



SYLLABUS- INTRO TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE

(2026_FALL_202710_CJ_1301_MRF_12244
W01_Intro to Criminal Justice)

Start Date: 08/24/2026 **End Date:** 12/10/2026

Type: Online

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Office Hours: Wednesday MORNING, appointment by
Blackboard Message.

Campus Office: MAB 109D

Contacting Me: The best way to reach me is via Blackboard Message. I will respond to your Blackboard message as soon as possible.

COURSE MATERIALS

The following course materials are required:

Peak, K. J., & Herold, T. D. (2023). Introduction to Criminal Justice (5th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc. (US).

American Psychological Association. (October 2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

Retrieved from <https://apastyle.apa.org/products/publicationmanual-7th-editions-spiral>

Additional resources, including supplementary readings, videos, and other materials, will be made available on Blackboard throughout the semester.

SRSU LIBRARY SERVICES

The Sul Ross Library provides free resources and services for the entire SRSU community, including books, articles, and online databases accessible at www.library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Librarians are available for assistance via email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), phone (432-837-8123), or in person.

Logging into your Sul Ross Blackboard account connects you directly to the library webpage, where you can explore online databases and access articles on the reading list.

Please note, the syllabus is subject to updates. Regularly check course announcements for changes. The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus as necessary.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the criminal justice system, emphasizing key decision points and administrative practices within policing, criminal courts, and correctional institutions. It examines the historical development of criminal justice agencies and explores foundational principles of criminal procedures.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the American Criminal Justice system, exploring its structure, processes, and contemporary issues. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the roles of police, courts, and corrections in addressing crime.
2. Examine the principles and philosophies underlying criminal law and punishment.
3. Evaluate social and individual crime theories, including strain, subculture, and psychological models.
4. Critique the strengths and weaknesses of the U.S. Criminal Justice system.
5. Assess the functions and interconnections of system components.
6. Propose solutions to crime-related social challenges.
7. Explore sentencing goals, traditional and alternative approaches, and justice reinvestment strategies.
8. Compare probation and parole systems and their roles in rehabilitation.
9. Investigate the history and societal impact of drug abuse and legislation.
10. Analyze global criminal justice systems, globalization's effects on crime, and transnational threats like cybercrime and terrorism.

This course emphasizes critical thinking and practical application to address modern criminal justice challenges.

Classroom Policies

Students are encouraged to attend class, participate actively, ask questions, and share opinions respectfully. Disruptive behavior, side conversations, and unrelated activities (e.g., reading non-course materials) are prohibited. Beverages are permitted; however, food is not allowed.

Students should come prepared to discuss assigned readings and may encounter pop quizzes. Electronic devices must not disrupt the class. Phones should be set to be silent or turned off. The overarching rule is the "Golden Rule": Treat others as you wish to be treated.

SRSU Distance Education Statement

Distance education students have full access to academic resources, including library services, online databases, and technology support. Visit the SRSU website for details.

Students must use their Sul Ross email and submit assignments via Blackboard, which requires secure login. All students are expected to follow academic honesty and conduct policies outlined in the student handbook. Web-based course participants must maintain the necessary equipment and software as specified on the SRSU website. Instructions for filing complaints are also available in the student handbook.

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

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with 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. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at

432-837-8203, or email mschwartz@sulross.edu The office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall # 112, and the mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, 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 Programs are listed as follows:

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 an 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 because 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.

Supportive Statement

I am to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of SRSU to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Course Assessment

1 - Quizzes (200 points total): Every two weeks there will be a quiz for the related chapters. There will be 5 quizzes in total. Quiz dates are indicated in the weekly course schedule. Each quiz will have different points, and you will get 100 points in total.

2-Midterm Exam (150 Points each): There will be a midterm exam in this class. These exams will cover the assigned chapters and other relevant material covered in the course up to the date of the examination. The midterm exam will be cumulative, which means that the material from the entire course will be covered.

Midterm exams will be worth 100 points. No make-up test will be given, unless an uncontrollable emergency or illness arises (written proof required).

3 - Final Exam (150 Points): There will be a comprehensive final exam at the end of the semester. The final exam will be cumulative, which means that the material from the entire course will be covered. This exam is worth 100 points. No make-up test will be given, unless an uncontrollable emergency or illness arises (written proof required).

4- Attendance (100 points): Attendance is important! Attendance demonstrates maturity, responsibility and a serious attitude toward education. I believe that regular and punctual attendance is an integral part of the learning process. Attendance will be taken daily, and absences cannot be made up. Students should be in class on time and should be prepared to stay for the entire class period. If I have begun class by the time you enter, you should make sure that I counted you as present by checking with me after class.

In accordance with current SRSU policy, when a student misses a total of 9 hours of class (6 classes), the presumption is that the student will be dropped from that class with an "F". Please note that it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor prior to any University event that would cause an absence. Failure of the student to inform the instructor will result in that absence being recorded as unexcused.

Attendance Policy (100 Points)

Attendance reflects maturity, responsibility, and commitment to learning. Regular and punctual attendance is essential. Attendance will be taken daily, and absences cannot be made up. Students should arrive on time and stay for the entire class. Latecomers must confirm their attendance with the instructor after class. Per SRSU policy, students missing 9 hours of class (6 sessions) will be dropped with an "F." Notify the instructor in advance of any University-related absence; failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.

Attendance Grading:

Full attendance: 100 points

- 1 missed class: 80 points
- 2 missed classes: 60 points
- 3 missed classes: 40 points
- 4 missed classes: 20 points
- 5 missed classes: 0 points
- 6 missed classes: Final grade = "F"

Grading Components		Course Grade Scale	
Assessment	Points	Letter Grade	Points Range
Attendance %16.7	100	A	600 – 560
Quizzes in Vantage (16x 12.5) %33.3	200	B	559 – 510
Midterm Exam %25	150	C	509 – 470
Final Exam %25	150	D	429 – 390
Total Possible Points	600	F	389 & below

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 final paper will be submitted through SafeAssign.

Late Assignment Submission Policy

Students are expected to complete coursework on time and submit assignments by the specified deadlines.

Late work is generally not accepted, as students are informed of deadlines at the beginning of the term. If an assignment or exam is missed, students must provide a valid, university-recognized excuse. It is the student's responsibility to plan accordingly and stay aware of deadlines by regularly reviewing the syllabus.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty as outlined in the **Sul Ross Student Code of Conduct**. Any form of academic dishonesty—including **cheating, plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, or falsification of records**—will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with university policies.

Definitions:

- **Cheating:** Using unauthorized materials or assistance during exams, altering academic records, or obtaining answers through dishonest means.
- **Plagiarism:** Submitting another's work, ideas, or words as your own without proper citation.
- **Collusion:** Assisting or being complicit in another student's academic dishonesty.

Using tools like **ChatGPT or other AI generators** is prohibited unless explicitly permitted for a specific assignment. Violations may result in penalties ranging from a failing grade on an assignment to failure of the course and may lead to further disciplinary action. Maintaining academic integrity protects both the value of your education and the credibility of the university.

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.

Student Support Services

Sul Ross State University offers various programs to help students succeed, including advising, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and writing assistance. For a complete list of services, visit Student Support Services at <https://www.sulross.edu/section/311/student-support-services>. For more information, contact SSS at (432) 837-9118 or visit Ferguson Hall, Room 105.

Counseling Services: Sul Ross students have access to nine free counseling sessions through TimelyCare. For 24/7 support, visit TimelyCare/SRSU. In-person counseling is also available in Ferguson Hall, Room 112 (Alpine campus), and via telehealth for remote 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 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. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203, or email mschwartz@sulross.edu. The office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall # 112, and the mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, SRSU, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Departmental Undergraduate Program Marketable Skills

(Aligned with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board – 60x30TX Plan)

The 60x30TX initiative aims for 60% of Texans aged 25–34 to hold a degree or credential by 2030. One key component of this goal is that all graduates from public institutions in Texas will complete academic programs with clearly defined marketable skills—competencies valued by employers that support career readiness and lifelong employability.

Marketable skills include both technical and soft skills—often referred to as “employability” or “transferable” skills—developed through coursework, research, internships, and co-curricular activities. Graduates of the Homeland Security and Criminal Justice Undergraduate Programs at Sul Ross State University will demonstrate the following marketable skills:

1. Effective Verbal and Written Communication
2. Data Literacy and Quantitative Analysis Skills
3. Critical Thinking and Observational Abilities
4. Teamwork and Collaborative Work Practices
5. Cultural Competency and Multicultural Understanding
6. Analytical Skills in Crime Causation and Prevention
7. Knowledge of Legal Codes, Procedures, and Public Safety Protocols

These skills prepare students for diverse roles in law enforcement, homeland security, public service, and justice-related professions.

Other Course Expectations

- This is an upper-level college course, and students are expected to produce work that reflects that level of academic rigor. This includes the use of proper APA formatting, correct grammar, clear sentence structure, and organized presentation of ideas.

- Students are responsible for carefully reviewing the syllabus to stay informed about assignment requirements and due dates. Please contact the instructor promptly if clarification is needed.

Course Schedule

This course schedule is subject to change as needed to meet the needs of the course. Students will be notified of adjustments when they are made. Also, any additional reading materials, resources and other information will be posted on Blackboard. Students will be notified of how to access this information by the instructor. *****All times are in central time*****

*****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*****

Week	Dates	Topics	Assignments
1	August 24-30	Welcome and Course Introduction & Requirements Fundamentals of Criminal Justice: Essential Themes and Practices 3	Syllabus & Semester Project Guidelines Chapter 1 Quiz # 1
2	August 31-September 6	Foundations of Law and Crime: Nature, Elements, and Measurement	Chapter 2 Quiz # 2
3	September 7-13 Sep 7th, Labor Day No class	Theories of Criminality and Crime	Chapter 3 Quiz # 3
4	September 14-20	Ethical Essentials: Doing Right When No One Is Watching	Chapter 4 Quiz # 4
5	September 21-27	Police Organization: Structure and Functions	Chapter 5 Quiz # 4
6	Sep 28-Oct 4	Police at Work: Patrolling and Investigating	Chapter 6 Quiz # 6
7	October 5-11	Policing Methods and Challenges: Issues of Force, Liability, and Technologies	Chapter 7 Quiz # 7
8	October 12-18 October 16 Midterm Exam October 19, Final Day for Midterm grade by noon	Expounding the Constitution: Laws of Arrest, Search, and Seizure Court Organization: Structure, Functions, and the Trial Process	Chapter 8,9 Quiz # 8,9
9	October 19-25	The Bench and the Bar: Those Who Judge, Prosecute, and Defend	Chapter 10 Quiz # 10
10	October 26- Nov 1	Court Methods and Challenges: Sentencing and Punishment	Chapter 11 Quiz # 11
11	November 2-8	Prisons and Jails: Structure and Function	Chapter 12 Quiz # 12
12	November 9-15	The World Behind Bars: The “Keepers” and the “Kept”	Chapter 13 Quiz # 13
13	November 16-22	Corrections in the Community: Probation, Parole, and Other Alternatives to Incarceration	Chapter 14 Quiz # 14
14	November 23-Nov 29 Thanksgiving Day Holiday (11 / 25-27)	Juvenile Justice: Philosophy, Law, and Practices	Chapter 15 Quiz # 15
15	Nov 30-December 6	On the Crime Policy and Prevention Agenda: Immigration, Mass Murder, the Cyber Threat	Chapter 16 Quiz # 16
16	December 2 December 3 is Dead Day December 10 by noon completed all grades.	December 4-9 Final Exams	