Course Materials:


In addition to these two texts that you are required to purchase, I will post readings online which you are responsible for having read by time class begins the week they are assigned. Please see the course schedule for the list of readings and their due dates.

Course Objectives:

This course is an elective upper-division criminal justice courses. The main goal of this course is to familiarize you with judicial policy and the judicial decision-making process. Thus, this course is to explore the structure and important role of the judiciary in making public policy and resolving competing societal and individual concerns. We will examine the manner in which courts have adjudicated some of today’s most controversial issues, including capital punishment, abortion, and pornography. Demonstrates how criminal law affects the rights and aspirations of minorities, the poor, and juveniles.

There are two main learning objectives that we will work toward since this course is an elective course for the Masters of Criminal Justice Program. Granted that all of you have taken the basic courses on American government and possess the background in fundamental concepts of American constitutional law, our class will provide you with the musts in terms of the structure and role of judiciary branch in term of adjudication, judicial review, and in our field of focus. By the end of the course, students should have an understanding about the judicial policy and the judicial decision-making process and develop a refined analytical skill on the exercise of judicial power. This course will also provide a firm foundation of general and specific knowledge for other courses in the Criminal Justice degree program, as well as help student who plans a career in criminal justice.
Assignments and Grading:

The course is reading, writing, and speaking intensive. The successful student’s work product will evidence (1) an understanding of the general doctrines of the judicial process and the factors that contribute to judicial policy and decision-making; (2) an ability to think and write analytically as demonstrated by written assignments, (3) involvement in the learning process by preparedness for class, participation in class discussion, and initiative in timely completion and submission of all assignments.

However, because enrollment is low I am treating this class as a hybrid. Therefore, you will be working at home every other week on writing assignments, and when you are in class with me, we will focus more on the discussion and presentation elements of the class. Since we are such a small group, you can expect us to have light days and not spend the entire 3 hours in class.

1) Discussion notes and questions on the weekly readings (30 pts each, 180 points total)

Graduate classes by nature are reading and discussion intensive. These readings will help guide you toward the comprehensive exam and thesis processes. In an effort to guide the discussions, I believe that students should take an active role in weekly classes. Therefore, each week you should come to class with a set of notes and a variety of questions that promotes discussion of the readings. There can be overlap among students and myself dependent on the week’s topic. All of you will be expected to be able to discuss the readings intelligently each week (see participation below). Therefore, before class you should prepare 1) detailed notes on the reading and 2) have a list of 6-7 discussion questions to prompt discussion for that day (these are not questions about fact, but rather open ended questions). You may use these notes as a guide for the class discussion but you MUST turn in both the notes and the questions to me by 5:00pm the night before class (the Monday night before we meet for class). If your questions and notes are late, then I will deduct 5 points from your score. Everyone is required to do this for the first week of class and will serve as a trial run for the semester.

2) Attendance and Participation (70 pts total)

In graduate courses, attendance is critical, because the class interaction stimulates ideas. I expect you to attend every in-class meeting and to be on time. We will not go the full three hours, but I expect you to give me your attention for the time that we are in class. I also expect you to be prepared (meaning having read the readings!) and participate in discussion. Each day, I will log whether you attend and whether or not it is clear from your participation in discussions that you have read the readings. If it is not clear to me that you have read, you will not get full credit for participation for that week. However, since you have completed notes and have written out questions for class, this shouldn’t be a problem whatsoever. You may miss one class without penalty, but only for legitimate reasons and you must alert me to the absence as soon as possible (e.g., conferences, medical). You all should be so completely prepared for class that I take a back seat to your discussions and you talk amongst yourselves for the duration of the discussion.

3) One presentation of a Supreme Court Case Brief (60 pts total)

Each of you will give one short presentation on a case heard by the United States Supreme Court that fits in with that week’s schedule. Everyone will be responsible for reading and being
familiar with the case, but each student will be responsible for providing an in-class presentation regarding the case itself. Only one student can present on an individual case. Therefore, if something catches your eye you should try to grab it before anyone else. For this presentation, you should read the case that is supplied to you on Blackboard and create a Powerpoint presentation, which addresses the background of the topic, major facts of the case, the SCOTUS’s ruling, and finally the importance of the case. The presentation should last roughly 15 minutes. I strongly suggest that you be creative as possible in your use of PowerPoint presentations. Videos and other visual media are optional (if you choose to use a video as part of your presentation, please sent it to me first). Be aware that videos do not count toward your 15 minutes. On the day that you present, you will need to give me copies of the materials used during your presentation as well as a list of references (in APA format) of any outside materials you used for the case. For those of you who do not present, you should know the case well enough to ask questions and talk about the facts, and ruling of the cases at hand.

4) At-Home Written Assignments (30 pts each, 150 pts total)

As stated earlier, because of the low enrollment this class will be set up with a hybrid structure. Every other week, you will work from home and complete the readings for that week like you normally would. Instead of taking detailed notes and creating written questions, you will complete a short paper that discusses the reading assignments and court cases if assigned. At the end of each in-class session, I will provide you with a writing prompt, which you will be required to submit by 6:00pm – when class begins the following week. You should submit the papers via Blackboard.

Each paper should be between 2-3 pages long, single-spaced, 12-point TNR font, and should have 1” margins. You must talk about each of the readings in-depth, give equal attention to each of the readings, and successfully answer each of the prompts. You should properly cite the articles, book chapters, or court cases that you are assigned to read in APA format. Additionally, if you choose to use outside information you must properly cite that as well. Please do not use Wikipedia to as an outside informational source.

5) Semester Paper (150 pts total)

The largest assignment you will complete in this class is the semester paper. This is the time for you to apply what you have learned through the careful analysis of criminal cases, judicial process, and the legal/social outcomes of these issues. You may choose the specific topic of your paper, but it must contain a strong argument for why you chose the topic in question and how it applies to the judicial processes at hand. The topic MUST have ties to judicial policy and must be more criminological rather than social in emphasis. If you are in doubt regarding the topic, please come see me.

Your paper should include 1) a thorough explanation for why the topic was chosen, 2) a comprehensive literature review explaining the background of the issue, 3) an in-depth argument for the significance of this issue, and 4) where is the future of this topic heading. All of your responses should not be rooted in opinion, but based on the consensus of the criminological field.

The paper must be heavily researched and MUST include only academic sources. This means that if you choose to only use Internet generated sources (i.e. national news sources, websites, blogs and so on) I will not even look at your paper. This means that under no circumstances should you use Wikipedia for any academic work that you are submitting for a grade. Graduate
students should be using peer reviewed journal articles, books, court cases, and governmental reports. Be aware that you must cite all of your sources in APA format. If you are still unsure how to use APA citation style, please come see me. It is also in your best interest to over-cite, rather than not have enough citations throughout the paper. I will provide you a more detailed outline of the paper’s formatting requirements, but please be aware that this paper will be due on the last day of class for the semester.

Grading Scale

Your grade this semester is dependent on the work and effort that you put into this class. I do not award extra credit, nor do I provide extensions for work unless there is a medical emergency. Therefore, the grade you earn is the grade you will be awarded. Please see the following breakdown of grades and what the point value equates to in letter grade format.

1) Class discussion (30 points each) 180 points
2) Attendance and participation (10 points each) 70 points
3) Presentation on a weekly topic 60 points
4) At-home writing assignments (30 points each) 150 points
5) Semester paper 150 points

Point Total for Semester 510 points total

Letter Grades will be assigned as follows:

<table>
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<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
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</thead>
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<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>584.5 – 560</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>559.5 – 535</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>509.5 – below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Additional Policies

Classroom Behavior
The College of Arts and Sciences encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The College will always tolerate diverse, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include being involuntarily withdrawn from the class.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s work as your own. 1) When you borrow someone else’s facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words, you must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism. 2) When you also borrow someone else’s words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism. 3) When you present someone else’s paper
or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own, you have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2010, sixth edition of the *Manual of The American Psychological Association* (APA). *Plagiarism*: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. *Each* time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the Discussion section of someone else’s article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications. (pp. 15-16). Consult the Writing Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the *Manual of the APA* or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* for guidance on proper documentation. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

*Penalties for Plagiarism*: Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student will receive a grade of ‘F’ in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, has the right to give freshmen and sophomore students a “zero” for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of “F” (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade. This option is not available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse.

*Penalties for Cheating*: Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student will receive a “zero” for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident must be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an “F” in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an “F” in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."

**Students Rights and Responsibilities**
To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: [http://www2.uttler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php](http://www2.uttler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php)

**Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies**
Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at [http://www.uttler.edu/registrar](http://www.uttler.edu/registrar). Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar. Failure to file
a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract. The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy
Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services
In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu

Student Absence due to Religious Observance
Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities
If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

**Social Security and FERPA Statement:**
It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**Emergency Exits and Evacuation:**
Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Rev. 06/2012