



## **Legal Issues in Criminal Justice, CJ 4331**

Spring, 2025

Sul Ross State University

Department of Homeland Security and Criminal Justice

### **SYLLABUS**

Professor: Benjamin Barrientes Email: [benjamin.barrientes@sulross.edu](mailto:benjamin.barrientes@sulross.edu)

Cell phone: (432) 294-4189

109A MAB Office Hours are prior to class (and by appointment)

Class meets in MAB 107 Tuesdays/Thursdays 11-12:15

#### **Course Description:**

In this course we will examine different types of legal reasoning. To understand the jurisprudence of our legal history it is important to study legal reasoning. What is involved with utilizing important legal concepts and where does it lead?

**Course Objectives-** Through the study of case law this course will enable the student to:

Think critically in examining what factors are useful in reading cases.

Articulate cases by using legal terminology that is implemented in writing about litigated matters brought before a court.

A solid historical understanding of the jurisprudence of various legal issues.

Developing the ability to listen to others articulate their perspectives on legal matters.

Provide evidence of extensive work on legal issues of importance and interest.

**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 Criminology including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through distinct and unique systems and approaches for thought.

**Americans with Disability Act Statement:**

To receive accommodation for exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services (Office: 112 Ferguson Hall); to set up an accommodation meeting call (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodation may be arranged.

**Course Policies:**

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.

**No Electronic Devices:**

Our classroom will resemble a Seminar setting. Our subject matter is complicated, our reading is dense, our discussions will be lively (and stimulating); thus, it is necessary to omit the trappings (and distractions) of electronic devices during our meetings.

**Our duty to each other:**

With the advent of email, communication between teacher and student is better served. I will respond to your communication(s); I expect you to respond to mine. I cannot stress the importance of communication more than that.

**Course Requirements:**

**There's no Required text for this class; required readings and or materials will be posted on Blackboard.**

Students are expected to communicate with me and complete all assignments in a timely manner. Students are expected to prepare and participate fully in the class. Please report any technical issues as soon as possible by emailing me immediately.

Grading for this course will be based on the quality of student's work: \*Exams and a Critical Analysis paper (i.e. a Critique) that's roughly 10-15 pages in length.

The "critique" will be an opportunity for you to write an analysis on a topic in Criminal Law (I will be posting possible topics throughout the month of January 2025).

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

**Course Assignments:**

You will be responsible for developing a Journal.

The Midterm Exam: will consist of brief essay responses.

The Final Exam: will consist of an individual presentation.

Each student will write a critical analysis paper.

**Grading Scale:**

Journal Project/Class participation: 25%.

Midterm Exam: 25%.

Critique: 25%.

Final Exam Symposium (individual presentations): 25%.

I welcome inquiries. The quality of your inquiry provides me with very interesting evidence of your concentration/focus. You are expected to read the material and ask questions. I welcome hearing from you often; my hope is that your communication with me is substantive.

A separate Course Schedule will be available to students on the first week of the semester.