

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology
Sam Houston State University

CJ 2364-06
Fundamentals of Criminal Law
Spring 2018

Professor: Bennie L. Schiro
Office: C204
Phone: 936-642-2401(daytime)
Email: bls025@shsu.com
Class Hours: Wednesday 6 p.m – 8:50 p.m.
Classroom: C 110
Office Hours: Wednesday 5:15 p.m. – 6 p.m or by appointment

TEXTBOOK(S): Highly Recommended - Texas Criminal Law: Principles and Practices Author 2d Edition: Jerry L. Dowling, Sam Houston State University ISBN 13: 978013351257 (978-0-13-351-257-1)

Supplemental Reading Material: ACCESS TO ANY CURRENT version of the Texas Penal Code. A digital copy of the current Texas Penal Code is available on the internet.

Course Description:

A course in the substantive criminal law which includes definition of law, definition of crime, general principles of criminal responsibility, elements of major crimes, punishments, and conditions or circumstances which may excuse from criminal responsibility or mitigate punishment. Particular emphasis is on the penal laws of the State of Texas.

Course Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the basic principles that underlie the American system of law;
2. Explain and distinguish the different types of crimes;
3. Familiarize themselves with the elements of the primary state criminal offenses as defined by the Texas Penal Code;
4. Identify and discuss the possible criminal liabilities, defenses and mitigations of different parties to a crime; and
5. Utilize and develop critical thinking in handling specific cases.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Regular attendance is expected. In order to do well in this class a student will need to be present for class. Due to the fact that this class meets once weekly, only one absence is allowed. Some in class assignments/quizzes may be given and should you be absent that day, you will lose the opportunity to receive credit. For any absences over one the student will not receive the opportunity to earn extra credit. Additionally if a student has two or less absences the professor will raise the grade of the student to the next highest letter grade if the student's final average is one and a half points or less away from the next highest letter grade. If however, the student misses more than

three classes, grades may be lowered one letter grade for each absence.

Cell Phones and like devices -- Please have them on silent or vibrate. No text messaging during class. I will ask you to leave class if you are seen using it in class for any reason. If your job requires that you be able to be contacted at any time, please discuss that with me in advance and we can arrange for that situation.

Lap tops – Can be used if used appropriately.

If you are tardy by more than 15 minutes you will be counted absent. If you know ahead of time you will be late, let the instructor know. Additionally you will lose the opportunity to earn any credit on quizzes or assignments given at the beginning of class and if you are tardy.

No tobacco will be allowed in class in any form. It distracts other students and interferes with their education.

Test#1 33.3%

Test#2 33.3%

Final Exam 33.3%

Extra Credit may be given based on class participation in discussions as well as special projects given at the instructor's discretion. Also read attendance section above which may effect your grade as well.

MAKE-UP EXAMS:

None will be offered. If for some reason a student cannot attend an exam they must contact the instructor as soon as possible. Any emergencies must be documented. If you fail to take the exam at the scheduled time, you will be required to take an essay exam.

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>

USE OF TELEPHONES AND TEXT MESSAGES IN ACADEMIC CLASSROOMS AND FACILITIES:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-curriculum.html>

ANNOTATED OUTLINE OF TOPICS TO BE COVERED FOR EACH CLASS MEETING:

WEEK	ASSIGNMENT	Exams
01/17/18	Introduction: Foundations of Criminal Law and Elements of a Crime	
01/24/18	Criminal Law in Daily Practice & Law of Parties	

01/31/18	Assault	
02/07/18	Sexual Crimes in Texas	
02/14/18	Exam	Exam 1
02/21/18	Homicide	
02/28/18	Kidnapping & Related Offenses and Offenses against the Government	
03/07/18	SPRING BREAK	
03/14/18	Theft, Fraud & Related Offenses	
03/28/18	Robbery, Burglary & Criminal Trespass	
04/04/18	Exam	Exam 2
04/11/18	Intoxication Offenses and Preparatory Offenses	
04/18/18	Defenses & Excuses	
04/25/18	Prison Crimes	
05/03/18	FINAL EXAM	Exam 3