What is Justice?
CJUS 4600.001

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What is Justice?
 CJUS 4600.001

**Instructor Name:** Samuel Simon
**Semester and Year:** Fall 2025 **Number of Credits:** 3 Credits
**Class Location:** Gab 105
**Class Meeting Day(s) & Time(s)**: M, W, F 11-11:50a
**Office Location:** 263G (CJ Suite) Chilton Hall **Office Hours:** M, W, F 10:00a – 11:00p
**Email:** samuel.simon@unt.edu
**Graduate Assistant:** Victoria Cadena, VictoriaCadena@my.unt.edu
**Response Time:** Email communication with me should be done via my unt.edu email address. You should use your UNT email account for all email communications with me. Communication with students is important to me and I will respond promptly. I will respond to all student emails, so if you do not receive a response within a reasonable period (48 hours) assume I did not receive the initial message and try again.

When sending an email, please put the COURSE NUMBER (CJUS 4330) in the subject line of the email. Only emails sent from your UNT email account (username@my.unt.edu) will receive a response. Please allow 48 hours of turnaround time for your email inquiries. Every effort will be made to provide a prompt response to student emails.

# Syllabus Change Policy

**I reserve the right to modify the syllabus as necessary** to account for unforeseen developments. While every effort will be made to follow this syllabus, it may be the case that the syllabus must be modified. Students will be made aware of any adjustments in advance and any changes to the syllabus will work to the benefit of the class. It is the student’s responsibility to check ANNOUNCEMENTS, so they are aware of any syllabus changes. Failure to check and read announcements regarding any such changes does not constitute an acceptable excuse for missed assignments.

# Final Exam Date & Other Important Dates

There will be no FINAL EXAM for this course.

**Important Dates.**
Monday, August 18, first day of class
Monday, September 1, Labor Day Holiday
Monday-Sunday, November 24 through 30, Thanksgiving Holiday
Thursday, December 4, Last day of class
Friday, December 12, Final day for any approved make up work to be completed.

# Course Description

Study the ethical meaning of justice in the United States. Problems confronting police, the courts and the juvenile and correctional systems are addressed.

In the United States (U.S.), the criminal justice (CJ) system is the predominant method for responding to the harms that individuals cause each other as well as the harms that individuals cause to the community at large. Because the CJ system is so pervasive, many Americans take for granted the assumption that the CJ system can actually achieve its stated goal of preventing harm and promoting community well-being. During the first half of the semester, this course explores whether the CJ system helps heal harm among individuals and build healthier communities.

The second half of the semester is dedicated to exploring big picture questions such as “what is community?”, “why is community important?”, “what types of things cause harm to communities?”, and “how can communities ethically prevent or respond to harm caused by one or more of their members?”. Throughout the entire semester, the overarching challenge this course asks you to wrestle with is to reimagine what role, if any, the CJ system is suited to play in helping communities ethically prevent and address harms experienced by their members and advance the general well-being of those communities. Course material will also help you reflect on what it would look like to be an ethical employee of the CJ system if, as some claim, the CJ system itself antithetically heaps additional harm on individuals and undermines community well-being. This course won't provide you with concrete answers for any of the questions raised in class but will provide you with the resources and critical thinking skills required to begin answering those questions for yourself.

# Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Define justice.
2. Provide a logical defense of your definition of justice.
3. Explain the various ethical issues currently confronting the U.S. criminal justice (CJ) system as it relates to the various key components within the system.
4. Compare and contrast ethical challenges that employees may encounter while working in the CJ system.
5. Develop concrete strategies for successfully overcoming ethical challenges in the CJ system.
6. Summarize what a community is and why community is important.
7. Identify what types of things cause harm to communities.
8. Justify what role, if any, the CJ system is suited to play in helping communities ethically prevent and address harms experienced by their members and advance the general well-being of those communities.
9. Generate a system in which communities can ethically prevent and respond to harm caused by one or more of their members.

# Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

# Required Texts / Materials

The assigned text listed below is required for all students enrolled in this course. Reading assignments are noted in the Course Calendar. All students are expected to read the assigned chapters prior to the date specified in the Course Calendar. The assigned readings will serve as a foundation for the discussion of the issues in class as well as test material.

Required:

Herbert, S. (2006). Citizens, Cops, and Power: Recognizing the Limits of Community. The Chicago Press. ISBN-13: 9780226327310

Maher, G. (2021). A World Without Police. Verso Books. ISBN-13: 978-1839760051

#  Additional / Supplementary Resources

Additional required reading will be provided to the students through PDF handouts posted via CANVAS. I will also post copies of the weeks power point lecture slides to CANVAS.

# Teaching Philosophy

The UNT mission statement emphasizes empowering students to thrive in a rapidly changing world. This requires critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills as key components to learning. This mission statement is perfectly patterned to my teaching philosophy. I believe that true learning occurs in an environment where sound theory and fundamental concepts are combined with solid practical application. I was fortunate to have a very successful career in federal law enforcement and intelligence, and I bring those practical experiences into the classroom. My career experiences demonstrated that, without a sound foundation, grounded in theory and education, it is difficult if not impossible to grow and learn through practical experience.

# Course Policies and Requirements

## Grade Breakdown

Grades are based on your earned point totals for the semester.

Class participation (mandatory) 50 points
Classroom Exercises 100 points
Journal 100 points
Quizzes 100 points

**Total Points 350 points**

FINAL GRADE SCALE

A= 315 -350 points

B= 280 - 349 points

C= 245 - 279 points

D= 210 - 244 points

 F= 209 and below points

**Final grades will be calculated based on total points earned in the course using the indicated scale, not on a percentage basis. I reserve the right to resolve borderline grades if students have first completed all the assignments in the course.**

## Journal

Throughout the course the students will be asked to complete journal entries. There will be four occasions when journal entries will be turned in for grades. The instructions for the journal entries will be posted to Canvas, with a grading rubric. Each journal entry will be 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. times new roman font. The journal will be graded on overall content, proper sourcing and APA citation use, length, and grammar.

## Quizzes

There will be 5 quizzes that will be given throughout the semester. I reserve the right to have the quizzes be completed in the classroom or online. If the quiz is provided online, you will be provided with the due date in class. The quizzes will reinforce the fact that you are keeping up with the assigned reading and lecture notes. Quizzes will come in the form of 20 questions potentially consisting of: true/false, multiple choice, fill-ins, or short essay questions.

## Exercises

Throughout the course students will be asked to complete four (4) exercises. The exercises will vary in their format and complexity. You will be provided with specific instructions for each exercise, and in some cases, you will be provided with examples to use as a guideline for completing the exercise. Each exercise will be valued at 25 points. Exercises may be individual effort or group effort based on the specific exercise. Instructions for the exercise as well as grading rubrics (if appropriate) will be posted to Canvas.

## Extra Credit

There may be extra credit given but this will be at the discretion of the professor. If this opportunity presents itself, this will be for 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, therefore it is important for you to do well on all course work and attend class.

## Attendance Policy

The UNT Attendance Policy can be found here:

<https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.039%20Student%20Attendance%20and%20Authorized%20Absences.pdf>

The University of North Texas recognizes that student success is promoted by regular attendance and participation in class. The student is responsible for regular and punctual attendance and is expected to participate in all courses in which the student is enrolled.

I expect every student to attend class regularly and promptly. Students are allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences during the semester. You are allowed two, use them for whatever you deem necessary. Remember, however, if you are absent on the day an assignment or extra credit is given, you forfeit those points as they cannot be made up.

A student who is absent from a class session is responsible for the subject matter discussed during that particular session. Notes missed (from lecture, guest speaker, presentations, etc.) will need to be obtained from a fellow classmate. It will be extremely difficult for you to obtain an acceptable grade in this course if you miss class consistently.

I reserve the right to request that a student be dropped from the course with a grade of “WF” upon the accumulation of a stated number of unexcused absences. An absence may be excused for the following reasons: a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose; active military service, including travel for that purpose; participation in an official university function; illness or other extenuating circumstances; pregnancy and parenting under Title IX; and when the University is officially closed by the President. The student is responsible for requesting an excused absence in writing as early in the semester as possible, and personally delivering to me satisfactory evidence to substantiate the excused absence.

## ADA Statement

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students 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 with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>

## Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. 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.

Minor violations such as an inadvertent instance of plagiarism such as a failure to cite/reference a source may result in an admonition or requirement for a resubmission of the assignment.

More serious violations will be handled consistent with the severity of the violation.

Multiple violations, intentional plagiarism, forgery, sabotage, or sharing of test answers will result in severe sanctions.

## 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).

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 will be considered at all times during the semester.

A classroom, especially during times of 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 all interactions. Each student brings unique insight and perspectives, and that can make for a very interesting and lively discussion forum, but please be appropriate and respectful of others.

## Anti-Discrimination and Title IX Information

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students 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 with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

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.

### Title IX (Survivor Advocacy)

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as 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. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648.

## 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 – Eagle Connect

Students’ 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>).

## Survivor Advocacy

Students’ 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>).

## Important Notice for F-1 Students Taking Distance Education Courses

### 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 (http://www.ecfr.gov/). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

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 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.

### Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

### Succeed at UNT

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grown. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here’s how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find Support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, <https://success.unt.edu/>.

## Emergency Response Information

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.

# Tentative Course Schedule

This calendar represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunities. Such changes will be clearly communicated.

| **Date** | **Topic** | **Corresponding Readings** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week 1**  | **Introduction; Course/Syllabus Review****Defining Justice** | LO1; LO2 |
| Mon 8/18 | Syllabus Day | Week 1 Handouts |
| Wed 8/20 | Defining Justice (In Class Exercise/Journal) | **Exercise** **1: Journal** |
| Fri 8/22 | Classroom Discussion |  |
| **Week 2** | **Ethics** | LO3; LO4; LO5 |
| Mon 8/25 | What are Ethics | Week 2 Handouts; Video |
| Wed 8/27 | Classroom Exercise | **Exercise 2: Classroom Debate** |
| Fri 8/29 | Classroom Exercise |  |
| **Week 3** | **Responsibility For Justice** | LO1; LO2 |
| Mon 9/1 | **NO CLASSES. HAPPY LABOR DAY** |  |
| Wed 9/3 | Who is responsible for seeking justice | Week 3 Handouts |
| Fri 9/5 | Can justice occur without the Government | **Exercise 3: Presentation** |
| **Week 4** | **Who Are the Police?** | LO1 |
| Mon 9/8 | Roles and Responsibilities | Week 4 Handouts |
| Wed 9/10 | Changing Expectations |  |
| Fri 9/12 | Classroom Discussion | **Quiz 1** |
| **Week 5** | **Ethics in Policing** | LO3, LO4 |
| Mon 9/15 | Various ethical guidelines | Week 5 Handouts |
| Wed 9/17 | Qualified Immunity |  |
| Fri 9/19 | The importance and role of ethics | **Exercise 4: Journal** |
| **Week 6** | **Securing the Border** | LO3, LO4 |
| Mon 9/22 | Are borders necessary? | Week 6 Handouts |
| Wed 9/24 | Who is responsible for securing the border? | **GUEST SPEAKER** |
| Fri 9/26 | Ethics at the Border | **Quiz 2** |
| **Week 7** | **Criminal Justice as a Revenue Stream** | LO3, LO4 |
| Mon 9/29 | Ferguson, MO | Week 7 Handouts |
| Wed 10/1 | Ferguson, MO |  |
| Fri 10/3 | Classroom Discussion | **Quiz 3** |
| **Week 8** | **What is Community?** | **LO6, LO7** |
| Mon 10/6 | Define community | Text HERBERT Pgs. 1-62 |
| Wed 10/8 | The Role and purpose of community |  |
| Fri 10/10 | Classroom Discussion | **Exercise 5: Survey** |
| **Week 9** | **Can Communities Function w/o Police?** | **LO8, LO9** |
| Mon 10/13 | The Role of Police in Community | Text MAHER Pgs. 1-69 |
| Wed 10/15 | Defunding the Police, What Does it Mean? |  |
| Fri 10/17 | Classroom Discussion |  |
| **Week 10** | **Can Communities Function w/o Police?** | **LO8, LO9** |
| Mon 10/20 | Classroom Discussion | Text MAHER Pgs. 127-156; 213-231 |
| Wed 10/22 | Classroom Discussion |  |
| Fri 10/24 | Classroom Discussion | **Exercise 6: Journal** |
| **Week 11** | **The Role of the Courts** | **LO3, LO4, LO5** |
| Mon 10/27 | Overview of Judicial Branch | Week 11 Handouts/Videos |
| Wed 10//29 | Purpose of the Court System |  |
| Fri 10/31 | Classroom Discussion | **Quiz 4** |
| **Week 12** | **Ethics in the Courtroom** | **LO3, LO4, LO5** |
| Mon 11/3 | Ethics for Lawyers | Week 12 Handouts |
| Wed 11/5 | Ethics for Judges |  |
| Fri 11/7 | Separation of powers | **Exercise 7: Courtroom EthicsReflection Paper** |
| **Week 13** | **The Role of Corrections** | **LO3, LO4, LO5** |
| Mon 11/10 | Overview of Corrections in America | Week 13 Handouts |
| Wed 11/12 | Punishment, Incapacitation, and Rehabilitation |  |
| Fri 11/14 | Classroom Discussion | **Quiz 5** |
| **Week 14** | **Ethics in Corrections** | **LO3. LO4, LO5** |
| Mon 11/17 | Ethics in the Prison System | Week 14 Handouts |
| Wed 11/19 | Mental Health and Incarceration |  |
| Fri 11/21 | Classroom Discussion |  |
| **NOV 24 - 30** | **THANKSGIVING BREAK** | **NO CLASSES** |
| **Week 15** | **Final Review of Course** |  |
| Mon 12/1 | Journal Prep |  |
| Wed 12/3 | Journal Prep | **FINAL JOURNAL** |
| **Fri 12/5** | **READING DAY**  | **NO CLASSES** |
| Mon 12/8 | FINALS WEEK | FINALS WEEK |
| Wed 12/10 | FINALS WEEK | FINALS WEEK |
| Fri 12/12 | FINALS WEEK | FINALS WEEK |

# Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

# UNT Mission Statement

At the University of North Texas, our caring and creative community empowers our students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

# The College of Health and Public Service

Health and Public Science students are trained to lead nonprofits, become educators, researchers and professionals who strengthen the diverse communities we serve, with thoughtful, inclusive, and equitable practices as audiologists, behavior analysts, city managers, emergency managers, health care administrators, public safety administrators, public health specialists, rehabilitation counselors, speech language pathologists, social workers, urban planners, and more.

# Criminal Justice Department Mission Statement

The Department of Criminal Justice in the University of North Texas College of Health & Public Service is here to help you learn skills and knowledge that you can use to make a difference. With a diverse student body, students will gain knowledge both from their studies and the unique viewpoints of their peers.

Our programs prepare students with the knowledge, critical thinking, and communication skills they need to collaborate with diverse groups to create just, safe communities.