to experiment for fun, etc.).

Students shall not use AI tools during in-class examinations or assignments unless explicitly permitted and instructed to do so.

Student Resources and UT-Tyler Policies

[Student Resources](#)

[University Policies and Information](#)

Course Schedule

- **WEEK 1 (08/24 - 08/28)**
 - Welcome to class, review syllabus, course overview
 - Chapter One: The Development of Modern Policing
 - Section 1.1: Policing in Ancient Times
 - Section 1.2: Policing in Early America
 - Section 1.3: Peel and the Met
 - Week One Quiz
 - Anti-Plagiarism Certificate
- **WEEK 2 (08/31 - 09/04)**
 - Chapter One: The Development of Modern Policing (Continued)
 - Section 1.4: The Political Era
 - Section 1.5: The Reform Era and Its Aftermath
 - Week Two Quiz
- **WEEK 3 (09/07 - 09/11)**
 - NOTE: Monday, 09/07/2026, is Labor Day holiday: all offices closed; no classes held.
 - Chapter Two: : The Structure and Nature of Policing
 - Section 2.1: Police Functions
 - Section 2.2: Federal Law Enforcement
 - Week Three Quiz
- **WEEK 4 (09/14 - 09/18)**
 - Chapter Two: The Structure and Nature of Policing (Continued)
 - Section 2.3: State Agencies
 - Section 2.4: Local Agencies
 - Section 2.5: Styles of Policing
 - Week Four Quiz
- **WEEK 5 (09/21 - 09/25)**
 - Chapter Three: The Legal Environment of Policing
 - Section 3.1: The Role of the Constitution
 - Section 3.2: The Fourth Amendment
 - Week Five Quiz

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- **WEEK 6 (09/28 - 10/02)**
 - Chapter Three: The Legal Environment of Policing (Continued)
 - Section 3.3: The Fifth Amendment
 - Video: [Right to Remain Silent: Miranda v. Arizona](#) (Annenberg Foundation)
 - Section 3.4: The Sixth Amendment
 - Week Six Quiz
 - Reflection Paper: [Miranda v. Arizona 384 U.S. 436 \(1966\)](#)
- **WEEK 7 (10/05 - 10/09)**
 - Chapter 4: Police Methods
 - Section 4.1: Patrol
 - Section 4.2: Criminal Investigations
 - Section 4.5: Police Discretion
 - Week Seven Quiz
 - FIVE-POINT EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY: ATTEND [NATIONAL NIGHT OUT](#) BLOCK PARTY (the first Tuesday in October)
- **WEEK 8 (10/12 - 10/16)**
 - Chapter 4: Police Methods (Continued)
 - Section 4.3: Controversial Police Methods
 - Section 4.4: Specialized Units
 - Week Eight Quiz
- **WEEK 09 (10/19 - 10/23)**
 - Chapter 5: Administration and Culture of Policing
 - Section 5.1: Recruitment, Selection, and Training
 - Section 5.3: The Police Subculture
 - Week Nine Quiz
 - Assignment: Minimum Hiring Standards at Your Hometown LEA
- **WEEK 10 (10/26 - 10/30)**
 - Chapter 5: Administration and Culture of Policing (Continued)
 - Section 5.2: Police Administration
 - Section 5.4: Hazards of the Job
 - Section 5.5: The Crisis of Legitimacy
 - Week 10 Quiz
- **WEEK 11 (11/02 - 11/06)**
 - Law-Enforcement Use of Force
 - "[Reasonableness in Police Use of Force](#)" by Adam McKee, Ph.D.
 - Use of Force Continuum
 - [Tennessee v. Garner, 471 U.S. 1 \(1985\)](#)
 - [Brower v. County of Inyo, 489 U.S. 593 \(1989\)](#)
 - [Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 386 \(1989\)](#)
 - Section 3.5: Police Civil Liability
 - Week 11 Quiz
 - Assignment: Case Brief, [Tennessee v. Garner \(1985\)](#)

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- **WEEK 12 (11/09 - 11/13)**
 - Corruption and Misconduct in Law Enforcement
 - **Week 12 Quiz**
- **WEEK 13 (11/16 - 11/20)**
 - Chapter 6: Community Policing
 - Section 6.1: Development of Community Policing
 - Section 6.2: Core Components of COP
 - **Week 13 Quiz**
- **THANKSGIVING (11/23 - 11/27)**
 - Campus closed - no classes
- **WEEK 14 (11/30 - 12/04)**
 - Chapter VII: Criminal Justice Theory
 - Section 6.3: Challenges to Implementing COP
 - Section 6.4: Community Problem Solving
 - Section 6.5: Proactive Solutions
 - **Week 14 Quizzes**
- **WEEK 15 (12/07 - 12/11)**
 - **Comprehensive Final Exam**