

CJ 4309: Seminar in Criminal Justice

Sul Ross State University – Spring 2026

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Class Room & Hours : MAB 107 & Monday 6:00 PM - 8:45 PM

Office Hours : MAB 109, Monday 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM & by appointment.

Required Text(s)

- 1) American Psychological Association (October 2019), Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh 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, 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, <https://library.sulross.edu/>. Off-campus access requires logging in with your Lobold 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 <https://library.sulross.edu/find-borrow-request/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 senior seminar course is the pinnacle of one's undergraduate education. This course provides a structure for seniors to bring closure to their undergraduate experience while preparing for the transition from the university to the workplace or further academic study. This course allows

students majoring in Criminal Justice to analyze specific program related issues and problems using the knowledge and understanding gained by completing the required courses in the program and a significant number of the major courses. According to SRSU catalog, this course will focus on topics such as, professional ethics and professionalism, role of the private sector in criminal justice, opportunities for employment and graduate study, criminal justice data sources, history and future of discipline and current developments. The final exam for this course will be the CJ Senior Exam which must be passed to graduate.

Prerequisites: CJ 1301: Introduction to Criminal Justice, CJ 2323: Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement (Formerly CJ 2305), and CJ 4304: Criminology. You must contact me, if you have not successfully passed all of these courses.

Course Learning Objectives

Time in the course will be devoted to three main goals.

- 1) Reading about and discussing selected Criminal Justice problems.
- 2) Understanding the methods and techniques that are used to produce and disseminate the information that shapes Criminal Justice issues (including scientific knowledge, policy recommendations, public communication, etc.)
- 3) Developing a plan for pursuing their selected career path based on the awareness of the variety of post-graduate choices available to them (for example, career search process, planning for graduate school, etc.)

Criminal Justice Undergraduate Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

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.

General Classroom Policies

Students are encouraged to attend the class, ask questions and express opinions; however, talking among students and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. You may bring beverages to class

with you, but not food. Reading outside materials such as newspapers or other course work is not permitted during class time. Students should be prepared to engage in discussion over the assigned readings, and for possible pop quizzes. Electronic devices are never allowed to use in class in a way to distract the instructor and other students. Keep your mobile phone in silent mode, otherwise switch it off. Violation of this crucial principal will be penalized. There will be one general rule in class which applies to all situations. This is also called “golden rule”. TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED.

Course Assessment

1- Specialty Papers (350 points): The criminal justice system consists of the police, the courts, and the corrections. The major tasks of the police include enforcing the law, protecting the public, arresting suspected law violators, and preventing crime. The courts are responsible for assuring that suspected criminals receive fair trials and for determining the guilt or innocence of the accused. The goal of the correctional subsystem is to rehabilitate offenders or to alter their behavior so that they are socially acceptable and law abiding. The overall goal of all three subsystems is the reduction of crime in the community.

You will write 3 specialty papers on the topics that are assigned to you on these three components of the criminal justice system. You will write 2 (two) 7+ page specialty papers (100 points each) and 1 (one) 10+ page final specialty paper (150 points). The “Final Specialty Paper” will serve as your “CJ Senior Exam”. You must get a passing grade in your “Final Specialty Paper” to graduate!!!

Each paper must have a “Title Page”, “Table of Contents”, “Abstract”, “Body of the Paper”, and “References”. Only the “Body of the paper” will be counted towards your minimum page limit.

The papers should;

- be typed, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point Calibri font,
- include at least five scholarly citations (no website articles, Wikipedia, newspapers, magazines, etc.),
- be written according to APA formatting and citation style.

You will upload your papers to Blackboard. 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.

2 – Class Presentation (100 points): Everyone is required to give a presentation to the class during the class period on April 13, 20, or 27. You will make your presentation on the “Policing” topic that is assigned to you. You will prepare a PowerPoint presentation on that topic.

You will prepare for your presentation by reading papers, articles, or book chapters on your topic. Other sources, such as web resources, may also be appropriate. The presentation itself will be roughly 20 minutes in length. There are no strict rules for the format of the presentation. However, each presentation should provide an introduction to the topic, as well as provide some in-depth discussion on the subject. Please carefully read the “Presentation Guidelines” for an effective presentation.

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.

Academic Integrity

Be sure that you understand the university’s Academic Honesty Policy. It is important that you refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. SRSU students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the [Sul Ross Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). 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 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 number of resources have been 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 also visit the following link for help with APA

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html.

Tutoring Center

The [Lobo Den Tutoring Center](#) offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

Important Information:

- Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments: Flexible options to fit your needs.
- Hours of Operation: Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- Workshops: Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
- Location: BWML Room 128.
- Contact Us: For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.

Looking for additional support?

- Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.

- Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!

Student Support Services - Counseling

Sul Ross 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. 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.

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

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 or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartze@sulross.edu or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. RGC students can also contact Alejandra Valdez, at 830-758-5006 or email alejandra.valdez@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.

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 60x30TX: 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 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 Analyze the Factors Contributing to Crime.
7. Students Know Legal Codes & Procedures and Safety.

Classroom Climate of Respect

Students are expected to respect their classmates' and instructors' privacy and the work or comments they produce. Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Other Course Expectations

- Remember that this is an upper-level college course, therefore, college level work will be 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; contact me for any clarifications.
- Check Blackboard regularly for any announcements for significant information.

Grading

First Specialty Paper	100 points
Second Specialty Paper	100 points
Final Specialty Paper	150 points
Class Presentation	100 points
Total	450 points

Following grading scale will be applied for your course grade:

A = 450 points – 405 points

B = 404 points – 360 points

C = 359 points – 315 points

D = 314 points – 270 points

F = 269 points and below

Important Dates

- Monday, January 26, 2026 Review of the syllabus and course requirements.
- Sunday, February 15, 2026 First Specialty Paper, 7+ pages (100 points)
- Sunday, March 12, 2025 Second Specialty Paper, 7+ pages (100 points)
- April 13, 20, and 27 Class presentations
- Sunday, May 3, 2026 Final Specialty Paper, 10+ pages (150 points).
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****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****

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.