Sul Ross State University

Criminal Justice 4303
Family Violence
Spring 2020

Professor: Martin Guevara Urbina, Ph.D.
Classroom: Web
Class Meeting: Online

Office: 201 (Faculty Building)
Phone: 830-703-4820 (office, direct line)
Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 12:00 to 5:00. Even though this is an online course, you are welcome to visit the Professor’s office anytime.
E-mail: murbina@sulross.edu

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
1. Demonstrate proficiency in the application of legal concepts, theoretical applications, scientific principles, and historical trends in the criminal justice arena.

2. Demonstrate competency in the application of basic research methods, to include: research design, statistical analysis, and uses of empirical findings and interpretations.

3. Demonstrate the application of organizational principles, cultural, social and behavioral knowledge, critical thinking skills and cognitive thought processes within the criminal justice arena.

 Marketable Skills for Criminal Justice Program:
1. Oral and Written Comprehension: The ability to listen and understand information, ideas, and ideologies presented through spoken words; and the ability to read and conceptualize information, perspectives, and ideologies presented in writing. Broadly, oral and written communication involves active listening, speaking, and learning.

2. Critical Thinking: This includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking, which is fundamental for relevant inquiry and productive innovation, analysis, and synthesis of information, ideas, and propositions.

3. Problem Solving: Utilizing a humanist and liberating praxis, empower students to strategically utilize triangulation strategies for evaluating, finding, creating, and implementing solutions to difficult or complex issues in a never-constant society.
4. **Leadership Ability:** Transformational leadership, vital for motivating, decision making, and inspiring vision for achieving positive results—a defined mission.

**Course (Catalog) Description:** A study of child maltreatment and spousal abuse within the family with an emphasis in detection, investigation and deterrence; an examination into other forms of domestic violence.

**Objective:** *Family violence* will offer a sound and holistic analysis of the significance and dynamics of family violence in the US, combined with a sociological, historical, legal, and criminological examination of American criminal and juvenile justice systems, to include law, order, and justice, as it pertains to the origins, implications, manifestations, and ramifications of deviant behavior, beyond physical abuse, to include verbal abuse, psychological abuse, and emotional abuse. While the focus will be primarily, but not exclusively, on the “roots,” evolution, polices, and outcomes of family violence, particular attention will be given to what I call a symbiotic triangle (society, law, and justice), giving us insight into the nature of social dynamics, the socialization process, legal systems, and social institutions. For instance, some social scientists approach the community, as a social system, from an outside rather an inside perspective, which focus on issues like norms, family values, morality, culture, religion, expectations, rules, and outcomes as seen from inside the American society, often in an idealized form, pointing to a specific truth or reality. Specifically, the intent of this course is to provide the student with a detailed understanding of 10 main topics, which are best expressed in the following questions:

1. What is *family violence*? Is “family violence” solely a physical act? Or, does it equates subtle elements, like verbal, psychological, and emotional abuse, as a form of violence? How about neglect, as a form of abuse, and, by extension, violence?

2. In thinking about the questions in #1 above, how is family violence defined, viewed, and treated within the context of law, order, justice, and time? Note: A little history would be of use: how are women and children treated in the early days in the Americas?

3. Pragmatically, philosophically, politically, economically, culturally, and socially, what do we mean by *family violence*? Please think critically and globally, is family violence simply a matter of a legal definition, as stated in a legal statute?

4. What are the most influential theoretical and philosophical ideologies (or mentalities) shaping MODERN human behavior, especially violence, in the US? How has the criminal justice system, in the context of violence and victimization, particularly family violence, evolved in the US? What are the links between gender, class (SES), race, ethnicity, time, and space? Think about the socialization process, which really begins at birth.

5. What FORCES have driven and/or continue to drive legal reform as it pertains to family violence and, of course, victims and victimizers? What role do politics, the media, symbolism, power, social norms, and society play in the making and implementation of policies governing human expectations and behavior? Likewise, what role have historical EVENTS played in shaping and re-shaping informal norms and criminal justice policies?

6. What role does national origin, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and morality, as external forces, play in the evolution of family violence, to include physical, verbal, psychological, emotional abuse, and more subtle forms of violence? How influential are internal factors, like fear,
uncertainty, low-self esteem, stress, depression, courage, passion, love, compassion, fidelity, and loyalty in shaping and reshaping victimization in the context of family violence?

7. WHO has played the most significant role in “shaping and reshaping” judicial reform as it pertains to violence, abusers and victims, and those who are impacted indirectly? What are the reasons of amending existing laws? Note: Does law makes a big difference? Or, is something else missing?

8. What is the scope and nature of current “critical” issues currently confronting American families and society at large? For instance, some social scientists note that emotional and psychological scars, as a form of violence, run much deeper than physical scars, as a result of physical violence?

9. What are the avenues for the establishment of an understanding, compassionate, caring, tolerant, respectful, harmonious, and humane society?

10. What is the future of American families and the US society in general, in the context of violence, victimization, law, order, and justice?

The next set of questions is essentially definitional in nature. It is essential that we share the same definitions of issues, events, situations, or problems if we are to come to a common understanding of both the problem and any possible solutions/remedies. As such, the class’s first segment deals with defining family violence, as it pertains to deviant behavior in the US and placing it in a global context.

The last set of questions is more analytical. A particular truism about human behavior, criminal justice, criminological, sociological, and theoretical aspects of the nature of society is as follows: There are many typologies of criminological, sociological, and legal theories as there are authors writing textbooks about the subject.

The final question has policy overtones. First, we must briefly look at the nature and process of human behavior, in the context of family violence and the US criminal justice system, with a focus on civil, statutory, and constitutional rights. Next, we turn to the more difficult task of linking criminal justice policy, sociological, psychological, and criminological theory, particularly those we will review, to human behavior, legal rights, research, and practices.

Overall, this course is designed to introduce you to the nature and dynamics of family abuse and violence within the context of the criminal justice system and, by extension, social interactions in a broad context and, ultimately, human behavior in the world. By introducing you to influential issues that provide the frameworks to studying a wide variety of phenomena, I intend this course to be a basis for further, more in-depth study in the areas that interest you.

Course Context: As an upper-level course, this class may include controversial, sensitive, and/or adult material. Students are expected to have the mentality and readiness for upper-level content and rigor.

Course Structure: This course will be presented in modules. Please note that the ENTIRE course will be taught online via Blackboard.
Required Texts:

[ISBN: 978-1412981781]

Optional Readings:


Recommended Readings:

Books:


Book Chapters:


Urbina, Martin Guevara and Leslie Smith (2007). “Colonialism and its impact on Mexicans’ experience of punishment in the United States.” In Race, gender, and punishment: From colonialism to the
Refereed (Peer-Reviewed) Journal Articles:


**Encyclopedia, Magazine, and Other Publications:**


Weekly Assignments:

There will be ten (10) Weekly Assignments, each worth 100 points for a total of 100 points. The “Weekly Assignments” will be discussed further the first week of class. Please do NOT panic! Handouts will be posted to assist you as you prepare your weekly assignments.

Activities/Participation:

Please complete the reading assignments as assigned to avoid falling behind, and, more fundamentally, to capture the essence of the class. During the semester, I will be posting a question for you to respond (100 points) and post for ALL students to read. Again, please do NOT panic! If you do the reading, you should be fine. Participation in these “exercises” will be equated into your final grade.

Reviews (Book, Article, Movie):

Book Review (50 points): For your Book Reviews you are asked to read and make critical judgment about one book (50 points). Here is the complete citation for the required book review:


The Book Review is limited to 3 to 5 typed pages. The logistics of the Book Reviews will be discussed in class and handouts will be provided to assist you with the writing assignments.

Article Review (50 points): An article will be provided (or posted online) your review and assessment.

Movie Review (50 points): A movie title will be provided (or posted online) for your review and assessment.

Major Research Project:

The logistics of the research project, which will be submitted as a formal paper, will be discussed in detailed during the first/second week of class, with various posted handouts to guide you in the process. Your project, which is optional but highly recommended (100 points), will be posted the first (or second) week of school, giving you ample time to begin, work, finalize, and submit your research paper.

Research papers (15 to 20 pages in length, not including cover page or reference section) must be typed, with a minimum of 15 academic references (peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and books). Late papers will not be accepted. Do not submit (post) your only copy of any paper without saving your essay in case assignments are lost or destroyed. In effect, make sure that you have a backup copy of the latest version. Again, the project will be discussed further in class.
**Mini-project:**

This should be a fun exercise that allows you to explore (critically) some aspect of human behavior as it pertain to **Family Violence** in greater depth with less evaluation anxiety than you would have in a full-length paper assignment. I would like you to try to and choose a project that you will enjoy, and that will stimulate your thinking about the concepts covered in this course.

Mini-projects are **optional**. You will receive “extra credit” points for completing mini-projects. If your mini-project is **adequate**, you will receive one percentage point. This point(s) will be added on to your final grade at the end of the semester.

You may turn in your mini-projects any time during the semester. The projects will be of greater value if they are done thoughtfully. Thus, you may not submit more than three (3) mini-projects.

There is no minimum or maximum length requirement. Typically you will hand in a three to five page typed paper as the final product of each mini-project. Some projects, however, may require longer (or shorter) write-ups. Your analysis should illustrate or explore some phenomenon relevant to the course, while knowledgeably using concepts, principles, and language in the context of **Family Violence**.

Attached to the end of the syllabus are descriptions of some mini-project options. Some of them will make more sense to you as we progress through the course. If you think of an **alternative** you would like to do as a mini-project, please feel free to ask me about it. Again, I am looking for you to implement class material—especially critical issues/perspectives—when describing the phenomena you choose to explore.

**Make-up Work:**

A **tentative** schedule of assignment will be provided (posted) at the beginning of the semester. However, it is possible that the schedule will be **modified** during the semester. Hence, if you fail to log on as discussed herein, it is the student’s responsibility to check with the Professor (or the Professor’s website) regularly to determine the deadlines for weekly readings, assignments, and activities. To this end, as noted above, make-up exercises will NOT be given, unless otherwise specified. For missed readings, weekly assignments and activities (i.e., “special circumstances”), it is the student’s responsibilities to find out what make-up work is required. If you have any difficulties getting the assignments or making the deadlines, please contact me right way.

**Note:**

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments and activities are due on the scheduled due date. **No late assignments will be accepted.**
Grades: There are a total of 450 points available in this course. Grades will be based on the total points for the semester. Specifically, grades will be assigned by comparing your performance to the best possible score (450) as follows:

Weekly Assignments: 100 points*
Reviews: 150 points
Research Project: 100 points
Activities/Participation: 100 points**

**Total........................................450 points

*Tentatively, Weekly Assignments will count for 100 points. However, it is possible that the total possible points (i.e., 100) will be increased, or reduced. If increased, the TOTAL POSSIBLE points discussed herein (i.e., 450) will add to more than 450 points. If reduced, the TOTAL POSSIBLE points discussed herein (i.e., 450) will add to less than 450 points.

**Similarly, if the 100 Activities and Participation points are either increased or reduced, only the total possible points for Activities/Participation that are utilized will be equated in the final grade distribution. In such case, the TOTAL POSSIBLE points discussed herein (i.e., 450) will add to less (or more) than 450 points.

Grade Distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A (Excellent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>B (Better than Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C (Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>D (Below Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60%</td>
<td>Failing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mini-project points will be added to your point total at the end of the course.

Please be aware of class expectations, rules, and University/College Policies, which follow:

Attendance Policy: This course is “Web” based. Students are expected to log on regularly, check the calendar for due dates and respond to all emails. Thus, it is to your advantage to log-on regularly. For instance, if you do not participate, you cannot learn the discussed material. Additionally, you will not be able to discuss the assigned readings. Much of the learning in class is through discussion with other students. In the process, feel free to ask questions and/or make comments that might enhance our understanding of Family Violence and related issues. Also, do not hesitate to share experiences that may help to enhance our understanding of the nature and significance of deviant behavior within the context of the criminal justice system. (Please reference Sul Ross State University—Rio Grande College Catalog for additional information.)

Punctuality: It is of extreme importance that you complete the readings and writing assignments on time to avoid falling beyond. I understand that it is not possible at times, but please do not make it a routine.
Classroom etiquette. Above all, always **respect** yourself and others; be **patient**; be willing to explore new ideas (perspectives); and restrict questions and comments to the topic being discussed.

**Incomplete Grades:**
PLEASE AVOID INCOMPLETE GRADES. ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE DATES OUTLINED IN THE SYLLABUS. It is the responsibility of students to notify the Professor if they cannot make an assignment or will not be able to log-on to the class. Please call me at 830/758-5017 if you do not plan to participate in a class discussion question or feel you will be missing an assignment. If I do not hear from you in regards to missed assignments, I will not allow an excuse for the missed work.

**Class Responsibilities and Conduct:**
You will be responsible for all information posted anytime during the semester. You will be responsible for obtaining announcements or amendments you may have missed. Any student who is intentionally abusive, disruptive, or disrespectful vis-à-vis posted discussions, activities, or emails will be asked immediately amend such communication, AND possibly dropped from the course. Any student who has been asked to amend “unjustified” communication twice will be reported to the Department Chair or Academic Dean. You are expected to show respect to yourself, other students, and your Professor.

**Academic Honesty (Reference Sul Ross State University—Rio Grande College Catalog):**
Rio Grande College expects its students to maintain high standards of personal and academic conduct. Students who take part in academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. The faculty member is responsible for initiating action for each case of academic dishonesty. Discover any academic dishonesty by a student, may be reported to the Department Chair or Academic Dean.

**Disability Services:**
Students who have special instructional needs because of a physical handicap or a learning disability should discuss their special needs with the office of Student Disabilities Services. You may also see the University/College Catalog for additional information. Please do so before the end of the first week of class.

Contact person for ADA:
Mary Schwartze, M.Ed., LPC
Accessibility Services Coordinator
Counseling & Accessibility Services
Ferguson Hall, Rm #112
P.O. Box C-122
Alpine, TX. 79832
mschwartze@sulross.edu

**Drop Policy:**
If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must contact the Records Office and ask for the necessary paperwork. Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The record’s office will give a deadline for which the paperwork and form, if required, must be returned, complete and signed. If you discover that you are still enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Records Office
immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course.

Library Services:
Library information and technology focus on research skills that prepare individuals to live and work in an information-centered society. Librarians will work with students in the development of critical reasoning, ethical use of information, and the appropriate use of secondary research techniques including: exploring information resources such as library collections and services, identify sources such as subject databases and scholarly journals, executing effective search strategies, retrieving, recording, and citing relevant results correctly, and interpreting search results and deciding whether to expand the search.

The Rio Grande College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP):
Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). As part of the reaffirmation process, SACS requires every institution to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that enhances student learning. Rio Grande College has developed a QEP called Putting Your Words to Work that requires students to write different kinds of papers and deliver oral presentations for courses in all departments. Rio Grande College is committed to enhancing students’ written and oral communication skills which means that students should be writing and speaking significantly more in courses across all departments. To prepare for the increased number of written assignments, students should make every effort to enroll in English 3312 in their first semester at RGC. Students should expect to write and speak professionally in all courses, not just English classes. In this course, Family Violence, students will write various papers and present student work to other students and the Professor, as discussed herein.

Again, I want this class to be useful to you in your future careers. As such, if I can assist you in any way, please stop by and see me or call/e-mail me. If a problem is to arise during the semester, please contact me immediately so that we can work out a solution. Do not wait until it is too late to remedy the problem.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1| **Lecture focus:** Detail class expectations; provide a foundation for the study of family violence; & provide an introduction & broad overview of the subject matter: family violence.  
Explore “Urbina Links”: | The “Urbina Links” will be provided!                                    |
<p>| Week 2| History and definitions of family violence                           | Chapter 1                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Explore major historical forces defining and shaping the nature of family violence in the U.S.: cultural, financial, political, philosophical, ideological, etc. |                                                                          |
| Week 3| Research methodology, assessment, and theories of family violence     | Chapter 2                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Analyze research methodologies used to investigate the dynamics of family violence, and examine the major theories to better understand the scope and nature of family violence. |                                                                          |
| Week 4| Child neglect and psychological maltreatment                        | Chapter 3                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Detail historical trends of child neglect and psychological abuse, its implications and ramifications. |                                                                          |
| Week 5| Child physical abuse                                                 | Chapter 4                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Examine the realities, implications, and consequences of physical abuse of children, and review current social and legal policies. |                                                                          |
| Week 6| Child sexual abuse                                                   | Chapter 5                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Analyze the historical origins of child sexual and the issues resulting in child abuse. Review the physical, emotional, and psychological impact of child sexual abuse. |                                                                          |
| Week 7| “Reflection Week”:                                                    |                                                                        |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> “Reflection Week” is designed to give students the opportunity to reflect (think and act) on what has transpired during the first half of the semester, and, more fundamentally, how things “fits” into their broader academic career, professional life, and personal life. |                                                                          |
| Week 8| Abused and abusive adolescents                                       | Chapter 6                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Explore issues resulting in the complex dynamics of abused and abusive children, its implications and consequences for children and society. |                                                                          |
| Week 9| Dating aggression, sexual assault, and stalking                      | Chapter 7                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Detail the “evolution,” implications, and ramifications of dating aggression, sexual assault, and stalking in the American society. Examine key community programs and policies, including legislation. |                                                                          |
| Week 10| Abused heterosexual partners: Primarily women                        | Chapter 8                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Examine the scope and nature of abuse among heterosexual partners. Explore the influence of legislation, the media (including the web), and social reaction. |                                                                          |
| Week 11| Abused heterosexual partners: Primarily men                          | Chapter 9                                                              |
|       | <strong>Focus:</strong> Analyze the historical trends of intimate partner violence in relationships, and examine major issues resulting in violence, along with the social implications and consequences. |                                                                          |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>Abused and abusive partners in understudied populations</th>
<th>Chapter 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong></td>
<td>With shifting demographic trends and new scientific discoveries, examine the often hidden scope and nature of abuse and violence within certain segments of society, situating their experiences within a broader framework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Adult intimate partner violence: Practice, police, and prevention</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projects are due:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong></td>
<td>Analyze existing practices, programs, and polices; explore possible solutions, and examine possible effective policies and programs for long-term prevention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Abuse of elderly and the disabled persons</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong></td>
<td>Examine the scope and nature of abused elders and disabled people. Analyze social and legal implications.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>What can I do to help? Reflections, thoughts for the future, and conclusion:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong></td>
<td>As the final week of regular class, the various topics discussed during the semester will tied together, placing them within a broader framework; that is, globalization, to include the globalization of knowledge. Concluding with recommendations for the future, as we continue the discourse on family violence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Exam:</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The syllabus is likely to be amended during the semester at the discretion of the Professor!*

*Note: Please check Calendar on Blackboard for **due dates!***
Mini-Project Suggestions

1. With fellow students, family members, or friends, discuss the issue of what could possibly be the DRIVING force behind family violence in the US.

2. With fellow students, family members, boy-friends, or girl-friends, discuss the issue of whether issues like culture, religion, and morality are influential in the dynamics of family violence. WHY? Or, WHY NOT?

3. Visit different courtrooms in the area (local, state or federal) during the prosecution of criminal defendants accused of family violence. Compare what you see with the descriptions in this class. Keep a diary of your experience.

4. Find interesting stories in newspapers and magazines pertaining to family violence in your community, like Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Del Rio, or other community, and detail a brief report. Explain what you find interesting about the stories, as projected through the lens of the media.

5. Watch a documentary, video, or movie that vividly documents that history of family violence and write a brief reaction paper. An excellent choice: *A Class Apart.*