CJUS 3400 CORRECTIONAL SYSTEMS

Professor Information:
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Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the various correctional theories in criminal justice and how they relate to the field itself. This class is designed to familiarize you with the theories, issues, debates, and innovations about and in corrections. It is my hope that you will hone your critical thinking skills as we traverse the literature of this landscape. “Corrections” is a broad term that encompasses historical and contemporary methods of “dealing” with lawbreakers in society. This course examines the different ways of “correcting” people through time—from torture to corporal and capital punishments to penitentiaries and community-based programs. This course will also focus on the justification for corrections—deterrence, incapacitation, punishment, rehabilitation, and reintegration and how those justifications have changed throughout history.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
At the completion of this course, students should:

- Explain the regional differences in American corrections throughout history.
- Discuss the philosophy and goals of corrections, which are sometimes competing.
- Summarize of the legal evolution of correctional systems, including the role of the federal courts in changing conditions in prisons.
- Discuss the differences between male and female incarceration experiences.
- Describe the administration of prison organizations, including but not limited to staffing, security, inmate management, inmate programs, and health care.
- Recognize the various special populations that reside within correctional settings, and how their incarceration experience differs from “regular” prisoners and the challenges they create for correctional organizations.
- Identify population trends in incarceration over time, influences on correctional populations, and the demographic composition of today’s prisons.
- Outline why America is one of the leaders in incarceration worldwide, and what has contributed to this position.
• Define the issues that prisoners face once they are released from incarceration

TEXTBOOKS:

The assigned texts listed below are required for all students enrolled in this class. 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 issues in class as well as examination material.

Required Texts:


COURSE REQUIREMENTS: COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

The following section lists the required components of this course as well as the points that may be earned toward the final course grade for each component.

Discussion Board: You may be required to complete discussion boards throughout the semester. You must make at least three substantive comments on the discussion board regarding the readings AND answer the questions proposed by the professor. To earn points such comments and answers must be more than trivial and in fact substantial and substantive (think of these as the discussion you would engage in if we had an on campus class).

Zoom Meetings: We will have a few zoom meetings throughout the semester. The professor will let you know the dates. This will be to talk about current issues and present information that is relevant to the class. These meetings will be a part of your participation grade. However, sometimes I have been known to give extra credit for attending too.

Readings:

Students should follow the schedule of reading assignments found on the course calendar. The reading assignments need to be read before participating in discussions. This will not only facilitate peer discussion, but will also allow you time to formulate questions you may have regarding the material. In addition to the required texts, the course may utilize video presentations, additional handouts, etc. that concern issues pertinent to the study of ethical problems. Information from all sources (textbook, online discussions, video presentations, handouts) may be included on course examinations.

Attendance is a part of the final grade.

COURSE OUTLINE-ALWAYS TENTATIVE

** AT THE END OF EACH NOTES SECTION I HAVE ADDED FURTHER READINGS. THESE CAN BE ACCESSED ONLINE OR AT THE UNT LIBRARY PAGE.
Examinations:

There will be 3 exams that will be given at various intervals throughout the course. Each exam will consist of essay questions. Rote memorization of facts is not the goal of this course. As a professor, I want you to be able to apply the concepts that you will learn to numerous situations. Note that any material covered in the textbook or any supplemental material (such as extra assigned readings, online videos, etc.) is “fair game.” It is your responsibility to make sure that your exam is submitted correctly and on time. ALL MATERIAL IN THIS COURSE AND IN THE BOOK IS SUBJECT TO BEING ON THE EXAM.

Exams are tentative.

Grade Breakdown:

- Test 1- 25%
- Test 2- 25%
- Test 3- 25%
- Attendance, Participation and Discussion Boards – 25%

Grading Scale: Grades will be allocated according to the following standard scale:

A=90-100
B=80-89
C=70-79
D=60-69
F=59 and below

MAKE UP POLICY

There are no make-up tests/quizzes/assignments in this class 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. 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 make up 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 (e.g., traveling for a basketball game).

There is absolutely no make-up for assignments turned in late unless authorized as a result of university related absence or through prior consultation and approval by myself. Assignments as a result of authorized absences must be turned in within 3 days of returning from the authorized absence.

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, class cancellations (if applicable), and generally, so I can reach you if necessary.

The announcement board in Canvas will be used for primary communication to the class as a whole. I advise you check the announcements section frequently.

I would like you to send me questions regarding the class to scott.belsahw@unt.edu, instead of through Canvas. With that said, if I do receive several emails regarding a common topic, I will post an announcement or mass email addressing the issue instead of responding to each individual email.

It is your responsibility to utilize a computer system that works and is compatible with the UNT online system/Canvas Learn. 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.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

It is expected that each student will do his/her own work. Cheating, including plagiarism and dual submission, on any assignment will result in a zero for that assignment and an “F” for the course. This is criminal justice, how could anyone even contemplate cheating when you are studying to work in a system based on trust and honor? With that said, I reserve the right to pursue the formal channels for plagiarism/cheating set down in the UNT Policy Manual. All students are urged to read the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline located in the UNT Policy Manual (Section 5.2). Academic dishonesty will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the final disposition being at the discretion of the professor.

A GRADE OF “INCOMPLETE”

I – Incomplete; a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course; (2) has justifiable reason (medical or other emergency circumstance) why the work cannot be completed on a schedule; and (3) arranges with the professor before the end of the semester to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements that the professor must list on the grade sheet. All work in the course must be completed within the specified time (not to exceed one year after taking the course). If you do not meet the specifications for this grade, you will need to see the Registrar’s Office about resigning from the University.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

My lectures are protected by state and common law and by applicable federal copyright laws. You are not authorized to make any commercial use of them without express prior permission from myself. Persons who do make use of my lecture notes for commercial purposes (i.e. sell your class notes to an internet site or other commercially-related business) will be held legally liable.

ODA STATEMENT:
It is the policy of UNT not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the University, through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and educational goals. Direct questions or concerns to the equal opportunity office, (940) 565-2456, or the dean of students, (940) 565-2648.

I will make every attempt possible to accommodate anyone with a documented disability. Please let me know in advance of exams or other class requirements so I have enough time to send exams or other materials to ODA. You must provide me with the appropriate exam request forms from ODA prior to the exam in order to take the exam at ODA.

Grades: Every semester, at least a couple of students come to my office around the end of the semester asking, “What can I do to raise my grade?” My policy and statement concerning that question is this:

- If you focus on learning and being responsible (i.e., keeping up with assignments, completing extra credit when given, etc.), your final grade will reflect this.
- I do not give individual extra credit. If and when I offer an extra credit assignment it will be offered to the entire class. I suggest you take advantage of extra credit whenever it is offered.
- Borderline grades will be evaluated on a case by case basis and my policy is this: if a student is 0.5 percentage points away from the next letter grade (borderline grade), has completed all extra credit opportunities, and has not missed more than the allotted number of absences, I will bump them to the next letter grade. I will not raise any grades that are not borderline grades. Not all borderline grades will be raised. Grades are not based on how much I like a person. They are based on work and performance, period. ALL GRADES ARE FINAL AFTER ENTERED IN THE COMPUTER. The final decision on whether or not to raise a grade is solely at the discretion of the professor.

FINAL POINTS:

Please do not hesitate to come to me with any questions, problems, or issues you may have. Do not wait to address these issues until it is too late for you to receive an acceptable grade. I think you will find me to be very approachable and eager to address any problems with you in a professional manner.

1. To do well in this class the student must complete all assigned readings prior to that class date. (READ!, READ!!, READ!!!) This will allow for a better discussion and understanding of the material. I take test questions from the book and discussions!!!
2. DO NOT highlight and copy text from the internet and turn it in as your own work. It is easy for me to catch you doing this. I type a sentence into Google or Yahoo and it
will pull up the entire text. You will not receive a good grade for doing this!! This includes Canvas Assignments.

3. If you are having academic or even a personal problems please feel free to talk to me. I am here to help. I might understand more than you think!

4. If you are looking for a letter of recommendation for a job or graduate school DO NOT send a mass email to multiple professors asking this. We take letters of recommendation very serious. If you cannot take the time to personally ask for a letter from your professor then I do not have the time to write you one.

Although we will attempt to adhere to the schedule of topics listed and described below, the course schedule should be viewed as highly flexible. I am not interested in covering the material as fast as possible simply for the sake of covering it. Rather, I want to cover the material that we do cover thoroughly, and at a pace that is conducive to learning the material instead of simply covering the material. Consequently, it is your responsibility to come to class, know where we are in the listing of assigned readings irrespective of this schedule, and know the material that we have covered prior to any reading assessment, examination, and/or presentation. Further, there may be additional items added to the calendar throughout the course of the semester (i.e. video presentations and/or handouts). It will be your responsibility to keep up with these as well.