COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on substantive criminal law: the basic crimes and criminal defenses. In this connection, we will explore the traditional and Texas and federal statutory definitions of the crimes and defenses, as well as cases that interpret these definitions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Through this course, students should gain:

1) an understanding of the constitutional, legislative, and judicial parameters of federal and Texas basic criminal law and
2) an awareness of judicial and legislative "outputs."

REQUIRED READING:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Final course grades will be based on performance on the following activities: 4 examinations; 4 discussion boards; and class participation. Each of the exams will be evaluated on a 100-point scale and each exam will represent 20% of your final course grade. Each discussion board will be evaluated on a 20-point scale and each will represent 4% of your final grade. Your class participation will be evaluated on a 20-point scale and will represent 4% of your final grade.

GRADING SCALE (Maximum of 500 points):
A= 448 – 500 points
B= 398 – 447 points
C= 348 – 397 points
D= 298 – 347 points
F= 0 – 297 points

EXAMINATIONS: The 4 exams will consist of multiple choice, definitional, descriptive, listing, and/or short essay questions. The first examination is Thursday, February 17, 2022. The second examination is Tuesday, March 22, 2022. The third examination is Thursday, April 14, 2022.
The fourth examination will be given from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 12, 2022. There will generally be no make-up exams.

DISCUSSION BOARDS: During the course of the semester, there will be 4 Canvas discussion boards. They are attached to this syllabus, along with their due dates and related instructions. Your discussion board materials will be submitted through the class Canvas site. Students can earn up to 20 points for each discussion board assignment (up to 15 points for your posting and up to 5 points for your response to another student’s posting), for a maximum total of 80 points for these 4 activities. In the discussion board activities, students are expected to thoughtfully address the subject matter and to treat fellow students’ postings with respect in their responses. No late postings will be accepted.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: The class participation component of each student’s grade will be based on the number of times that the student actually participates in the discussions of class material. Students may volunteer to participate and they will be called upon to participate. A student will be awarded up to 2 points each time that the student participates in class, up to a maximum of 20 points for the semester. No points will be deducted from or added to the student’s class participation score if the student gives an incorrect answer, is unable to respond to a question in class, or asks a question in class.

ATTENDANCE: No specific records will be kept regarding student attendance. Attendance, however, will strongly affect course grades because 1) at least 30% of each exam will be drawn from class presentations, 2) class presentations will elaborate on and review text materials, 3) class participation evaluations will be based on participation in class, and 4) each student will be responsible for the content of all class presentations, as well as for any announcements, schedule changes, etc. that are made in class.

ZOOM RECORDINGS: I will make Zoom recordings of the class presentations. These will be available to you via the class Canvas site when they become available following the recorded class sessions. Your use of these recordings is designed to supplement your class attendance, such as if you have to miss a class, want to fill in class notes, or want to review class materials for an exam – not substitute for it. If use of these Zoom recordings has a serious negative impact on class attendance, I will terminate the recordings.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: Disruptive behavior is not permitted in class. Students engaging in such behavior may be directed to leave the classroom and may be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities for consideration of a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: The university rules and policies regarding academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. 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.

COVID POLICIES: UNT’s COVID-related policies and recommended practices can be found at healthalerts.unt.edu. UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html), please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: If you need any technical assistance with Canvas, please contact the help desk. To find ways to access help desk assistance remotely, use the Help tab on our class Canvas site (techsupport.unt.edu/students). In-person assistance is also available at Sage Hall, Room 330.

SPOT: As part of the university-wide assessment of teaching, students are strongly encouraged to anonymously complete the Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) online surveys for this and all of their classes. Your input is valued. This semester’s SPOT will be open near the end of the semester.

ADA STATEMENT: 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 Access (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. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION/PROCEDURES: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you 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). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.
COURSE SCHEDULE

The following reflects the approximate schedule for required readings in the Lippman text; the student should also read the cases and Texas Penal Code (TPC) provisions in the Statutory and Case Supplements that relate to each chapter in the text. Dates for examinations and other assignments are also included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Texas/Federal Court Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25*, 27</td>
<td>Crime Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25*</td>
<td>* Discussion Board #1; opens at 10:50 a.m. (end of class)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>February</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1*, 3</td>
<td>Chs. 1, 2 (The Nature of Criminal Law and Constitutional Limitations), DiGiacinto; Winship; TPC 2.01, 2.03, 2.04, 12.01-12.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1*</td>
<td>* Discussion Board #1; closes at 9:30 a.m. (beginning of class)</td>
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<td>8, 10, 15</td>
<td>Chs. 4, 3 (Parties to and Elements of a Crime), Montes, Pesticiras; Sutton, Chadwell, Acosta; TPC chs. 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17**</td>
<td>** First Exam **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22, 24*</td>
<td>Ch. 7 (Homicide), Mehserle; Bingham, Thornton; TPC ch. 19, 22.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24*</td>
<td>* Discussion Board #2; opens at 10:50 a.m. (end of class)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>March</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Ch. 7 (continued)</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>15, 17</td>
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<td>24*, 29</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>7, 12</td>
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<td>14***</td>
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<td>19, 21*</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>21*</td>
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<td>26, 28</td>
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May
3  Ch. 6 (continued)

5  Conclude/Review

12**  **Fourth Exam**, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Discussion Boards

General Instructions: Each discussion board assignment includes a posting of at least 500 words and a response to another student’s posting of at least 200 words. Each assignment also requires reference to at least 2 sources in each posting, with the types of sources further described in each assignment. Although not all sources must be governmental or scholarly sources, Wikipedia is not an acceptable source for these assignments. Your class text will not count as one of your required sources. Students should generally summarize or paraphrase any referenced material, with exact quotations indicated by quotation marks. Students should identify their source material in the text of their postings and list their sources at the conclusion of their postings. Examples of reference formats for your internal references and List of Works Cited are included on the attached document.

Discussion Board #1: Opens January 25 at 10:50 a.m. and closes February 1 at 9:30 a.m.

The criminal law evolves slowly over time. Some acts, like murder, have generally always been and will always be considered criminal acts. Other conduct has been considered criminal – or non-criminal – in different societies at different times. Choose 1 of the following categories of conduct and describe, in at least 500 words, why you think this conduct should be considered a crime and be subject to criminal punishment. Include in your posting 1) how this conduct harms the individual engaging in it or others (include specific types of harm) and 2) what kind of punishment is appropriate for the conduct (include specific types/amounts of punishment). Include in your posting a reference to at least 2 sources, at least 1 of which is a federal or state governmental source. In addition, respond to 1 other person’s posting that has suggested criminalizing a category of conduct (other than the conduct that you addressed in your post) and describe, in at least 200 words, why you think that category of conduct should not be criminalized and how society should address the conduct other than through the criminal law.

Categories of Conduct:
Gambling
Prostitution
Bigamy
Public Intoxication
Obscenity/Pornography
Texting while Driving
Graffiti
Discussion Board #2: Opens February 24 at 10:50 a.m. and closes March 3 at 9:30 a.m.

Domestic violence continues to be a problem in this country. Look at some of the web sites that address this topic, such as the National Center for Victims of Crime, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime, or other sources. Discuss the following: 1) How widespread is the problem of domestic violence (include data/statistics regarding the extent of domestic violence)? 2) What is the criminal justice system doing about it (include specific actions or activities)? 3) What could the criminal justice system do more effectively to reduce domestic violence (include specific actions or activities)? Your posting should be at least 500 words and should include a reference to at least 2 sources, at least 1 of which is a federal or state governmental source or crime victim organization source. In addition, respond, in at least 200 words, to at least 1 other person’s posting that has suggested a response to reduce domestic violence and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of that person’s suggestions to reduce domestic violence.

Discussion Board #3: Opens March 24 at 10:50 a.m. and closes March 31 at 9:30 a.m.

Identity theft has become an increasingly significant crime problem in this country. Look at some of the web sites that address this topic, such as those of the FBI and the Federal Trade Commission, or other sources. Discuss the following: 1) How widespread is the problem of identity theft (include data/statistics regarding the extent of identity theft)? 2) What is the criminal justice system doing about it (include specific actions or activities)? 3) What could the criminal justice system do more effectively to reduce identity theft (include specific actions or activities)? Your posting should be at least 500 words and should include a reference to at least 2 sources, at least 1 of which is a federal or state governmental source. In addition, respond, in at least 200 words, to at least 1 other person’s posting that has suggested a response to reduce identity theft and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of that person’s suggestions to reduce identity theft.

Discussion Board #4: Opens April 14 at 10:50 a.m. and closes April 21 at 9:30 a.m.

As of October 2021, Colorado, Washington, Alaska, Oregon, the District of Columbia, California, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, Michigan, Vermont, Illinois, Arizona, Montana, New Jersey, [South Dakota,] New York, Virginia, New Mexico, and Connecticut have passed ballot initiatives and/or laws that legalize possession of small amounts of marijuana for non-medical purposes under certain circumstances, and provide for its regulation and taxation. Look at the governmental web sites or other sources that address these laws. In a posting of at least 500 words, and with a reference to at least 2 sources including at least 1 federal or state governmental source, 1) describe the laws of one of these states (including what specific activities are permitted and what are not) and 2) discuss the laws’ advantages and disadvantages, as well as 3) implementation problems you envision regarding the laws. In addition, respond, in at least 200 words, to at least 1 other person’s posting discussing one of the laws’ advantages/ disadvantages or implementation issues.
Documenting Sources

DOCUMENT ALL WORDS, IDEAS, INFORMATION OR ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS TAKEN FROM A SOURCE!!!


All paraphrased or quoted material that requires documentation of its source should be followed by a parenthetical including the source’s author’s last name(s) and the page(s) on which the referenced information appears (Lakoff 123). If the author’s name appears in the text, only the page number(s) on which the referenced information appears goes in the parenthetical: Lakoff emphasizes the role of language in the socialization process (123-24). If you are using 2 or more works by the same author, include a shortened version of the title in the parenthetical (Lakoff, Language 24). For internet references, use the author, title, or site information that begins your entry in the List of Works Cited. If you are referencing multiple sources, list them in alphabetical order in your parenthetical.

Quotations

Short quotations should be enclosed in quotation marks in the text of your paper. Long quotations (generally over 4 lines of text in length) should be indented from the left margin of your text.

List of Works Cited

List entries alphabetically by author’s last name/initial information in entry. Indent the second line of any entry.

Books by a single author:


Books by 2 or 3 authors:


Books by more than 3 authors:

Later edition of a book:


Parts of book by a single author:


Parts of collections of works by different authors:


Signed article in journal with continuous pagination:


Signed article in journal with separate pagination:


Signed article in monthly or weekly magazine:


Government Documents:


Internet Sources that have no print version:

Provide as much of the following information that is available: author/editor/compiler. “Article Name.”

*Name of Site*. Version Number. Name of institution/organization affiliated with site (sponsor or publisher), Date of last update. Web. Date of access. url (required by instructor)
