Sul Ross State University

Criminal Justice 3302
Victimology
Summer I: 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 5:00p.m. Even though this is an online course, you are welcome to visit the Professor’s office anytime.
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Program Learning Outcomes:
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:** Provides an in-depth study of factors that affect victims of crime. Specific crimes are studied and remedies explored; victim precipitation, self-help and prevention of victimization, victimization surveys and other data sources; history of victims’ rights and the victims’ rights movement and victim services.

**Objective:** Victimology will offer a sound and holistic analysis of the significance and dynamics of victimization in the US, combined with a sociological, historical, legal, and criminological examination of American jurisprudence, to include law, order, and justice, as it pertains to the implications, manifestations, and ramifications of social behavior. While the focus will be primarily, but not exclusively, on the evolution, polices, and outcomes of victimization, 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. 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 victimology? What is victimization?
2. How is victimology defined within the context of law, order, justice, and time?
3. Pragmatically, philosophically, politically, economically, culturally, and socially, what do we mean by victimization?
4. What are the most influential theoretical and philosophical ideologies (or mentalities) shaping MODERN human behavior in the US? How has the criminal justice system, in the context of victimization, particularly family violence, evolved in the US? What are the links between gender, class (SES), race, ethnicity, time, and space?
5. What FORCES have driven and/or continue to drive legal reform as it pertains to 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 behavior? Likewise, what role have historical EVENTS played in shaping and re-shaping criminal justice policies?
6. What role does race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and morality, as external forces, play in the evolution of victimization? How influential are internal factors, like fear, courage, passion, love, compassion, fidelity, and loyalty in shaping and reshaping victimization?
7. WHO has played the most significant role in “shaping and reshaping” judicial reform as it pertains to abusers and victims? What are the reasons of amending existing laws?
8. What is the scope and nature of current “critical” issues currently confronting the American society? For instance, some social scientists note that emotional and psychological scars run much deeper than physical scars?

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

10. What is the future of the American society, in the context of 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. Consequently, the class’s first segment deals with defining victimology, as it pertains to victimization in the US and placing it in a global context.

The last set of questions is more analytical. A particular truism about human behavior, jurisprudence, 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 five-fold approach we will take is an amalgam of several such typologies:

- **History**—When deemed appropriate, we will make use of historical events, situations, and circumstances to better understand the subject matter by its totality. It is essential that we obtain an understanding and appreciation for historical ruptures and discontinuities as we try to bridge existing gaps. According to an African proverb, “Until lions have their own historians, histories of the hunt will glorify the hunter.”

- **Theory**—Theoretically, we must investigate which theories provide the best guidance in our search for “truth and reality.”

- **Law and Society**—In a society where most behavior is governed by some type of law, it is vital that we explore the relationship between law and society. To some scholars, laws are a measure of culture; crime, another element of all known cultures, is the violation of those laws. In essence, why do we have laws? Do we need laws? Does law makes a difference?

- **Philosophy**—While sociological and criminological theories might serve as “road maps” to everyday life, philosophy gives “meaning” to human existence. It enables us to better appreciate what matters most at the END of the day.

- **Poetry**—Even though poetry is one of the oldest forms of dialogue, it is seldom mentioned in academic discussions. Yet, poetry allows us to transcend the unknown … it allows us to dream the impossible … to dream the impossible dream. “Invent the age, invent the metaphor. Without a credible structure of law a society is inconceivable. Without a workable poetry no society can conceive a [person].” --Archibald MacLeish, Apologia, 1972.

The final question has policy overtones. First, we must briefly look at the nature and process of human behavior, in the context of victimization and the US criminal justice system, with a focus on human 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 victimology 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: 978-1284130195]

**Optional Readings:**


Recommended Readings

Books:


Book Chapters:


**Refereed (Peer-Reviewed) Journal Articles:**


Encyclopedia, Magazine, and Other Publications:


Weekly Assignments: There will be five (5) Weekly Assignments, each worth 20 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.

Mini-project: This should be a fun exercise that allows you to explore (critically) some aspect of human behavior as it pertains to victimization 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, though, 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 the victimology.
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 and 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 200 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 (200) as follows:

Weekly Assignments: 100 points*
Activities/Participation: 100 points**

Total: 200 points

*Tentatively, Weekly Assignments will count for 100 points. However, it is possible that the total possible points (i.e., 200) will be increased, or reduced. If increased, the TOTAL POSSIBLE points discussed herein (i.e., 200) will add to more than 200 points. If reduced, the TOTAL POSSIBLE points discussed herein (i.e., 200) will add to less than 200 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., 200) will add to less (or more) than 200 points.

Grade Distribution:

90-100% = A (Excellent)
80-89% = B (Better than Average)
70-79% = C (Average)
60-69% = D (Below Average)
Below 60% = Failing
Note: Mini-project points will be added to your point total at the end of the course.

**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 study victimization and related issues. Also, do not hesitate to share experiences that may help to enhance our understanding of the nature and significance of criminal behavior and law within the context of the criminal justice system. (Please reference Sul Ross State University 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.

**Class etiquette.** Above all, always respect yourself and others; be patient; be willing to explore new ideas and 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):**
Sul Ross State University 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.

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.

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.
**Tentative*  
Schedule of Classes and Assignments**

### Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td>Crime &amp; victimology</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Victimology concepts and theories</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Detail class expectations; provide a foundation for the study of victimology and related issues; &amp; provide an introduction &amp; broad overview of the subject matter: victimization.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>Victim services, legislation, &amp; treatment</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<td>Child &amp; adolescent victimization</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Explore major historical forces defining, shaping, and re-shaping the dynamics of victimization, focusing primarily on services, legislation, and treatment, in addition to cultural, financial, political, legal, philosophical, and ideological forces.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>Victims of schools shooters</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
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<td>Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Carefully examine the realities of two of the most polemic and sensitive forms of victimization, school shootings and intimate partner violence, as we seek to provide a sound and holistic analysis, and, ultimately, solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>Victims of rape &amp; sexual assault</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<td>Stalking victims</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Examine the scope and nature of rape, stalking, and sexual assault. Explore the implications and ramifications of this type of victimization, and examine the influence of legislation, the media (including the web), and social reactions.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
<td>Elder abuse victims</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Hate crimes</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Examine the scope and nature of abused elders and victims of hate crimes. Analyze social, political, psychological, and legal implications and consequences.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 6</strong></td>
<td>Cybercrime &amp; other forms of victimization</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<td><strong>Focus:</strong> As the final week of class, the various topics discussed during the semester will tied together, placing them within a broader framework. Concluding with recommendations for the future, as we continue the discourse on victimization.</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
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*The syllabus is likely to be amended during the semester at the discretion of the Professor!*

**Note:** Projects will be due at the beginning of the class, and no late assignments will be accepted.
Mini-Project Suggestions

1. With fellow students, family members, or friends, discuss the issue of what could possibly be the DRIVING force behind victimization in the US (and abroad).

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 victimization. WHY? Or, WHY NOT?

3. Make observations of HOW people treat each other in daily life, and see if you notice subtle forms of victimization. For instance, social scientists note that isolating and neglecting a person is one of the WORSE forms of victimization, possibly resulting in stress, depression, suicidal thoughts, and even suicide. 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 victimization 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 victimization and write a brief reaction paper. An excellent choice: A Class Apart.