

University of North Florida
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
CCJ 2002 Crime in America
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:50 – 12:05
Building 39, Room 1009
Spring 2009

Professor: Dr. Alicia Sitren

Office: Building 51, room 2126

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 – 3:00 PM or by appointment

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Course Description:

Crime is a serious problem in the United States. Americans express a great deal of concern about crime and go to great lengths to protect themselves from it. Politicians often talk about fighting crime during political campaigns because they know that citizens will respond positively to this, and legislatures sometimes allocate vast sums of public money to fight crime.

Despite all of this concern about crime, few Americans understand much about the real causes of crime or about how our criminal justice system actually works. This course is designed to address that lack of understanding by covering: (1) what we know about the nature of crime in the U.S.; (2) what we know about the crimes which are committed and the criminals who commit them; (3) how experts have tried to explain why crimes are committed; and (4) how our system of justice works.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. To develop an understanding of the basic components (law enforcement, courts, and corrections) of the criminal justice process in the United States.
2. To gain knowledge of the social context of crime and of crime control efforts.
3. To learn the different approaches to criminal justice systems used in past, present, and future operations of criminal justice in the United States.
4. To develop an appreciation and critical understanding of criminal justice in the United States.

This is a general education class which also addresses the following UNF General Education Student Outcomes by helping students develop: (1) the ability to think critically, reason soundly, and argue effectively; (2) knowledge of the social, political, economic, and psychological world; and (3) an understanding and appreciation for ethical judgment and its application to everyday life.

Required Texts:

Gaines, L. K. and Miller, R. L. (2008). *Criminal Justice in Action: The Core 4th Edition*. Thomson and Wadsworth.

Levitt, S.D. and Dubner, S.J. (2005). *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*.

Additional readings will be assigned and will be available within the course.

The majority of material discussed during class time will not originate from the text. The class and text are designed to complement each other. Students are responsible for all material that is covered during class. The Professor will deliver course material through a variety of visual aids, such as PowerPoint Slides. Please note that simply copying the visual outline is not sufficient note taking. Students are encouraged to take thorough notes, including the Professor's verbal explanations that supplement the visual outlines.

Course Requirements:

Completion of the following requirements will assist you in accomplishing the learning objectives for this course:

1. Examinations: Students must take and complete all three exams on time (each representing 25% of the final grade). Exams will consist of questions developed from the reading assignments, lectures, and any supplemental information provided. Exam dates are February 3rd (Exam 1); March 5th (Exam 2); and April 16th (Exam 3). Exams will consist of true-false and multiple-choice questions. A scantron is required for each exam. Students are responsible for taking exams during the scheduled time. Make-up exams will only be given during extreme, documented circumstances.

2. Group Discussion Questions: Groups of 5 will be assigned in the first week of class and you will remain in those same groups through the remainder of the semester. Each week students will be responsible for coming to class having read the assigned course materials (usually a chapter from the required textbooks). Additionally, groups will be responsible for answering the critical analysis questions at the end of each chapter. Questions and answers should be typed with headings, group names and your group number. I will randomly call on groups each week to answer the critical analysis questions. At the end of the class, your group will submit the typed discussion questions to me.

Grading Scale:

A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89%
C = 70 – 79%
D = 60 – 69%
F = below 60%

Grading Policy:

Exam 1 = 25%
Exam 2 = 25%
Exam 3 = 25%
Discussion Questions: 25%
Total = 100%

Class Format:

This class will meet twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursday for one hour and 15 minutes per session. Class will begin at 10:50am and will end when the professor indicates, on or close to 12:05pm. All students should come to class on time and remain for the duration of class until dismissed. Class format will include lectures, class exercises, discussions, guest speakers, and videos.

Blackboard:

The Professor will use the University's Blackboard system to disseminate general course information, course notes, reading materials, and exam grades. Therefore, all students will be required to learn how to access their Osprey e-mail and Blackboard accounts if they do not already know how to do so.

Academic Integrity:

All members of the community recognize the necessity of being honest with themselves and with others. The integrity of the educational experience is diminished by cheating in class, plagiarizing, lying and employing other modes of deceit. None of these should be used as a strategy to obtain a false sense of success. The need for honest relations among all members of the community is essential.

I expect that each of the exams, projects, and assignments reflect your own individual work. Particularly, you should not copy another student's work or allow them to copy your work. When discussing ideas and concepts from something you have read, you must cite the source. Lastly, if you include any direct quotes from another source, you must place them in quotation marks and cite the original author (direct quotes should only be used when you cannot restate those ideas in your own words). For more details on the consequences of academic dishonesty please see the rules of conduct described in The Student Conduct Code, which can be found at: http://www.unf.edu/unfinfo/policies-regs/pdf_files/5_student_affairs/5_0010R.pdf.

Civility Statement:

Students are expected to communicate in a civil manner in academic interactions at all times, both in and out of the classroom. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified manner, which are respectful and understanding toward both peers and professors.

Proper decorum includes, but is not limited to, arriving to class on time, participating in classroom activities and discussions, paying full attention during all aspects of the class, respecting the views of other students and the professor, and making meaningful contributions to class content. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who are disruptive will be dismissed from class and referred to Student Affairs. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, arriving late or leaving in the middle of class, chatting with other students during lecture and discussions, permitting cell phones and other electronic devices to ring during class, and engaging in other activities unrelated to course content (such as reading newspapers, surfing the internet, and doing work for another class).

Class Attendance:

According to various studies, class attendance and grades tend to positively correlate. Thus, it is in the best interest of the students to attend class regularly, except in cases of extreme illness or emergency. In the event that students do miss class, they should borrow notes from someone who attended, in order to maintain continuity when preparing for the course exams. I reserve the right to take attendance at any time and factor this into your final grade.

Course Schedule				
Week	Date		Topic	Chapter
Week 1	Tuesday	6-Jan	Introduction to the class	N/A
	Thursday	8-Jan	Introduction to the class	N/A
Week 2	Tuesday	13-Jan	Criminal Justice Today	Ch. 1
	Thursday	15-Jan	Criminal Justice Today	Ch. 1
Week 3	Tuesday	20-Jan	Causes of Crime	Ch. 2
	Thursday	22-Jan	Causes of Crime	Ch. 2
Week 4	Tuesday	27-Jan	Defining and Measuring Crime	Ch. 3
	Thursday	29-Jan	Defining and Measuring Crime	Ch. 3
Week 5	Tuesday	3-Feb	Exam 1	
	Thursday	5-Feb	Law Enforcement Today	Ch. 5
Week 6	Tuesday	10-Feb	Law Enforcement Today	Ch. 5
	Thursday	12-Feb	Law Enforcement Today	Ch. 5
Week 7	Tuesday	17-Feb	Challenges to Effective Policing	Ch. 6
	Thursday	19-Feb	Challenges to Effective Policing	Ch. 6
Week 8	Tuesday	24-Feb	Police and the Constitution	Ch. 7
	Thursday	26-Feb	Police and the Constitution	Ch. 7
Week 9	Tuesday	3-Mar	Police and the Constitution	Ch. 7
	Thursday	5-Mar	Exam 2	
Week 10	Tuesday	10-Mar	Probation and Community Corrections	Ch. 11
	Thursday	12-Mar	No class	N/A
Week 11	Tuesday	17-Mar	<i>Spring Break</i>	
	Thursday	19-Mar		
Week 12	Tuesday	24-Mar	Probation and Community Corrections	Ch. 11
	Thursday	26-Mar	Probation and Community Corrections	Ch. 11
Week 13	Tuesday	31-Mar	Prisons and Jails	Ch. 12
	Thursday	2-Apr	Prisons and Jails	Ch. 12
Week 14	Tuesday	7-Apr	Behind Bars: The Life of an Inmate	Ch. 13
	Thursday	9-Apr	Behind Bars: The Life of an Inmate	Ch. 13
Week 15	Tuesday	14-Apr	Behind Bars: The Life of an Inmate	Ch. 13
	Thursday	16-Apr	Exam 3	
Week 16	Thursday	23-Apr	Final Activity (9 - 10:50 AM)	

The purpose of the course schedule is to be used as a guide to assist you in planning class preparation. The syllabus and the course schedule are subject to change, as the instructor may deem necessary. It is in the best interest of students to come to class prepared by reading the material prior to class.