CJ / CRIM 3303: Crime & Justice in the Movies
Sul Ross State University - Fall 2024

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Class hours   : Online   **Web Page** : https://srinfo.sulross.edu/fs/9180
Office Hours   : This is an online course, and the best way to reach me is via email. Do not hesitate to
                contact me for any reason. I will respond to email inquiries as soon as I can.

Required Texts

1) American Psychological Association (October 2019), Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition, https://apastyle.apa.org/products/publication-manual-7th-edition-spiral
2) Additional readings (e.g., articles, reports) will be posted on Blackboard.

Regarding scientific journal articles, Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library of SRSU has an extensive database infrastructure. You can get detailed information and advising from libraries website https://library.sulross.edu Once you logged in to your Sul Ross Account on Blackboard you should be automatically connected to the library webpage as well. Thus, you can browse the online databases of the University and find the articles on the additional reading list.

The SRSU Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website. Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting https://library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or contact a librarian.

Course Description

Movies play a central role in shaping our understanding of crime and the world generally, helping us define what is good and bad, desirable and unworthy, lawful and illicit, strong and weak. Crime movies raise controversial issues about the distribution of social power and the meanings of deviance, and they provide a safe space for fantasies of rebellion, punishment, and the restoration of order. This course examines theories and themes of criminology through the lens of this popular culture. The course examines how current themes in crime films both reflect and shape our views of crime in society and how theories and current trends in criminology and criminal justice studies manifest themselves on film.

Class Caveat: Students are warned that the films in this course contain graphic depictions of violence, profanity, nudity, and sexual behavior. Any given movie may have realistic and disturbing portrayals of murder, mayhem, torture, rape, and other acts of extreme or brutal violence. Documentaries may

contain images of actual dead and tortured bodies as well as accounts of severe and excessive violence. **<u>Students who do not wish to be exposed to such scenes should reconsider taking this class</u>**.

Course Learning Objectives

The point of this course is to examine how film represents, distorts, and/or filters crime and justice issues. This class will have the "critically-thinking student look" at films in a different manner. Students will be provided with a guideline for viewing the film. That is, students will be asked to reflect, analyze, discuss, and answer questions.

After the course you will be able to:
1. Have the skills to analytically view crime films and recognize the construction of crime and justice (e.g., police, attorneys, judges, courts, corrections, and prisons) within such films.
2. Identify and analyze film issues as they relate to crime, criminal behavior, the law and sentencing, the criminal justice system, law enforcement, courts, and corrections.
3. Analyze films depicting aspects of the criminal justice system and separate entertainment value from realistic portrayals of the principal aspects and agents of the criminal justice system.
4. Understand the basic theoretical perspectives on crime and relate these perspectives to film portrayals of the causes of crime.
5. Understand the contemporary and historical issues regarding the criminal justice system.
6. Demonstrate an understanding concerning the impact that film has on society's perceptions of the criminal justice system and how these perceptions can impact criminal justice policy and law.
7. Analyze and evaluate the media portrayal of the criminal justice system.

Criminal Justice & Homeland Security Undergraduate Programs Student Learning Outcomes

UG-CJ-SLO1: Student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of specific areas of the U.S. Constitution as it relates to specific legal liabilities.

UG-CJ-SLO2: Student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of criminological theories, and apply those theories to an analysis of practical criminal justice events.

UG-CJ-SLO3: Student will be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of the specific language of the Criminal Justice System, ability to identify the individual parts and costs associated with the Criminal Justice System, and demonstrated knowledge in recognizing the political influences on the CJ system.

UG-HS-SLO1: Students will explain the history and evolution of homeland security, including the Department of Homeland Security, within the political and social systems of the United States.

UG-HS-SLO2: Students will describe the magnitude and scope of terrorist threats to the United States, including the motives and methods of different international and domestic terrorist organizations.

UG-HS-SLO3: Students will identify and demonstrate an understanding of the significant legal issues in the Homeland Security Domain.

Attendance Policy

Absence policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-based and ITV courses. The University allows a maximum of 20% absences in a course before an instructor may drop a student for excessive absences with a grade of "F". In Web courses, this policy is interpreted as not participating for more than 3 weeks in a long semester, 1 week in a summer session, or 3 days in the midwinter session. Any student dropped for non-participation will receive an "F" in the course dropped. Inactivity may include the following:

- ➢ Not logging on to the course
- ➢ Not submitting assignments
- ➢ Not participating in scheduled activities
- ➢ Not communicating with the instructor by phone or email, and/or
- ➢ Not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus.

All students taking distance learning classes are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email account regularly for notices from the School and from their instructors. A student's Sul Ross email address is added to Blackboard when a student registers, so when instructors email students through Blackboard, the message is sent to the student's Sul Ross email account. Email accounts are automatically set up when a student register. In order to use your SRSU email account, you will need to log in to the email system. The information you need in order to log in is a username and a password.

Class Participation Policy

This class is a fully online course; there are no class meetings. However, I want you to introduce yourself to all of us. This "Introduction" is a chance for you to "meet" your classmates in the class and an opportunity to introduce yourself to your professor. You are also expected to log into the class at the earliest opportunity to check the class website every day for announcements. All assignments and examinations are to be completed online no later than the final due dates for each assignment. If you have questions regarding the course material, please e-mail me.

Course Assessment

1 - Reaction and Analysis Essays (140 points – 10 points each): You will write 14 weekly essays in this course. Each essay is worth 10 points. These writing assignments are intended to require you to engage in critical thinking and logical reasoning as well as to further assist you in developing your written communication skills.

Throughout the semester, you will watch 14 movies. These films were chosen to show how particular aspects of the criminal justice system are portrayed in film, including prisons, police, crime causation, and aspects of the court system.

Each essay should include two parts – Reaction and Analysis. The due dates for the essays will be Sunday 11:59 PM of that week.

Reaction and Analysis papers must meet the following criteria:
- ✓ 2 pages in length (not including the title page and the reference page).
- ✓ Utilize the APA style writing.
- ✓ 1.5-spaced, 12-point font, Calibri font.
- ✓ Title page – (APA Manual pg. 32).
- ✓ Proofread carefully the following: grammar, spelling, mechanics, citations, etc. This will be part of your grade.

Always remember that the paper is primarily about the film, not about you. Avoid summarizing the plot. Any movie watcher can get the plot from viewing the movie. There is no "value added" in the paper when the essay merely summarizes the plot, and the paper will offer little to a reader if it mainly retells the story. Therefore, DO NOT retell the story.

Suggested techniques that can help you avoid retelling the story:
- ✓ Be cognizant of and utilize thoughtful topic sentences in your paragraphs - make sure that each paragraph has a point to make, supported by relevant details or evidence supporting your point and that it is not just advancing the plot.
- ✓ A more mechanical approach is to arbitrarily limit your plot summary to a single short paragraph.
- ✓ Assume that your reader has already seen the film, which in the case of this class, the reader/audience will have seen the film; therefore, you do not want to waste the reader's time with what he/she already knows.
- ✓ Tell your reader (that's me) something he/she does not already know.

Grading Criteria for Reaction and Analysis Essays:
- ✓ Is there an explicit thesis statement that controls the direction of the paper and narrows the scope of the ideas presented in it?
- ✓ Does the paper have a strong introduction that invites the reader to further reading?
- ✓ Are the ideas presented in a logical and intelligible sequence that makes sense?
- ✓ Is there a definite conclusion drawing the ideas together leaving the reader satisfied?
- ✓ Does the paper avoid a disproportionate plot summary?
- ✓ Does the paper offer appropriate details or enough examples drawn from the film to clarify major points and make them compelling?
- ✓ Is the paper's language accurate and effective making ideas clear?
- ✓ Are the sentences clear and direct? Use of active voice and past tense is recommended.
- ✓ Is the paper void of major grammatical errors?
- ✓ Does the format of the paper match the APA format?

2 - Final Paper (100 Points): You will write a final paper on one of these topics:
1) Representation of Law Enforcement in Film: Investigate how various films depict law enforcement agencies and officers, and assess whether these portrayals influence public perceptions of real-world policing.

2) <u>Gender and Crime in Cinema:</u> Examine how gender roles influence the depiction of criminal activity and justice in films, including the portrayal of female criminals and victims versus their male counterparts.

3) <u>Racial and Ethnic Stereotypes in Crime Films:</u> Analyze how different races and ethnicities are represented in crime movies, and discuss the implications of these representations on societal views of crime and justice.

For your final paper, you should include examples from the films you've watched throughout the semester. To ensure you have a wealth of examples and can complete your paper on time, I recommend selecting your topic during the first week and beginning your writing process while you're watching the films. This approach will help you gather relevant examples and avoid last-minute challenges before the deadline.

Each paper must have a "Title Page", "Table of Contents", "Abstract", "Body of the Paper", and "References". Only count the "Body of the paper" towards your minimum page limit.

The paper should;
   a) be 6+ pages (this is just the "Body of the Paper" excluding all other pages)
   b) be typed, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12-point Calibri font,
   c) include at least <u>five scholarly citations</u> (not website articles, wikipedia, news agencies, magazines, and etc.),
   d) be written according to APA formatting and citation style.

A plagiarism detection software (SafeAssign) is used in this course. SafeAssign will detect and report all instances of plagiarism including where the student copied and pasted directly from a source. Students will receive a grade of "0" in these instances, and possibly fail the course. Your weekly reaction papers and final paper will be submitted through SafeAssign.

Technology Requirements

Blackboard is a course management tool that is an integral part of this course. You are required to check Blackboard on a regular basis to keep abreast of course developments. Several Blackboard features are utilized throughout the course including email, course documents, discussion board, grade center, external links, and SafeAssign.

This course requires a significant amount of online activity. In order for students to participate and progress in this course the followings are required.

Minimum Computer Skills Requirement

Using Blackboard does not require any special skills. Blackboard is, however, an Internet tool so you must possess basic computer skills, specifically
   ➤ using e-mail (sending, opening, replying, and saving attachments)
   ➤ web browsing (navigating, searching, and downloading)
   ➤ word processing (MS Word or compatible)

For more information and instructions about using Blackboard, see the <u>Blackboard tutorials</u>.

Hardware & Software Requirements

You must have regular and reliable access to a computer with access to the Web. The computer must be robust enough to run one of the recent web browsers and download files in a reasonable amount of time. You will need to be able to reach the World Wide Web, either through a network at your place of business or through a connection from home, using an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Academic Integrity

Sul Ross State University students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the "Sul Ross Student Code of Conduct, Responsibilities, Procedures, and Rights".

SRSU and the instructor of this course both place a high priority on the academic integrity of their student scholars. As a result, all institutional guidelines and instructional policies concerning academic integrity will be strictly and uniformly enforced with all students regardless of context.

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

➢ turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor;

➢ turning in another person's work as one's own;

➢ copying from professional works or internet sites without proper citation;

➢ collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

Students should also avoid using open AI sources unless permission is expressly given for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

APA Style

This course will use the American Psychological Association (APA) Seventh Edition formatting and style guide for all written assignments. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of APA, a useful resource is provided below. Please note that all external sources must be appropriately cited. A failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the course academic honesty standards. Beside numerous online sources you can visit the following link for help with APA https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html.

Student Support Services

Sul Ross State University has established a variety of programs to help students meet the challenges of college life. Support to students includes advising, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and writing assistance. For a complete list of academic support services, visit the Student Support Services at https://www.sulross.edu/section/311/student-support-services. For more information, students are encouraged to contact SSS at (432) 837-9118 or visit Ferguson Hall Room 105.

SRSU has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting Timelycare/SRSU. The SR

Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

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 a 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.

Online Support Desk

The Support Desk is where you can direct your more technical questions. For example, if you are having issues submitting a document, getting videos to play, or you are dealing with a technical error in the course. The support desk is open 24 hours a day/7 day a week for your convenience. You can reach the support desk:

➢ By calling 888 - 837 6055
➢ Via email blackboardsupport@sulross.edu
➢ Using resources from the Technology Support tab within Blackboard
➢ Clicking the Support Desk graphic on the course homepage

Students with Special Needs - Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA)

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the 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. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartze@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Late Assignment Submission Policy

Students are supposed to finish their coursework on time and assignments must be submitted before the deadlines. In principle, I do not accept late work and do not believe in allowing students to turn in work after the due date. My position is that everyone knows the rules of engagement at the beginning of the term and that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they plan accordingly to submit their assignments and take their exams in a timely manner.

If an assignment/exam is missed or late the students are expected to show an appropriate cause for this issue. Late assignments will not be accepted unless there is an excuse that is recognized by the university. Students are encouraged to <u>frequently review the syllabus and remain aware of the deadlines</u> for all assignments and exams.

Departmental Bachelor's Degree Program Marketable Skills

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) sets statewide goals through the 60x30TX initiative. The THECB plan includes four major goals in 60×30TX: Educated Population, Completion, Marketable skills, and Student debt. The [60x30TX](#) plan was designed to tie together all four student-centered goals. 60x30, which measures the educated population in Texas, is the overarching goal at the center of the plan and calls for 60 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds in Texas to hold a credential or degree by 2030. The 60x30 goal is supported by the other three goals (completion, marketable skills, student debt) that will get Texas to 60 percent by 2030.

By 2030, all graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills. Students who can effectively market their skills to potential employers can secure employment that pays competitively. Marketable skills include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas, are valued by employers, and are primary or complementary to a major. Marketable skills are acquired by students through education, including curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. Marketable skills are often called "employability skills" in other countries, or "transferable skills" here in the states. They include both technical and soft skills.
The marketable skills of Homeland Security and Criminal Justice BS Programs are listed as follows:
1. Students Develop Verbal and Written Communication Skills.
2. Students Access Resources with Crime Data and Work with Numbers and Demonstrate Quantitative Skills.
3. Students Use Critical Thinking and Observation.
4. Students Use Teamwork and Work Collaboratively.
5. Students Develop Multicultural Understanding.
6. Students Analyze the Factors Contributing to Crime.
7. Students Know Legal Codes & Procedures and Safety.

Other Course Expectations
➢ Remember that this is an upper-level course, therefore, upper-level work is expected which includes proper APA format, proper grammar, sentence structure, and organizational structure.
➢ Review the syllabus so that you may be aware of assignments and papers; email me for any clarifications.
➢ Review any announcements for significant information.

Grading

14 Reaction and Analysis Essays (10 points each)	140 points
Final Paper	100 points
TOTAL	**240 points**

Final Grading Scale

A 240 - 216
B 215 - 192
C 191 - 168
D 167 - 144
F 143 & below

End of Course Evaluations

Student evaluations of faculty are administered online at the end of each term/session for all courses with five or more students. Students will receive an email containing a link to a survey for each course in which they are enrolled. All responses are anonymous.

Weekly Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topics / Movie	Assignments
1	August 26 - September 1	Course Introduction. Sample movie "12 Angry Men".	Syllabus & Paper Guidelines. Watch the sample movie and review the Sample Paper.
2	September 2-8	Scarface	Reaction and Analysis Essay 1
3	September 9-15	Goodfellas	Reaction and Analysis Essay 2
4	September 16-22	Serpico	Reaction and Analysis Essay 3
5	September 23-29	Silence of the Lambs	Reaction and Analysis Essay 4
6	September 30 - October 6	The Shawshank Redemption	Reaction and Analysis Essay 5
7	October 7 - 13	American Gangster	Reaction and Analysis Essay 6
8	October 14 – 20	Training Day	Reaction and Analysis Essay 7
9	October 21 – 27	The Untouchables	Reaction and Analysis Essay 8
10	October 28 - November 3	Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile	Reaction and Analysis Essay 9
11	November 4 – 10	Zodiac Killer	Reaction and Analysis Essay 10
12	November 11-17	Law Abiding Citizen	Reaction and Analysis Essay 11
13	November 18-24	The Departed	Reaction and Analysis Essay 12
14	November 25 - December 1	Thelma and Louise Thanksgiving Day Holiday (11/27-29)	Reaction and Analysis Essay 13
15	December 2-4 December 4 December 5 December 6	The Town Last class day before finals Dead Day Final Exams	Reaction and Analysis Essay 14
16	December 9-11	Final Exams	

Syllabus is subject to updates and changes by announcement, always look to the course announcements and reminders for updates. The faculty member reserves the right to amend this syllabus as needed.