

COURSE SYLLABUS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE 4304 – CRIMINOLOGY
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY – RIO GRANDE COLLEGE
FALL - 2014

Online Course – August 25 through December 4, 2014

INSTRUCTOR: Darren P. Kohut, Adjunct Professor

Office Hours – by appointment

Email: dkohut@sulross.edu

(830)422-8652 (voicemail or text)

*** The most effective way to contact me is by phone or text - please remember to identify yourself when sending me a text**

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to provide an understanding of the study of crime, commonly known as criminology. Criminology is primarily concerned with understanding the causes of crime. With this in mind, we will examine some of the most influential theories which attempt to explain criminal behavior.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) identify and understand the primary explanations of criminal behavior;
- 2) Understand the motivation for and organization of different criminal offenses and enterprises; and
- 3) become a critical consumer of the crime information provided by the media and the government about crime in the United States.

COURSE NOTES

Being that this is a web based course, the course will be dependent on the class blackboard page. All course communication and instruction will take place through blackboard and the student's registered Sul Ross email address. Assignments/instruction will be posted on a weekly basis, and unless instructed otherwise, all weekly assignments will be submitted by the specified due date utilizing Safeassignment on the class blackboard site. Please check the course blackboard site frequently for additional required material, updates, and the like.

Please make sure to have your official SRSU email forwarded to your preferred email address (if different) to receive important updates, class cancellations (if applicable), etc.

This course is dependent on the main text for material, and you are required to read all reading assignments. Since this course does not have a lecture component to rely upon, without completing the required reading assignments, the chances of gaining the necessary understanding of the components and successfully negotiating the course will be extremely slim. All text material is fair game for all exams and/or quizzes.

TEXTBOOK:

Criminology: The Essentials (Second Edition)

by Anthony Walsh

Sage (2015)

ISBN 978-1-4833-5069-1

EVERY STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO OBTAIN HIS/HER OWN COPY OF THE COURSE TEXT BOOK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. This course is textbook dependent and no sympathy will be shown for those who procrastinate and fall behind in their work because they do not have their textbook!

Grading Policy

The final grades for the course will be determined based on the compilation of the following components:

- “Weekly” assignments/quizzes - over the life of the course, there will be between 10 to 14 weekly assignment/quiz grades, which will be averaged together and constitute 50% of your final grade
- Midterm Exam - to be held on **Wednesday, October 15, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.** - will constitute 25% of your final grade
- Final Exam – to be held on **Wednesday, December 10, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.** (25% of final grade)
- It should go without saying, but the past dictates that I stress to all students how important it is to complete **ALL** of the assignments and the exams. **Do not expect to do well in this course otherwise.**
- Final grades will be determined by obtaining the average of the weekly assignments/quiz grades and multiplying by .50, and multiplying the Midterm and Final exam grades each by .25. The three percentages are then added together to determine the final numerical grade.

GRADING SCALE:

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

If a student for any reason fails to take an exam, fails to complete an exam, or fails to submit an exam in the designated and allotted time period, or is dropped off-line during an exam, the resulting grade will be an “F” for that exam. The instructor assumes no responsibility for technical problems or student omissions. **For this reason, it is highly recommended that exams be taken at the SRSU computer labs at your respective campuses!**

Course Policies:

PARTICIPATION, PREPARATION AND BEHAVIOR

As stated earlier, to be successful at learning and understanding the material in this class, it is essential that you complete all reading assignments and complete all assignments/exams. I reserve the right to implement any additional teaching/learning tools deemed necessary (i.e. online discussions, message boards, etc.) as the class progresses, and if so, participation will be required. If this becomes a reality, your active participation, along with your willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions regarding the topics will be taken into account at all times during the semester. In addition, due to the sensitive nature of our course, it is entirely possible that some of us in the class may at some point have been a victim of or otherwise exposed at some level to any measure of criminal activity. With this in mind, it is expected that each student will respect the positions, experiences, and feelings of all students in the event that online discussions become a part of the course.

Please review the undergraduate catalog concerning conduct which adversely affects the university community.

Communication with the Instructor –

In case you need to communicate with me, feel free to contact me via my Sul Ross email account listed above; **however, this is not always the quickest method to get in contact with me. Therefore, when you want a quicker response, I encourage you to call or text the above listed cell number.** When communicating with me via text, please identify yourself, as many times in the past I receive texts from unknown students asking important questions, and I like to know who I am communicating with. ***If you have any questions or concerns about anything in the course, please do not hesitate to contact me – I am here to assist you and have no problem whatsoever responding to phone calls or texts.***

SYLLABUS CHANGES

I reserve the right and have the discretion to change this syllabus. While every effort will be made to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, it is sometimes the case that the syllabus must be modified. In the case that the syllabus needs to be adjusted, I will announce such adjustments via the class BB page. I will make every effort to ensure that any changes to the syllabus benefit the class as a whole. It is the student's responsibility to monitor the class BB page regularly for all syllabus changes. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of inattention/irresponsibility does not constitute a defense against missed assignments, test dates, and other applicable changes.