

COURSE SYLLABUS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE 4302 – CONSTITUTIONAL LAW
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY – RIO GRANDE COLLEGE
SPRING - 2023

Course Dates: January 18 through May 17, 2023 - Online Course

INSTRUCTOR: Darren P. Kohut, Adjunct Professor
Office Hours – by appointment
Email: dkohut@sulross.edu
(830) 488-3654 (voice 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 will assist the student in mastering the crucial aspects of substantive law and procedural due process in the enforcement of criminal law. The course seeks to provide a strong foundation for understanding the purpose of law and the rule of law to maintain a civilized and stable society. The course will also explore civil liberties of the constitution and discuss how the related civil liabilities influence the criminal justice system.

By the end of this course, the objectives are to:

- 1) To familiarize the student with the fundamentals premises and design of the constitutional system and government of the United States.
- 2) To expose the student to the guiding principles and applicable doctrines of select subfields of constitutional law.
- 3) To cultivate the student’s ability to identify and discuss pertinent constitutional issues.
- 4) To provide the student with the intellectual skills necessary to properly analyze and conceptualize constitutional issues.
- 5) To foster an informed perspective on the nature and limits of constitutional judicial decision-making

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 the appropriate web-based assets on the class blackboard site. Please check the course

blackboard site frequently for additional required material, updates, and the like. Additionally, although this is an online course, I am currently looking into the possibility of adding an online lecture component (i.e. Zoom or Google Duo based) which will greatly increase the learning process and assist in the accomplishment of the goals of the course. More information will be forwarded on this possibility after the start of class.

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. Without completing the required reading assignments and the related homework 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. Electronic versions, if you prefer, are acceptable.

TEXTBOOK:

Constitutional Law and the Criminal Justice System

By Harr, Hess, Orthmann, and Kingsbury

7TH Edition, 2018

Cengage Learning

ISBN-13: 9781305966550

EVERY STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO OBTAIN HIS/HER OWN COPY OF THE COURSE TEXT. This course is text dependent, so once final instructions are made by the instructor, there will be no excuse for not following through immediately.

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 numerous assignment/quiz grades, which will be averaged together and constitute 50% of your final grade
- Midterm Exam - to be held on **Wednesday, March 22, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** - will constitute 25% of your final grade
- Final Exam – to be held on **Tuesday, May 16, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 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.
- Plagiarism and academic cheating will not be tolerated. It is a violation of university policy and morally unacceptable. If caught in violation of this code, the resulting grade will be an “F” for the semester.

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. Remember - your respective campus computer lab is always available for taking exams and are probably the most reliable option. **The use of cell phones for taking exams is strongly discouraged.**

Course Policies:

PARTICIPATION, PREPARATION AND BEHAVIOR

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.

Communication with the Instructor –

In case you need to communicate with me, for quickest results feel free to contact me by **calling or texting the above listed cell number**. You are free to use my Sul Ross email account; however,

this is not the quickest method to get in contact with me. If you call, and I do not answer, please send me a text (as opposed to a voicemail). 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 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.

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

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. RGC students seeking accessibility services should contact Paulette Harris, Executive Assistant to the Vice President and Dean, at 830-279-3023 or email pharris@sulross.edu. Ms. Harris's office is at 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde, TX 78801 (this is the mailing address, too).

For Remote/Online Courses Only – SRSU Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

Personal Responsibility

Students will develop principles of personal responsibility for living in a diverse world; to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities.

Social Responsibility

Students will develop principles of social responsibility for living in a diverse world, to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.