

CJ 5318: Seminar in Criminal Justice Theory
Sul Ross State University - Fall 2025

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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) Kubrin, Charis E. & Thomas Stucky (2013). Introduction to Criminal Justice: A Sociological Perspective. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
<https://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=16270>
- 2) American Psychological Association (October 2019), Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition, <https://apastyle.apa.org/products/publication-manual-7th-edition-spiral>
- 3) 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 reach the articles on the additional reading list.

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by 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 library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

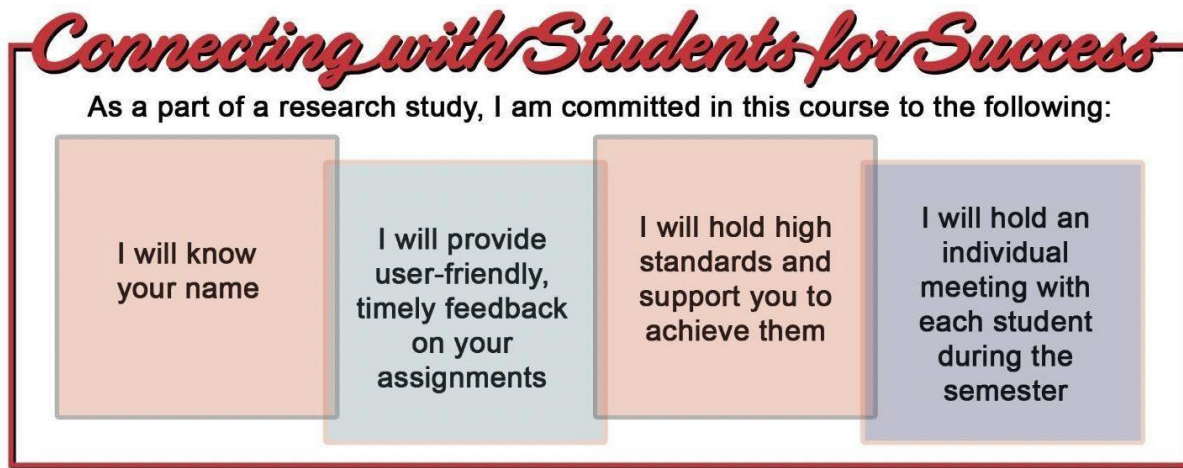
Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Course Description

This seminar presents an overview of the criminal justice theories from a sociological perspective, exposing you to most of the major thinking and research in the field. It will focus on a mix of classical and contemporary criminological theories with foundational and contemporary texts from quantitative and qualitative approaches. It will help you to develop expertise in criminal justice and understand how its

central tenets are informed by broader sociological principles and concepts, such as power, race, gender, and class. This seminar is organized around five themes: justice, police, courts, corrections, and crime control. You will have the chance to understand the relationship between social structures and the criminal justice system through theoretical and empirical discussions. Particular attention will be paid to current challenges to the system.

Connecting with Students for Success Initiative



This course will be participating in an initiative at SRSU referred to as “Connecting with Students for Success”. This study is aimed at connecting with students in a way that sets them up for better success, overall. As a part of this study, each student will be required to meet with me at least once during the Fall 2025 semester. The reasoning behind this is that I would like to personally speak to each of you about how you feel regarding your master’s program, discuss how you feel about the class overall, and your time at Sul Ross State University. This will be a 10-15-minute online meeting, and I will share the available dates and the time after the semester starts. I will be flexible in scheduling these appointments with you.

Course Learning Objectives

This seminar, like other graduate seminars, will help you make the transition from student to independent researcher/scholar. At the end of this seminar, you will be able to:

- Evaluate contemporary criminological theories and assess empirical research on theory,
- Describe basic features of the American criminal justice system, legal sanctions, and methods of social control;
- Explore different philosophical perspectives on justice and formal and informal decision making;
- Understand police organizations, how cases are processed through the court system, sentencing decisions and the various forms of criminal punishment;
- Critically evaluate criminal justice policies and their consequences;
- Become smart consumers of news reports, political rhetoric, and public discussion about crime, punishment, and the law.
- Communicate effectively in written English as exemplified by proper use of APA citation format, following writing guidelines and writing clearly and concisely.

Student Learning Outcomes

CJ&HS-GRAD-SLO 1: The student will be able to analyze the function and decision making of the court systems of the United States, including the ability to assess the impact the impact of court rulings, in particular those of the Supreme Court.

CJ&HS-GRAD-SLO 2: Student will be able to identify and apply criminological theories and competing theory arguments.

CJ&HS-GRAD-SLO 3: Student will be able to develop a working knowledge of the process and application of the methods of scientific research, including the ability to critique a piece of research based on its methodology and develop the ability to apply research to Criminal Justice and Homeland Security policy.

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 University 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 registers. 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 reading material, assignments, quizzes, and exams, please e-mail me.

Course Assessment

1 - Reaction Papers (10 Points Each): You will write a reaction paper every week. Each paper must be at least 2 pages, excluding the title and the reference pages. It must be double-spaced with 1-inch margins and in 12-point Calibri font. The reaction paper will be related to the reading of the week. When there is

CJ 5318: Seminar in Criminal Justice Theory | Fall 2025 | Dr. Ismail D. Gunes | Sul Ross State University 3

more than one reading assignment, then you should read all required readings but write reaction paper on one of them. A reaction paper is not a summary; rather, it should include your perspective, ideas, and critique about the reading. The due dates for the reaction papers will be Sunday 11:59 PM of that week.

2 - Weekly Quizzes (10 Points Each): You will take a quiz every week to measure the knowledge of the week's required readings. The weekly quizzes will be available until Sunday 11:59 PM of that week.

3 - Midterm Exam (100 Points): There will be a midterm exam which will cover the assigned chapters and other relevant material covered in the course up to the date of the examination. The midterm exam is worth 100 points. No make-up test will be given, unless an uncontrollable emergency or illness arises (written proof required).

4 - Final Paper (150 Points): You will write a final paper on any of the subjects covered in this seminar. 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 15+ pages (this is only 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 five scholarly citations (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 [Blackboard tutorials](#).

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).

Student Responsibilities and Academic Integrity

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize him/herself with the requirements of such laws.

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 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 24/7/365 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](https://www.timelycare.com/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 432-837 8888 (call toll free 888 – 837 6055)
- Via email ltac@sulross.edu 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: 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 Schwartz Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartz@sulross.edu or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, SRSU, 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 frequently review the syllabus and remain aware of the deadlines for all assignments and exams.

Departmental MS Program Marketable Skills

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) sets statewide goals through the 60x30TX initiative. The THECB plan includes four major goals: 60x30: 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 MS Program 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 Know Legal Codes & Procedures and Safety.
7. Students Know How to Conduct Scientific Research.

Other Course Expectations

- Remember that this is a graduate level course, therefore, graduate 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 the feedback provided for all assignments for ways to improve work (I always provide feedback for assignments).
- Review any announcements for significant information.

Grading

11 Reaction Papers	110 points (10 points each)
11 Weekly Quizzes	110 points (10 points each)
1 Midterm Exam	100 points
1 Final Paper	150 points
Total	470 points

Final Grading Scale**A 470 - 423****B 422 - 376****C 375 - 329****D 328 - 282****F 281 & 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

Dates	Topics	Assignments
8/25 – 8/31	Course Introduction & Syllabus Foundational Issues of Justice	Kubrin & Stucky: Part 1 Introduction and Chapter 1
9/1 – 9/7	Foundational Issues of Justice	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 2 & 3 Quiz # 1 and Reaction paper # 1
9/8 – 9/14	Policing	Kubrin & Stucky: Part 2 Introduction and Chapters 5 & 6 Quiz # 2 and Reaction paper # 2
9/15 – 9/21	Policing	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 7 & 9 Quiz # 3 and Reaction paper # 3
9/22 – 9/28	Policing	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 10 & 11 Quiz # 4 and Reaction paper # 4
9/29 – 10/5	The Courts	Kubrin & Stucky: Part 3 Introduction and Chapters 13 & 15 Quiz # 5 and Reaction paper # 5
10/6 – 10/12	The Courts	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 16 & 17 Quiz # 6 and Reaction paper # 6
10/13 – 10/19	The Courts	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 18 & 19 Quiz # 7 and Reaction paper # 7
10/20 – 10/26	Corrections ***Midterm Exam***	Kubrin & Stucky: Part 4 Introduction and Chapter 20 (Not included in the Midterm Exam)
10/27 – 11/2	Corrections	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 21 & 22 Quiz # 8 and Reaction paper # 8
11/3 – 11/9	Corrections	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 23 & 24 Quiz # 9 and Reaction paper # 9
11/10 – 11/16	Crime Control in the 21 st Century	Kubrin & Stucky: Part 5 Introduction and Chapters 25 & 26 Quiz # 10 and Reaction paper # 10
11/17 – 11/23	Crime Control in the 21 st Century	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapters 27 & 28 Quiz # 11 and Reaction paper # 11
11/24 – 11/30	Crime Control in the 21 st Century	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapter 29
12/1 – 12/3	Crime Control in the 21 st Century	Kubrin & Stucky: Chapter 30
12/4	Dead Day	Dead Day (No Classes)
12/5, 8, 9, & 10	Final Examinations	Final Paper Due by Sunday, December 7.

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.