Instructor Information
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***For questions or other concerns regarding this course, please email Mr. Tyler Gosswieiler first. He will determine if he can address the question/concern or if he should send it to me for response. Also, please carefully read the syllabus as it can answer many questions.

Course Description
The course will examine the courts, legal and judicial processes and judicial behavior. The history, philosophy and traditions underlying the American justice system as played out in the criminal courts will also be examined. Special attention will be given to the interaction of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and jurors. The impact of significant court decisions on the operation of the justice system will also be addressed.

Course Objectives
After completing the course students will:

- Recognize the functions and responsibilities of the participants in the criminal justice process
- Identify the structure of the criminal justice system, including the various levels of the judiciary and the respective role of each
- Describe the ways in which the judicial process influences, and is influenced by, various components of the larger society
- Explain the basic day-to-day functionality of the criminal justice system

Students will successfully demonstrate the attainment of these objectives through quizzes, exams, and written assignments

Required Text

Course Notes and Recommendations
Please make sure to have your official UNT email forwarded to your preferred email address (if different) to receive important updates, changes, announcements, class cancellations (if applicable), and generally, so I can reach you if necessary.

The announcement board in Canvas, and email, will be used for primary communication to the class as a whole. I advise you check the announcements section frequently.
Important: It is your responsibility to utilize a computer system that works and is compatible with the UNT online system/Canvas. This is especially critical during examination times. I would recommend that you take your exams on the UNT campus if possible. Do not take your exams on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets.

Course Requirements

This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives. Each week you will work on various combinations of readings, discussions, quizzes, and exams. Chapter modules will become available students on the week corresponding to the course calendar. Students can expect their grades and feedback to be released to them within 1 week. There is a total of 510 points that can be earned in this class. The grading policy along with other class requirements is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Quizzes (15)</td>
<td>150 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts (3)</td>
<td>60 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3)</td>
<td>300 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points Possible</strong></td>
<td><strong>510 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Scale

A= 459 - 510 points  
B= 408 - 458 points  
C= 357 - 407 points  
D= 306 - 356 points  
F= Less than 306 points

Please note that grades will be calculated based on points earned in the course, not a percentage. I reserve the right to resolve borderline grades, but only if students have completed all the assignments in the course.

Exams: Each exam contains 50 multiple choice and ordering style questions to be completed in 90 minutes. Dates for each Exam can be found on the course schedule in Canvas.

Weekly Quizzes: Each chapter quiz contains 10 multiple choice questions to be completed in 20 minutes. Dates for when each is available can be found on the course schedule in Canvas.

Discussions: Each student will be required to participate in 3 discussions throughout the course. These discussions will first require you to post an answer to the questions posed by me. Be clear and detailed in answering the questions. These posts should be 2-3 paragraphs long (a paragraph is at least four complete sentences) and will be worth 10 points. This portion of the assignment is referred to as “Post.”

Each student must then appropriately and professionally respond to at least one other student’s post. These responses should constructively critique the post. Consider: what makes sense about your classmate’s post? What flaws can you see in the post? These responses should also be 2-3 paragraphs long and will be worth 10 points. This portion of the assignment is referred to as “Response.”

Does Spelling Count?

Yes, it does. An individual’s ability to effectively communicate in writing is a reflection on their competence and credibility. Persons entering the field of criminal justice should strive to be seen as
both competent and credible. Attention to detail is necessary to achieve that goal. As professionals in the field your work will be judged not only by what you say, but perhaps to a greater degree, by how you say it. Please review all written assignments prior to submission for proper grammar and spelling.

**APA Citations:** Discussion posts and responses will require students to cite the sources used. Even if the source used is the course textbook, it must be cited. Some course discussion assignments will ask students to do their own outside research, for which a citation is required. Posts/responses without citations may be considered an act of academic dishonesty and can result in the failure of the course.

APA citation guide: [https://guides.library.unt.edu/citations-style-guides/apa](https://guides.library.unt.edu/citations-style-guides/apa)

**Make-Up Policy**

There will be no opportunities to make up any missed coursework with the exception of authorized absences according to University policies prescribing authorized absences in certain situations. I reserve the right to consider extreme circumstances and modify this rule. Students should notify me prior to missing an assignment, if possible. Those in athletics, those who are absent for religious holidays, and/or those involved in other school supported activities that require being absent from class will be allowed to make up assignments if proper procedures are followed in requesting an excused absence. I must have written documentation in advance that you will be away from class for the absence to be excused.

**Authorized Absences**

Absences are authorized only in cases of participation in school sponsored activities and/or religious holidays. For an excused absence due to a school sponsored activity, students must be approved in advance by the department chair and academic dean. Within three days after the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the Dean of Students for presentation to instructor. Students who wish to request an excused absence for religious holidays can do so and will be excused from class as long as they make a request within the required time frame set by the University (see the most recent undergraduate catalog). Notification must be in writing so that I may have it for my records. You must arrange to make up any work missed during the excused religious absence or school sponsored activity.

**Academic Dishonesty/Integrity**

All students are required to conduct themselves with utmost honesty and integrity in all aspects related to this course. Any act of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and may result in failing the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for course credit.

**Grade Appeals**

Please keep all your graded work. You cannot, under any circumstance, dispute a grade on an exam or assignment if you cannot provide the original copy. Should you have any discrepancy with a grade you receive, you must submit a written complaint and meet with me within one week of receiving the grade. Bring the original copy of the exam or assignment to this meeting. Written complaints must address specific comments and/or grading criteria. Filing an appeal does not guarantee that your grade will be changed. **Grades are not verbally negotiable.**

**Disabled Student Policy**

Any student in this class may request learning assistance by submitting a written statement that describes the nature of your impairment and any specific accommodations you may need. Should you need assistance please contact the Dean of Students’ Office at [http://www.dos.unt.edu/index.html](http://www.dos.unt.edu/index.html) or
by calling (940) 565-2648.

**SPOT Participation**

The SPOT evaluation is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class.

**Student Behavior and University Policy:**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr).

**Participation and Online Behavior**

To be successful at learning and understanding the material in this class, it is essential that you read and complete the assigned material and engage in thoughtful online discussions. Your active participation, along with your willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions regarding crime and justice in the United States will be taken into account at all times during the semester.

An online classroom, at least during times of online discussion, is a place to express varying ideas, opinions, and engage in thoughtful discussions. Students will respect the views and opinions of others at all times or their status in the course will be examined. In sum, simply be appropriate during online interactions. Each student brings diverse insight and perspectives, and that can make for a very interesting and lively discussion forum, but just please be appropriate and respectful of others. Please review the undergraduate catalog concerning conduct which adversely affects the university community.

**Syllabus Changes**

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 the syllabus must be modified. In the case that the syllabus 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/email so that any and all syllabus changes are documented. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of failure to check and read announcements does not constitute a defense against missed assignments, test dates, and other applicable changes.

**Miscellaneous**

The material posted online is my personal intellectual property or that of the University of North Texas. You may not utilize the material for other than class purposes.

**Technical Assistance**

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.
UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130
Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Telephone Availability:
- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm
Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

Office of Disability Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student.

Students can access resources and information regarding disability accommodations in the Academic Support tab in Blackboard Learn. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

UNT Compliance with F-1 Visa Students Taking Online Courses

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 his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email [internationaladvising@unt.edu](mailto:internationaladvising@unt.edu)) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.
TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE
Note: Most assignments (quizzes and exams) open at 8:00 a.m. on the first day (Monday) of each week and close at 11:59 the following Sunday. Week 15 and the final exam have a different schedule. Please see the end of this document for the open and close dates for week 15 and the final exam.

Week One: 8/19 – 8/25
  Topic: Structure: Law, Crime, Courts, and Controversy
  Reading: Chapter 1
  Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 1; Discussion 1 will open and the post and response will be due by 9/22

Week Two: 8/26 – 9/1
  Topic: Structure: Federal Courts
  Reading: Chapter 2
  Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 2

Week Three: 9/2 – 9/8
  Topic: Structure: State Courts
  Reading: Chapter 3
  Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 3

Week Four: 9/9 – 9/15
  Topic: Structure: Juvenile Courts
  Reading: Chapter 4
  Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 4

Week Five: 9/16 – 9/22
  No readings for this week. Please spend the week preparing for and completing Exam 1
  Assignments: Complete Exam 1; complete Discussion 1 post and response

Week Six: 9/23 – 9/29
  Topic: People in the Courts: The Dynamics of Courthouse Justice
  Reading: Chapter 5
  Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 5; Discussion 2 will open and the post and response will be due by 10/27

Week Seven: 9/30 – 10/6
  Topic: People in the Courts: Prosecutors
  Reading: Chapter 6
  Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 6
Week Eight: 10/7 – 10/13
   Topic: People in the Courts: Defense Attorneys
   Reading: Chapter 7
   Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 7

Week Nine: 10/14 – 10/20
   Topic: People in the Courts: Judges; Defendants, Victims, and Witnesses
   Reading: Chapter 8 and Chapter 9
   Assignments: Complete the quizzes for Chapter 8 and Chapter 9

Week Ten: 10/21 – 10/27
   No readings for this week. Please spend the week preparing for and completing Exam 2
   Assignments: Complete Exam 2; complete Discussion 2 post and response

Week Eleven: 10/28 – 11/3
   Topic: Processing in the Courts: From Arrest and Bail Through Arraignment
   Readings: Chapter 10
   Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 10; Discussion 3 will open and the post and
   response will be due by 12/5

Week Twelve: 11/4 – 11/10
   Topic: Processing in the Courts: Disclosing and Suppressing Evidence
   Readings: Chapter 11
   Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 11

Week Thirteen: 11/11 – 11/17
   Topic: Processing in the Courts: Negotiated Justice and the Plea of Guilty
   Readings: Chapter 12
   Assignments: Complete the quiz for Chapter 12

Week Fourteen: 11/18 – 11/24
   Topic: Processing in the Courts: Trials and Juries; Sentencing
   Readings: Chapter 13 and Chapter 14
   Assignments: Complete the quizzes for Chapters 13 and 14

*Thanksgiving Break 11/25-12/1—University closed. Enjoy a break!

Week Fifteen: 12/2 – 12/5 (THURSDAY)
   Topic: Processing in the Courts: Appellate and Habeas Corpus Review
   Readings: Chapter 15
   Assignments: Complete Chapter 15 quiz and Discussion 3 post and response

Week Sixteen: 12/9 – 12/12 (THURSDAY)
*The final exam will be made available on Monday, December 9th at 8:00 a.m. and will be due no later than 11:59 pm on Thursday, December 12th. Please note that December 12th is a THURSDAY.