

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology
COURSE # 2361.04
Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
Fall 2017

“People who love sausage and people who believe in justice
should never watch either of them being made”
~Otto Bismark

PROFESSOR: David B. Houston
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CLASS HOURS: T/TH 9:30-10:50am
CLASSROOM: C-110
OFFICE HOURS: T/TH 8-9am

TEXTBOOK(S): Introduction to Criminal Justice: A Personal Narrative Approach,
Ackerman, Alissa r., Sacks, Meghan, ISBN: 978-1-61-163652-9, Carolina Academic
Press, 2016

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class is structured to provide an overview of the principles, practices, and procedures of the criminal justice system and its components, namely, the police, the courts, and corrections. It is geared to present an introductory examination to the operations and issues of the United States justice system.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Describe the history and philosophy of the American criminal justice system.
2. Explain the nature and extent of crime in America.
3. Analyze the impact and consequences of crime.
4. Evaluate the development, concepts, and functions of law in the criminal justice system.
5. Describe the structure of contemporary federal, state, and local justice agencies and processes.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

STUDENT ACADEMIC POLICIES concerning Attendance, Academic Honesty, Disabled Student and Services for Disabled Students, and Absences on Religious Holy days may be found at: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

1. Attendance Policy: Per university policy regular and punctual class attendance is expected of each student at Sam Houston State University. Attendance is defined as attending the entire class. I do not acknowledge any type of absence, excused or otherwise. Since attendance is an expectation, extra credit will not be given for attending nor will I penalize you for not attending. If the classroom door is closed, there is no further admittance. No exceptions.
2. Academic Dishonesty Policy: Students are expected to do their own work. Under no circumstances will academic dishonesty be tolerated. Any student caught violating the student honor code will lose all designated points for that requirement. A second infraction will result in an F for the course and referral to the dean for possible further disciplinary action. All intellectual dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, is strictly forbidden.

Simple plagiarism is occasionally using words or ideas from outside sources without documenting the sources. As a penalty, the professor may require the work to be resubmitted with documentation and/or require the student to work on documentation at the library.

Aggravated plagiarism is purchasing a paper, having another person write a paper, or extensive copying of words or ideas from outside sources without documentation. Penalties range from receiving a zero for the assignment to receiving a grade of F for the course. Penalty for an aggravated plagiarism infraction will be at the discretion of the professor.

USE OF TELEPHONES AND TEXT MESSAGES IN ACADEMIC CLASSROOMS
AND FACILITIES: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-curriculum.html>

3. Telephones and similar devices have become increasingly a part of everyday life. In the academic classroom, however, during class these devices can be a serious distraction and during tests they can be a serious problem. The technology is constantly changing and evolving. So, the present policy does not specify particular devices or device types. Rather, the policy applies to any device that performs the function of a telephone or text message. The use by students of electronic devices that perform the function of a telephone or text message during class-time is prohibited if deemed disruptive by the instructor to the conduct of the class. Arrangements for handling potential emergency situations may be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to comply with the instructor's policy could result in expulsion from the classroom or with multiple offenses, failure of the course. Any use of a telephone or text message or any device that performs these functions during a test period is prohibited, except when expressly permitted by the instructor. These devices should not be present during a test or should be stored securely in such a way that they cannot be seen or used by the student. Even the visible presence of such a device during the test period will result in a zero for that test. Use of these devices during a test is considered de facto evidence of cheating and could result in a charge of academic dishonesty.
4. There will be two exams; a midterm and a final. The final will not be cumulative. (see class schedule below). These exams are designed to help improve student understanding of the material. Exams are based on class lecture. PowerPoint may not be used in this class therefore, notetaking is paramount. Each exam is worth 100 points.
5. Each student will write four (4) 500-word papers on a topic (to be assigned) throughout the semester. You will be graded in the following four areas:

- Clarity – Is your paper easy to read? Do I have to re-read sentences to understand what they mean?
- Concise (but complete) – Don't try to fill your paper with unnecessary words to hit the magic 1,000 word-count.
- Coherent – Use proper, grown-up academic words. Colloquialisms have no place in research or college papers. Words like 'dude', 'awesome' and 'hooters' are good for dorm rooms but not classrooms. Do not rely on spell check as your final proofreading source. Omitting the letter 'l' from public changes the meaning of the entire sentence.
- Competent - Do you know what you are writing about? Is your writing accurate? Do your outside sources coincide or conflict with the text material and are your outside sources academic in nature?

Papers are due via Blackboard no later than the dates listed on the class calendar in this syllabus. Each paper is worth 25 points. Late papers will not be accepted.

MAKE-UP EXAMS:

The midterm may be made up for any reason. It will cover the same material but may be both objective and subjective in nature. Make up day is Tuesday, November 28, 2017 during class. If you do not make up the midterm you do not have to attend class. To take the midterm, you must sign up for it. A sign-up sheet will be circulated during class on November 14 and 16. You MUST make an election on this list in order to take the exam. This is necessary so that an alternate exam may be designed. If you elect to take a make-up exam that will be your grade, even if it is lower than the original exam. The final exam may not be made up.

COMMUNICATION

Generally, I do not answer emails. I prefer face-to-face meetings as they are typically more productive and effective than emails. To that end, you may contact me during my office hours or make an appointment for other times. Please be advised, appointment times are very limited.

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GRADING:

GRADING SUMMARY		GRADING CRITERIA	
Midterm	100	A	300-264
Final	100	B	263-234
Papers	100	C	233-204
TOTAL POINTS	300	D	203-174
		F	Below 174

EXTRA CREDIT

Per the SHSU website, Academic Community Engagement (ACE) is a teaching method that combines community engagement with academic instruction. The ACE initiative allows students to use the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to make a difference and improve life in our community by understanding their roles as community members. To qualify for this extra credit you must:

- Volunteer at a non-profit institution or non-profit business for a minimum of 8 hours between August 23, 2017 and November 29, 2017.
- Write a 500-word reflection paper documenting where you volunteered, your duties, and what you learned from your volunteering experience.
- Complete all paperwork related to the project
- Participation is voluntary; however, if you successfully complete all requirements, 15 points will be added to your semester grade. Partial credit will not be given.
- Extra Credit is due by the beginning of class, Tuesday, November 30, 2017, but may be turned in any time prior to this date. Because extra credit may be turned in at any time throughout the semester, late extra credit will not be accepted.

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OUTLINE OF TOPICS TO BE COVERED FOR EACH CLASS

DATE	TOPIC
August 24- September 7	Law, Crime, Policy
August 31	Paper #1 Due
September 12 – October 3	Police
September 14	Paper #2 Due
October 5	Midterm
October 10 – October 12	Class Without Walls
October 12	Paper #3 Due
October 17 – October 31	Courts
November 2 – November 21	Corrections
November 2	Paper #4 Due
November 28	Midterm Make Up Exam
November 30	Extra Credit Due
December 7 - 9:30-11:30am	Final Exam

Calendar may be changed at the discretion of the professor.