



Sul Ross State University

Criminal Justice 4350 Independent Study Spring: 2023

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

Course (Catalog) Description: *The student will pursue an independent research or experiential learning project chosen by the student in consultation and approval of the instructor. Prerequisite: Approval of the instructor.*

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.

Course Context: As an upper-level course, this class may include controversial, sensitive, and/or adult material. For instance, how should "we" address consequential issues, like terrorism, or polemic issues, like immigration, without violating the civil liberties of individuals, including our own constitutional rights? Thus, 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:

- Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina, eds. (2018). *Immigration and the law: Race, citizenship, and social control*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
[ISBN: 978-0816537624]
- Urbina, Martin Guevara, Joel E. Vela, and Juan O. Sanchez (2014). *Ethnic realities of Mexican Americans: From colonialism to 21st century globalization*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher, Ltd.
[ISBN: 978-0-398-08780-7]
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Claudia Rodriguez Wright (2016). *Latino access to higher education: Ethnic realities and new directions for the twenty-first century*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
[ISBN: 978-0398090913]

Recommended Readings:**Books:**

- Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina, eds. (2018). *Immigration and the law: Race, citizenship, and social control*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez, eds. (2018). *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: Ethnicity, ideology, and social control* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez (2017). *Ethnicity and criminal justice in the era of mass incarceration: A critical reader on the Latino experience*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Claudia Rodriguez Wright (2016). *Latino access to higher education: Ethnic realities and new directions for the twenty-first century*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez, eds. (2015). *Latino police officers in the United States: An examination of emerging trends and issues*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara, ed. (2014). *Twenty-first century dynamics of multiculturalism: Beyond post-racial America*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara, Joel E. Vela, and Juan O. Sanchez (2014). *Ethnic realities of Mexican Americans: From colonialism to 21st century globalization*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2012). *Capital punishment in America: Race and the death penalty over time*. El Paso, TX: LFB Scholarly Publishing.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara, ed. (2012). *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2008). *A comprehensive study of female offenders: Life before, during, and after incarceration*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.

Urbina, Martin Guevara (2003/2011). *Capital punishment and Latino offenders: Racial and ethnic differences in death sentences*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Book Chapters:

Urbina, Martin Guevara and Ilse Aglaé Peña (2018). "Policing borders: Immigration, criminalization, and militarization in the era of social control profitability." In *Spatial policing: The influence of time, space, and geography on law enforcement practices*, edited by Charles Crawford. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2018). "U.S. immigration laws: The changing dynamics of immigration through time." In *Immigration and the law: Race, citizenship, and social*, edited by Sofia Espinoza Alvarez and Martin Guevara Urbina. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2018). "Immigration, criminalization, and militarization in the age of globalization." In *Immigration and the law: Race, citizenship, and social control*, edited by Sofia Espinoza Alvarez and Martin Guevara Urbina. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez (2018). "Immigration laws and social control movements: Situating the realities of immigration in the twenty-first century." In *Immigration and the law: Race, citizenship, and social control*, edited by Sofia Espinoza Alvarez and Martin Guevara Urbina. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Álvarez (2018). "The Latino Condition in the Age of Mass Incarceration: Ethnicity, Diversity, Change, and Social Control." In *Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Ethnicity, Ideology, and Social Control* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Peña, Ilse Aglaé and Martin Guevara Urbina (2018). "The Legacy of Capital Punishment: Executing Mexicans and Other Latinos." In *Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Ethnicity, Ideology, and Social Control* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Álvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2018). "Life After Prison: Recommendations for Overcoming Legal Barriers, Community Reentry, and Steps for Making It Outside." In *Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Ethnicity, Ideology, and Social Control* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Álvarez (2018). "The New Frontier: Globalization, Latinos, and Criminal Justice." In *Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Ethnicity, Ideology, and Social Control* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Álvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2018). "The Future of Latinos and the U.S. Criminal Justice System." In *Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Ethnicity, Ideology, and Social Control* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Urbina, Martin Guevara (2016). "Life after prison for Hispanics." In *The new Latino studies reader: A twenty-first-century perspective*, edited by Ramon A. Gutierrez and Tomas Almaguer. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez (2015). "Situating the current state of research on Latino police and ethnic community in twenty-first century America." In *Latino police officers in the United States: An examination of emerging trends and issues*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2015). "Bridging the gaps and future research: Thinking ahead." In *Latino police officers in the United States: An examination of emerging trends and issues*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara, Ferris Roger Byxbe, and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez (2015). "Policy recommendations: Toward a new police force." In *Latino police officers in the United States: An examination of emerging trends and issues*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2015). "The future of Latino officers in the American police." In *Latino police officers in the United States: An examination of emerging trends and issues*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2014). "From the shadows of the past: Revolutionizing multiculturalism in the midst of globalization—A twenty-first century challenge." In *Twenty-first century dynamics of multiculturalism: Beyond post-racial America*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2014). "It's a new world: The changing dynamics of multiculturalism." In *Twenty-first century dynamics of multiculturalism: Beyond post-racial America*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2014). "The future of U.S. multiculturalism: Si se puede." In *Twenty-first century dynamics of multiculturalism: Beyond post-racial America*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Peña, Ilse Aglaé and Martin Guevara Urbina (2012). "The legacy of capital punishment: Executing Latinas and Latinos." In *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2012). "The dynamics of education and globalization in the new millennium: The unspoken realities." In *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2012). "Ethnic constructions: The making of the upcoming majority, Latinas and Latinos." In *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2012). "Indigent defendants and the barriers they face in the U.S. court system." In *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.

- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2012). "Life after prison: Ethnic, racial, and gender realities." In *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2012). "The American criminal justice system and the future of Latinos and Latinas." In *Hispanics in the U.S. criminal justice system: The new American demography*, edited by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- Nieling, Sara and Martin Guevara Urbina (2008). "Epilogue: Thoughts for the future." In *A comprehensive study of female offenders: Life before, during, and after incarceration*, by Martin Guevara Urbina. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, Publisher Ltd.
- 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 war on terror*, edited by Mary Bosworth and Jeanne Flavin. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Refereed (Peer-Reviewed) Journal Articles:

- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Ilse Aglaé Peña (2018). "Crimmigration and Militarization: Policing Borders in the Era of Social Control Profitability." *Sociology Compass*, December, 1-16.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sofia Espinoza Alvarez (2016). "Neoliberalism, criminal justice, and Latinos: The contours of neoliberal economic thought and policy on criminalization." *Latino Studies*, 14: 33-58.
- Alvarez, Sofia Espinoza and Martin Guevara Urbina (2014). "Capital punishment on trial: Who lives, who dies, who decides—A question of justice?" *Criminal Law Bulletin*, 50: 263-298.
- Byxbe, Ferris Roger and Martin Guevara Urbina (2014). "The global epidemic of prescription drug abuse: The American experience." *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, 2: 208-216.
- Byxbe, Ferris Roger and Martin Guevara Urbina (2013). "The globalization of crime in American schools: An assessment of emerging trends in the twenty-first century." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2: 1-13.
- Byxbe, Ferris Roger and Martin Guevara Urbina (2013). "*In loco parentis*: The contours of the Fourth Amendment in American public schools." *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, 2: 11-26.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Ferris Roger Byxbe (2012). "Capital punishment in America: Ethnicity, crime, and social justice." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2: 13-29.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Ferris Roger Byxbe (2011). "Interacting forces in the judicial system: A case study in American criminal law." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1: 141-154.
- Byxbe, Ferris and Martin Guevara Urbina (2011). "Sexual harassment: Crossing the lines within the ranks." *Police Forum*, 20: 4-12.

- Byxbe, Ferris, Martin Guevara Urbina, and Patricia Nicosia (2011). "Community oriented policing and partnerships: A recipe for success!" *Police Forum*, 20: 4-16.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and William Sakamoto White (2009). "Waiving juveniles to criminal court: Court officials express their thoughts." *Social Justice: A Journal of Crime, Conflict & World Order*, 36: 122-139.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2007). "Latinas/os in the criminal and juvenile justice systems." *Critical Criminology: An International Journal*, 15: 41-99.
- Ruddell, Rick and Martin Guevara Urbina (2007). "Weak nations, political repression, and punishment." *International Criminal Justice Review*, 17: 84-107.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2005). "Transferring juveniles to adult court in Wisconsin: Practitioners voice their views." *Criminal Justice Studies: A Critical Journal of Crime, Law and Society*, 18: 147-172.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2004). "Language barriers in the Wisconsin court system: The Latino/a experience." *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice*, 2: 91-118.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2004). "A qualitative analysis of Latinos executed in the United States between 1975 and 1995: Who were they?" *Social Justice: A Journal of Crime, Conflict & World Order*, 31: 242-267.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Sara Kreitzer (2004). "The practical utility and ramifications of RICO: Thirty-two years after its implementation." *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 15: 294-323.
- Ruddell, Rick and Martin Guevara Urbina (2004). "Minority threat and punishment: A cross-national analysis." *Justice Quarterly*, 21: 903-931.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2003). "Race and ethnic differences in punishment and death sentence outcomes: Empirical analysis of data on California, Florida and Texas, 1975-1995." *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice*, 1: 5-35.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2003). "The quest and application of historical knowledge in modern times: A critical view." *Criminal Justice Studies: A Critical Journal of Crime, Law and Society*, 16: 113-129.
- Urbina, Martin Guevara (2002). "Furman and Gregg exist death row?: Un-weaving an old controversy." *The Justice Professional*, 15: 105-125.

Encyclopedia, Magazine, and Other Publications:

- Urbina, Martin Guevara and Ilse Aglaé Peña (2019). "Capital Punishment in the U.S.: Doing Justice or an Illusion of Justice, Legitimated Oppression, and Reinforcement of Structural Hierarchies." *UCLA Law Review*, 66: in print.
- Byxbe, Ferris and Martin Guevara Urbina (2017). "The New Face of Capital Punishment: Nitrogen Asphyxiation." *LAE Journal*, 45-48.

Byxbe, Ferris Roger, Donna Byxbe, Martin Guevara Urbina, and Patricia Nicosia (2011). "Prescription drugs: Generation Rx in crisis." *LAE Journal*, 34-36.

Byxbe, Ferris, Martin Guevara Urbina, and Patricia Nicosia (2010). "Community oriented policing and partnerships: A recipe for success!" *LAE Journal*, 22-25. (A reprint.)

Urbina, Martin Guevara (2005). "Puerto Rican nationalists." *Encyclopedia of Prisons & Correctional Facilities*, Vol. 2: 796-798. Edited by Mary Bosworth. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Urbina, Martin Guevara (2003). "Good teachers never die." *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education Magazine*, 13: 31-32.

Urbina, Martin Guevara (2002). "Death sentence outcomes." *Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment*, Vol 2: 482-485. Edited by David Levinson. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Book Reviews (Required):

For your *Book Reviews* you are asked to read and make critical judgment about **three** book (50 points each). 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.

Major Project:

The logistics of the project, which will be submitted as a formal paper, will be discussed in detailed during the first part of the class. Illustration: some agencies (law enforcement and penal system) allow citizens to go in and observe. Some law enforcement agencies, for instance, allow "ride alongs." Hence, you could arrange to participate in a series of "field" activities. At the end of the shift/session, write down what you observed. Describe how it **compares** with what you have learned in class (like, criminality, law, policing, policy implications, and consequences). For instance, based on your observations, what are the links between law, society, media, age, gender, race, ethnicity, research, and practice?

Your project, which is **required** (100 points). Papers (approximately 8 to 12 pages in length) must be typed. 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. Note: 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 **substantive law** 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 submit 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 **substantive law**.

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 250 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 (250) as follows:

Book Reviews:	150 points
Required Project:	100 points**

Total.....	250 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

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 **substantive law** and related issues. Also, do not hesitate to share experiences that may help to enhance our understanding of the nature and significance of **substantive law** 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 behind. 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:**ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)**

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartze, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8691. E-mail: 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.

Distance Education Statement:

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, such as 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 information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. 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.

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, **Individual Research (Substantive Law)**, students will write various papers and present student work to other students and the Professor, as discussed herein. If you have questions about the QEP, please contact Dr. Sarah Moreman, QEP Coordinator, at smoreman@sulross.edu.

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.