**CRIME AND JUSTICE IN THE UNITED STATES**

**CJUS 2100.401**

**Fall 2025**

**Course Syllabus**

**Instructor**: Madison McDowell, M.S.

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**Office Hours**: By Appointment Only

**Class Meeting**: This is an online class. Course expectations and classroom policies are outlined in the syllabus below. While students are expected to complete written assignments, participate in online discussions, and online quizzes, there are no formal on campus meetings for this course which would require a student to come to campus.

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# **EMAIL EXPECTATIONS**

When sending an email, please put the COURSE NUMBER AND SECTION (CJUS 2100.401) in the subject line of the email. **Only emails sent from your official UNT email account (**[**username@my.unt.edu**](mailto:username@my.unt.edu)**) will receive a response.** Also, to ensure that you receive timely course related correspondence, make sure your official email address at UNT is forwarded to your preferred email address.

\*\*Note: Emails sent after 5pm or on the weekends will be answered the following business day. Please send correspondence through the UNT Outlook portal (Eagle Connect) with the aforementioned email addresses.

The announcement board in Canvas, and email, will also be used for communication to the class as a whole. I advise you check the announcements section frequently. All announcements will be addressed via the announcements tab on Canvas.

**For questions, please first email the Teaching Assistant.**

The Teaching Assistant for this class is Victoria Cadena. She will be assisting with maintaining course documentation and grading. Be aware that a Teaching Assistant has no authorization to make exceptions or course changes for students, as those responsibilities lie with the professor only. For example, if you need to arrange ODA accommodations for the course, you need to contact me, not the TA. Victoria can be reached at Victoria.Cadena@unt.edu.

# **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the societal responses to people and organizations that violate criminal codes; discusses the history, development, organization, and philosophy of the justice process; and analyzes the complex inter-relationships between the major components of the criminal justice system (i.e., police, courts, and corrections).

# **COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able:

1. To identify the major foundations of crime and justice including the nature of law, behavioral aspects of crime, and measurement of crime;
2. To identify the major components of the criminal justice system including the police, courts, and corrections;
3. To use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories;
4. To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for crime;
5. To examine criminal justice institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures and cultures;
6. To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural and global forces on criminal justice.
7. To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.
8. To employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social scientists use to investigate criminals and the criminal justice system.

# **READING MATERIALS**

Bohm, R.M., & Haley, K.N. (2021). *Introduction to Criminal Justice* (10th). New York: McGraw-Hill.

We will use multimedia to supplement the course materials. This may include web articles, podcasts, videos, documentaries, and social media. Students will be notified when additional learning is assigned.

# **ACCESS & NAVIGATION**

*Access and Log in Information*

This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas’ Learning Management System, Canvas. To get started with the course, please go to: <https://unt.instructure.com/login/ldap>. You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course.

*Student Resources*

As a student, you will have access to:

* Student Orientation via Canvas. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials within the Orientation to better equip you with navigating the course.
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* From within Canvas, you will have access to the “UNT Helpdesk” tab which provides student resources and Help Desk Information.

# **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

Students will spend most of their time on the Modules page in the course. The “Start Here” module will be available throughout the course and contains the course syllabus and course calendar. Each week new materials will unlock in line with that noted in the syllabus. Each module will contain objectives, an introduction and to do list for the week, weekly notes, assignments that are due, and next steps. You will be able to complete all activities for each week within the Module. Updates to the course and important information will be shared on the Announcements page. Finally, students can view their Grades in the course using the “Grades” tab in Canvas.

# **FIRST STEPS**

Upon entrance into the online classroom, students should spend some time navigating course materials and links to ensure they are able to locate all required materials. The student should review the syllabus and course materials early in the semester and keep a copy of the syllabus for easy reference throughout the course.

# **COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING**

Your final grade will be determined based on your performance on 14 Chapter quizzes, 3 Exams, 3 discussion boards, and 1writing assignment. There are a total of 435 points that can be earned in this class.

Exams: 3 @ 50 points each

Chapter Quizzes: 14 @ 10 points each

Discussion Boards: 3 @ 15 Points each

UCR Writing Assignment: 1 @ 100 points

Grading Scale: 391 – 435 = A

348 – 390 = B

305 – 347 = C 261 – 304 = D

0 – 260 = F

**Chapter Quizzes:** There will be 14 online quizzes that will be given throughout the semester. Quizzes will be worth a total of 140 points or 10 points each. Quizzes will be available within the weekly modules and exact dates may be found on the course calendar. You will have 15 minutes to take each quiz. **No late work will be accepted**. The quizzes will reinforce the fact that you are keeping up with the reading and lecture notes. Each chapter quiz contains 10 multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and/or fill in the blank.

**Exams:** Each exam contains 50 multiple choice, true/false, and/or fill in the blank questions. Dates for each exam can be found on the course schedule in Canvas. Students will have 60 minutes (1 hour) to complete the exam.

**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. If that is not possible, I would recommend you avoid waiting until the last minute to take your exam in case problems arise. **Do not take your exams on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets.**

**Writing Assignment:** Paper discussing the violent and property crime rates you collect. Additional details and rubric found on Canvas. This will be submitted via Canvas.

**Canvas Discussion Assignments/Activities**: Each student will be responsible for completing 3 Canvas Discussion Assignments throughout the course, with each discussion assignment being worth 15 points (for a total of 45 points). This will be located in Canvas under Modules. Your initial discussion post must be a minimum of 250 words. You are also required to cite at least 1 scholarly source in your initial post (scholarly sources may include journal articles, books, government documents, etc). For each discussion assignment, students must reply to at least 2 classmates for full points. Participation posts responding to your classmates should be a minimum of 100 words each for full points. All responses should contain 100% original content for this course and should contain appropriate citations when necessary. If you do not know what APA format is, please visit <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html> or you can visit the UNT writing center.

Responses are not to be based on your personal opinion (unless the Professor asks you to provide it) but should reflect careful considerations of the course materials and required readings. Failure to be responsive to the particular discussion assignment will result in a loss of points. To earn points such comments must be more than trivial and in fact be substantial and substantive (think of these as the discussions you would have if we were having class on campus). Submit your discussion in Canvas only – do not email your discussion response to me directly. If for some reason you have technical difficulties and are not able to submit your response, you may email me your response for partial credit, as long as the time stamp on the email is in accordance with the time frame listed above.

When engaging in an online discussion, I ask that you remain civil with each other and operate the same way you would if the person was in the same room as you. Use discussions to develop your skills in intellectual conversations about the various topics that we will cover. In the event that there is any foul language or disrespect in the online environment, these issues will be dealt with by the Professor and if the situation merits meeting with the Department Chair or Dean, action will be taken.

**Extra Credit:** There may be extra credit given but this will be at the discretion of the professor. If this opportunity presents itself, the credit will be offered to the entire class and not one individual person. Any extra credit that is given will be given to the entire class. I do not give individual extra credit, so it is important for you to do well on all other course work.

## **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**

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a “0” for that assignment or test. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term “plagiarism” includes but is not limited to a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment, and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

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.

## **CLASSROOM POLICY**

Students are expected to log in to Canvas daily to check Announcements or changes to the course. Missing deadlines as a result of not frequently checking Canvas will not be an excuse for late work submission.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ADOPTED POLICY**

I expect you to generate your own work in this class. When you submit any kind of work (including projects, exams, quizzes, or discussions), you are asserting that you have generated and written the text unless you indicate otherwise by the use of quotation marks and proper attribution for the source. Submitting content that has been generated by someone other than you or was created or assisted by a computer application or tool, including artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT is cheating and constitutes an academic integrity violation. You may use simple word processing tools to update spelling and grammar in your assignments, but you may not use AI tools to draft your work. There may be opportunities for you to use AI tools in this class. Where they exist, I will clearly specify when and in what capacity is permissible for you to use these tools.

*Things you CAN use AI for*: Use it to chat about a topic you’re interested in. However, it’s probably no more than 65% accurate. You will need to use academic sources to verify what AI told you. It can be a useful tool for identifying starting points on a topic but should not be utilized as an alternative to scholarly research. It cannot provide reliable resources or data.

Things you CANNOT use AI for: Do not use AI to draft any written scholarly work. Do not use citations provided by AI. Not only is it unreliable, but you risk an academic integrity violation. You are here to analyze and develop your critical thinking skills. If you need to use it as a starting point, that’s fine. However, when it’s time to draft a written assignment, close AI generated content before you begin and utilize the reliable scholarly sources you have found.

The UNT library system is a valuable resource!

## **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.**

## **PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, & RETALIATION (POLICY 16.004)**

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION**

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT’s Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim’s compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](mailto:SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at [oeo@unt.edu](mailto:oeo@unt.edu) or at 940-565-2759.

## **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.

## **RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student’s records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Student’s access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student’s Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail Eagle Connect (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

## **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 & 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 discussions. Your active participation, along with your willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions regarding criminological theory 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 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 unique 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.

## **MISC.**

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.

## **OFFICE OF DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION (ODA)**

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) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

## \* A course schedule can be found in a separate file in Canvas