

Fundamentals of Criminal Law CJ 1310  
SRSU Spring Fall 2023  
Syllabus

Professor: Benjamin Barrientes

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109A MAB; (432) 294.4189 Office Hours prior to class and by appointment

Course Description:

The student will be introduced to concepts of criminal law including the nature of law, historical development, major definitions, classification and elements of crime and criminal responsibility.

Through reading of classical and contemporary cases, students will study the structure of courts in America, the role of courtroom actors, and court processes. We will examine criminal case law and foundational readings in American Jurisprudence, Federal and State Judicial Systems, procedures prior to a criminal trial, the criminal trial and its aftermath, the Civil Court Process, and (if there is time) Implementation & Impact of Judicial Policies.

In the interest of keeping expenses at a minimum for students, the instructor will not assign a textbook. Readings and other materials will be uploaded on Blackboard.

Course Objectives- upon completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts in articulating issues in criminal law;
2. Think critically about American Jurisprudence;
3. Think critically about the role of courtroom actors;
4. Utilize concepts of procedure and apply them in articulating on judicial policies;
5. Dispel assumptions in theories of cases that we study;
6. Develop critical writing skills.

Texas Domain III Competency 19: The teacher understands and applies critical thinking knowledge and skills to plan, organize/implement instruction, and assess learning.

Texas Domain III Competency 23: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of core concepts of Courts and Judiciary including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through distinct and unique systems and approaches for thought.

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services. Contact the office to set up an accommodations meeting by calling (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

#### Americans with Disability Act Statement:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government programs and services. SRSU is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU's 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; please contact Mary Schwartz Grisham at (432) 837.8203 or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu).

#### Course Policies:

Please observe that Sul Ross State University has a zero tolerance policy on cheating, plagiarism, or collusion. Procedures for dealing with these acts are addressed in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy. These policies are meant to ensure the academic integrity of SRSU.

#### Education Statement:

Students enrolled in courses have equal access to SRSU's academic support services. Please visit the SRSU website if you have any questions on accessing such resources. Students are expected to correspond through Sul Ross email accounts and submit assignments through Blackboard. Blackboard requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. Your Instructor prefers that you email your work directly to the Instructor.

#### Course Requirements:

Students are expected to communicate with me and complete all assignments in a timely manner. Students are expected to login to Blackboard frequently so as to ensure full participation in the class. Please report any login issues as soon as possible by emailing me immediately.

Grading for this course will be based on the quality of student's work: \*Papers mainly. Due to the reality of the virus, this Seminar will require 2 papers (each valued at 33% of your grade) and a series of Journal assignments (the remaining 34% of your grade) based on our readings.

Grading system: A: 100-90 B: 89-80 C: 79-70 D: 69-60 F: 59 or less

{ This syllabus is subject to changes approved by Instructor. }