

**Criminal Law
CJUS 2500
5WK1 Summer 2026**

Welcome to the online section of CJUS 2500, Criminal Law. I look forward to having you in this class.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS COURSE IS 100% ONLINE AND DOES NOT HAVE ANY SCHEDULED CLASS MEETINGS.

Professor Contact Information

- Jordan Russell, M.S.
- Office: Chilton Hall, Room 265 (Department of Criminal Justice)
- Email contact: Jordan.Russell@unt.edu
- Office hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistant Contact Information

- Ashlyn Gierling
- Email contact: Ashlyn.Gierling@unt.edu

***For questions or other concerns regarding this course, please email Ms. Ashlyn Gierling **first**. She will determine if she can address the question/concern or if she should send it to me for a response. Also, please carefully read the syllabus as it can answer many questions.

Online Class Considerations

This class is completely online. For those of you who have not taken an online class before, these classes require your personal discipline and motivation to keep up with the pace of the class materials. For example, most module materials will be released each week on Mondays at 8:00 am. Each module will have a quiz, and some will have an exam and discussion board as well that are due by the end of the week on Sundays at 11:59 pm. See schedule for any exceptions – particularly for weeks 4 and 5. Students will have several days in the course schedule to identify time to complete the exams, quizzes and discussion assignments.

Because students have an extended period of time to complete exams, quizzes and discussion assignments, *there will generally be no make-up exams or quizzes and late discussion assignments will generally not be accepted. A zero will be awarded for any work that is submitted late or not turned in at all during the scheduled time period.* Students with absences that are authorized pursuant to university policy 06.039 Student Attendance and Authorized Absences **and** that impact the timeliness of their work (for example, by covering the entire time period during which an exam, quiz or discussion board could be done),

should contact me and provide documentation *prior to any due date* in order for such absence to receive any consideration.

Individual technical or technological difficulties in completing coursework in a timely manner (e.g., computer crashes or viruses or interrupted internet connections) do not constitute a basis to request a make-up exam or quiz, the submission of a late discussion board, or receive a time extension. To avoid such issues, I encourage you to *not wait* until the final available hours or minutes to complete assigned coursework and/or complete your exams/quizzes/discussion boards in a UNT computer lab. It is further recommended that you submit assigned work through a supported web browser on a computer or laptop rather than an iPad or other electronic device and that you avoid using wireless internet connections.

Because the class is online, you will, of course, need to use a personal computer that is compatible with the UNT online course system or use one of the computers available in the campus computer labs. This is important for submitting your coursework in a timely manner and is especially important for your quizzes and exams. Because your quizzes and exams are timed, you want to avoid any computer glitches that may impact your work.

Because most of the communication in this course will occur online, you will need to make sure that you keep up with the class communications. I will primarily use the *Announcements* page to communicate with the class as a whole. You should check this area frequently. These communications will also be sent to your *UNT email address if you have notifications in Canvas set up in this manner.* If you do not routinely check your UNT email address, make sure to forward your UNT email to your preferred email address so that you can stay up-to-date with class announcements and information.

Finally, online classes also require some basic technological skills to access course materials and complete assigned coursework. UNT has a variety of resources to assist you with the technological aspects of navigating this and other online classes. *One of the most important of these resources is the help desk. It can be reached by email at helpdesk@unt.edu and via phone at 940-565-2324. Personnel at the help desk can assist you with issues concerning access to UNT's online system and other technological issues*

Course Description

As the course title indicates, this course concerns criminal law. This is the area of law that defines crimes and provides for their punishment. This is a subject that is essential for all students of Criminal Justice to understand.

The course materials will first address general concepts of crime, such as the elements of crime and the parties that can be held responsible for crime. Next, we will address the basic categories of crime, such as murder, robbery, and theft. Finally, we will cover the defenses to criminal responsibility. With regard to these topics, we will cover both traditional and contemporary concepts of these subjects.

The course material will be divided into chapters and modules. The order in which we will cover the text materials will differ somewhat from the order presented in the text, as reflected in the order of coverage described in the preceding paragraph. The order in which we will cover the chapters and modules is provided in the Course Schedule later in this syllabus. *Online modules that accompany each chapter will highlight and supplement the assigned text readings.* All learning modules will have an accompanying quiz while some learning modules will also have a discussion board.

The quizzes and discussion boards that accompany the learning modules are designed to verify and extend your knowledge and understanding of the class materials. The discussion boards also provide a mechanism to apply such knowledge and understanding.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Illustrate the constitutional limitations on criminal law and how they shape the definitions of crimes.
- Explain the essential elements of crimes and defenses, using both traditional definitions (such as those of the common law) and contemporary definitions (such as those of the Model Penal Code).
- Analyze court decisions that apply criminal laws to individual cases.
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Required Text

Moore, Jennifer L., and John L. Worrall. *Criminal Law*, 3rd ed. New York: Pearson, 2022.

This text is required for all students enrolled in the class and is the only required text for the course. Reading assignments are noted in the Course Schedule.

How the Course is Organized

This course will take place completely online through Canvas. The course is composed of several modules. Each module contains relevant chapter outlines as well as other supplementary material as needed. *Online materials that accompany each module will highlight and supplement the assigned text readings.*

How Students Should Proceed Each Week for Class Activities

At the beginning of each week, the student should refer to the Course Schedule (see below) for the coursework/activities for that week. The textbook chapters and online modules will help you complete the coursework for each week and satisfy all learning objectives.

Course Requirements

There are a total of 480 points that students can earn in this class: 2 exams (100 points each, for a total of 200 points); 13 quizzes (10 points each, for a total of 130 points); 3 discussion

assignments (50 points each, for a total of 150 points). The grading scale and descriptions of the assessment measures are described below.

Grading Scale

432 – 480 points = A

384 – 431 points = B

336 – 383 points = C

288 – 335 points = D

Below 287 points = F

I do not offer extra credit in this course.

PLEASE NOTE: I DO NOT DEVIATE FROM THE ABOVE GRADING SCALE EVEN IF YOU ARE ONLY ONE POINT AWAY FROM THE NEXT LETTER GRADE.

Exams (200 points total)

*There will be 2 online exams (a midterm exam and a final exam) for this class which will be available on the course site when they are released. The exams are designed to assess the knowledge that each of you has individually learned regarding the course materials. Therefore, I expect your exam responses to reflect your own individual and independent knowledge and work, *without assistance from* any other person. **You may use your textbook and all course materials while completing the exams.** The exams themselves should not be copied or duplicated by you or anyone else for any purpose whatsoever. The university rules concerning academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.*

The exams are included in the related Course Materials, under *Modules*, and should be submitted there.

Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions. Each multiple choice question is worth 2 points. Thus, each exam is worth 100 points. Each exam will cover the assigned text material and the modules in Canvas. Exams are timed (75 minutes), so plan your time efficiently to do your best.

EXAMS ARE TAKEN FROM THE COURSE TEXTBOOK AND THE MODULES IN CANVAS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU READ THE CORRESPONDING CHAPTER MATERIALS AND CANVAS MODULES BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE AN EXAM.

*For the midterm exam, you will have from Monday at 8:00 am until Sunday at 11:59 pm to set aside 75 minutes to take the exam. For the final exam, you will have from Monday at 8:00 am to **THURSDAY** at 11:59 pm to set aside 75 minutes to take the exam. The exams will be timed. From the time that you log in to take the exam, you will have up to 75 minutes to complete the exam.*

You are allowed only 1 attempt to take each exam. Once you start the exam, you cannot exit (and return to) the exam or pause the exam time.

Students who do not complete any exam during the scheduled time period will receive a zero for the exam. There will *generally be no make-up exams. Exam grades will be available immediately upon completion of each exam.*

Quizzes (130 points total)

There will be 13 online quizzes for this class which will be available on the course site when they are released. The quizzes are designed to assess the knowledge that each of you has individually learned regarding the textbook and course materials. Therefore, I expect your quiz responses to reflect your own individual and independent knowledge and work, *without assistance from any other person. **You may use your textbook and all course materials while completing the quizzes.*** The quizzes themselves should not be copied or duplicated by you or anyone else for any purpose whatsoever. The university rules concerning academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

The quizzes are included in the related Course Materials, under *Modules*, and should be submitted there.

Each quiz is comprised of 10 multiple-choice questions and is worth 10 points. Quizzes will cover textbook readings and the modules in Canvas. Quizzes are timed (15 minutes), so plan your time efficiently to do your best.

QUIZZES ARE TAKEN FROM THE COURSE TEXTBOOK AND THE MODULES IN CANVAS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU READ THE CORRESPONDING CHAPTER MATERIAL AND CANVAS MODULE BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE A MODULE QUIZ.

*For each quiz, **except final exam week**, you will have from Monday at 8:00 am until Sunday at 11:59 pm to set aside 15 minutes to take the quiz.* The quizzes will be timed. From the time that you log in to take the quiz, you will have up to 15 minutes to complete the quiz.

You are allowed only 1 attempt to take each quiz. Once you start the quiz, you cannot exit (and return to) the quiz or pause the quiz time.

Students who do not complete any quiz during the scheduled time period will receive a zero for the quiz. There will *generally be no make-up quizzes. Quiz grades will be available immediately upon completion of each quiz.*

Discussion Assignments (150 points total)

Three of the modules will have an accompanying discussion assignment due by the end of time allotted for the module, as reflected in the Course Schedule.

These discussion assignments are included in the related Chapter Materials, under *Modules*, and should be submitted there.

Each Canvas discussion is worth 50 points, for a total of 150 points towards your final grade. Discussion posts should include your response to the post, and a response to a classmate's post. Initial responses of the Canvas discussions should be a minimum of 250 words.

Students must reply to at least one other student's posts for full point potential (responding appropriately and meaningfully). The discussion assignments will be posted on Canvas and available a few days before they are noted on the syllabus schedule. **Discussion due dates are listed in the course calendar below.**

Your discussions will be graded on depth of explanation, utilization of sources, connection to course materials, specific efforts to back up your arguments with logical points and sources, grammar and spelling, and adhering to the assignment. **A detailed rubric for the discussions is provided at the end of the syllabus and on Canvas.**

In order to receive full credit, you must post an original response and respond to at least one other students' post. **Note that you will NOT be able to see any other students' posts until you have first posted a thread yourself.**

In this course, GenAI tools may be used only for specific assignments where I have explicitly designated their use. For these assignments, I will provide clear guidelines about which tools are permitted and how they should be incorporated. All other coursework must be completed without the assistance of GenAI.

This approach helps you develop GenAI literacy and ethical resilience—learning when and how to use these tools appropriately while building strong foundational skills through independent work. Using GenAI on non-designated assignments constitutes academic misconduct under UNT Policy 06.003. If you have questions about whether GenAI is permitted for a particular assignment, please ask before using these tools.

General Class Policies

Communication:

We will use the course site message function for communication purposes. Any email communication with me outside the course site should be done via my unt.edu email address: Jordan.Russell@unt.edu. You should use your UNT email account for all email communications with me. I will return emails within 48 hours during Monday-Friday. If you do not receive a response from me during that period, assume that I did not receive your communication and contact me again.

If you are having technical or technological issues regarding the course, your first communication should be with the help desk at helpdesk@unt.edu or 940-565-2324. The technicians there have the expertise to help you resolve your issues.

Syllabus Change:

I reserve the right and have the discretion to change this syllabus. While every effort will be made to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, it is sometimes the case that it must be modified. In the case that it needs to be adjusted, I will announce such adjustments to the class. I will make every effort to ensure that any changes to the syllabus benefit the class as a whole. It is the student's responsibility to check announcements/notifications/emails so that any and all changes are documented. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of failure to check and read announcements/notifications/emails does not constitute a basis for a missed applicable change.

Release of Chapter Materials:

The Chapter Materials for each chapter and related modules will be released on the course site according to the schedule on the Course Schedule. Once released, they will remain available on the course site.

Late Policy:

Because students have an extended period of time to complete exams, quizzes, and discussion boards, *there will generally be no make-up exams or quizzes and late discussion boards will generally not be accepted. A zero will be assigned for any work that is submitted late or not turned in at all during the scheduled time period.* Students with absences that are authorized pursuant to university policy 06.039 Student Attendance and Authorized Absences **and** that impact the timeliness of their work (for example, by covering the entire time period during which a discussion or exam/quiz could be done), should contact me and provide documentation *prior to any due date* in order for such absence to receive any consideration.

Individual technical or technological difficulties in completing a discussion or exam/quiz in a timely manner (e.g., computer crashes or viruses or interrupted internet connections) do not constitute a basis to request a make-up exam/quiz or the submission of a late discussion. To avoid such issues, I encourage you to *not wait* until the final available hours or minutes to complete assigned coursework and/or complete your discussions, quizzes, and exams in a UNT computer lab. It is also recommended that you submit assigned work through a supported web browser on a computer or laptop rather than an iPad or other electronic device and that you avoid using wireless internet connections.

Online Etiquette:

This online format provides the opportunity to thoughtfully discuss issues and exchange ideas. Your communication with me and your fellow students in this online format should be appropriate to the course and respectful of the opinions of others. Engaging in disruptive or disrespectful behavior in this online forum may result in your dismissal from this class, as provided in university policy.

Posting of Grades:

Students can access their grades via the *Grades* tab on the course page in Canvas.

Academic Dishonesty:

The university rules (UNT Policy 06.003) concerning cheating and plagiarism will be strictly enforced. *Your work on discussion boards, quizzes, and exams should be your own individual and independent work. These are not group projects. You should not consult other persons when completing exams or quizzes.*

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties:

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive outage assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation.

SPOT (Student Perceptions of Teaching):

You will have the opportunity to complete the SPOT survey at the end of the semester and share your thoughts about the course. I value the feedback that I receive from the SPOT survey and strongly encourage you to participate by completing the survey in this class and all of your classes.

ADA Statement:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet (i.e., electronically, phone, or in person) with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information, see the Office of Disability Access website at <http://disability.unt.edu/>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Intellectual Property Statement:

The material posted online for this course is my personal intellectual property or that of the university. You may not use this material for anything other than class purposes.

Emergency Notification & Procedures:

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses: see Appendix 1.

Course Schedule

Note: Chapter materials will open on *Mondays* on the course site in Canvas at 8:00 am each week as indicated in the Opening Date column below. Students will have until the following *Sunday* night at 11:59 pm to complete any related exam, quiz or discussion board (except Final Exam week which has a **THURSDAY** night at 11:59PM due date).

Week & Opening Date	Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Exams	Due Dates & Times
<p><u>Week 1</u> Monday May 18 at 8AM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Start Here</i> Module in Canvas • Read <i>Course Information</i> Module in Canvas • Read <i>Syllabus</i> in Canvas • Read Chapters 1-3 in <i>Criminal Law</i> textbook • Read Chapters 1-3 Modules in Canvas • Complete Quizzes for Chapters 1-3 in Canvas • Complete Discussion 1 in Canvas 	<p>Quizzes for Chapters 1-3 due by Sunday, May 24 at 11:59PM</p> <p>Discussion 1 due by Sunday, May 24 at 11:59PM</p>
<p><u>Week 2</u> Monday May 25 at 8AM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 6-8 in <i>Criminal Law</i> textbook • Read Chapters 6-8 Modules in Canvas • Complete Quizzes for Chapters 6-8 in Canvas • Complete Discussion 2 in Canvas 	<p>Quizzes for Chapters 6- 8 due by Sunday, May 31 at 11:59PM</p> <p>Discussion 2 due by Sunday, May 31 at 11:59PM</p>

<p><u>Week 3</u> Monday June 1 at 8AM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 9-10 in <i>Criminal Law</i> textbook • Read Chapters 9-10 Modules in Canvas • Complete Quizzes for Chapters 9-10 in Canvas • Complete Midterm Exam over Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, & 8 in Canvas 	<p>Quizzes for Chapters 9-10 due by Sunday, June 7 at 11:59PM Midterm Exam due by Sunday, June 7 at 11:59PM</p>
<p><u>Week 4</u> Monday June 8 at 8AM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 11-13 in <i>Criminal Law</i> textbook • Read Chapters 11-13 Modules in Canvas • Complete Quizzes for Chapters 11-13 in Canvas • Complete Discussions 3 & 4 in Canvas 	<p>Quizzes for Chapters 11-13 due by Sunday, June 14 at 11:59PM Discussions 3 due by Sunday, June 14 at 11:59PM</p>
<p><u>Week 5</u> Monday June 15 at 8AM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 4-5 in <i>Criminal Law</i> textbook • Read Chapters 4-5 Modules in Canvas • Complete Quizzes for Chapters 4-5 in Canvas • Complete Final Exam over Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 4, & 5 in Canvas 	<p>Quizzes for Chapters 4-5 due by Thursday, June 18 at 11:59PM Final Exam due by Thursday, June 18 at 11:59PM</p>

Discussion Assignment Rubric

Criteria	Inadequate 4 pts	Developing 6 pts	Accomplished 8 pts	Exemplary 10 pts
Ideas & Argument	Ideas expressed lack an understanding of the discussion topic. Comments are irrelevant, off-topic, and/or confusing to follow. Viewpoint, if given, is not supported with evidence or examples.	Ideas expressed in discussion posts show a minimal understanding of the discussion topic. Comments are general in nature and/or occasionally may not be relevant. Rehashes or summarizes ideas with limited analysis, original thought, and/or supported viewpoints.	Ideas expressed in discussion posts are mostly substantive and relevant to topic; some original thought. Demonstrates logical thinking, reasoning, and/or analysis for most part. Viewpoint is supported with evidence and/or examples.	Ideas expressed in discussion posts exceed expectations in original thought, substantial depth, and are relevant to topic. Viewpoint shows strong logical thinking, reasoning, and analysis with evidence and examples. Construction of new meaning and insights are evident.
Connection to Course Materials	No connections are made to readings or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.), and/or if made, are not clearly stated and are largely personal opinions.	Minimal direct connections are made to readings and/or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.). Connections are largely inferred and somewhat unclear at times.	Some direct connections are made to readings and/or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.) and are clearly stated for the most part.	Strong, direct connections are made to readings and/or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.) and are clearly stated.
Contribution to Learning Community	Negligible contribution to the learning community. Rarely engages with students and generally ignores others' posts and/or has a negative effect through misrepresenting content in other posts, inappropriate comments made, and/or attempts to dominate the discussion.	Somewhat contributes to the learning community but the focus is generally on own posts. Occasionally interacts with others' postings but little attempt to involve other students in the discussion. Short statements such as "I agree with...".	Contributes to the learning community. Often attempts to direct group discussion to present relevant viewpoints and meaningful reflection by others. Interacts respectfully with students.	Effectively contributes to the learning community. Frequently initiates dialogue and motivates group discussion by providing feedback to students' postings, asking follow-up questions, and through thoughtful, reflective comments. Respectfully encourages a variety of viewpoints and invites contributions from others.

Adherence to Instructions and Clarity	Does not provide any citations. Initial post does not meet minimum 250-word count.	Some significant errors in APA citations. Initial post does not meet minimum 250-word count.	Some minor errors in APA citations. Initial post meets minimum 250-word count.	Proper use of APA citations. Initial post meets minimum 250-word count.
Writing Quality	Posts show a below average/poor writing style that lacks standard English, and/or is difficult for readers to follow Contains frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling. Does not provide any citations. Initial post does not meet minimum 250-word count.	Posts show an average and/or casual writing style using standard English that is generally clear but contains some errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling.	Discussion posts show above average writing style that is clear using standard English with minor errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and/or spelling.	Discussion posts are well written and clearly articulated using standard English, characterized by elements of a strong writing style with correct grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling.
Required Response	Deduct 10 points	Deduct 3 points	No points deducted	No points deducted
	Required response post is missing/inadequate.	All required postings completed; however, response post only agrees/disagrees and does not provide additional insight.	All required postings by deadline; an adequate response post is given that provides some additional insight.	All required postings by deadline; response is extremely thoughtful and provides additional insight.

Appendix 1

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses: Federal Regulation

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at "Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G)" and can be found within this document: <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/get-cfr.cgi?TITLE=8&PART=214&SECTION=2&TYPE=TEXT>

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F–1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F–1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about their need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, they should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.