



South Plains College

"SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE IMPROVES EACH STUDENT'S LIFE"

Fundamentals of Criminal Law CRIJ-1310

Instructor Contact and Office Hours

Instructor: Kenton J. Burns, Professor of Law Enforcement Technology

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Office Location: Law Enforcement Technology Building, Room 105. Levelland Campus

Office Hours

Monday – 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Tuesday - 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Wednesday - 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Thursday - 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Friday – 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Virtual Office Hours – By appointment only

Fundamentals of Criminal Law– Syllabus

Department: Professional Services and Energy

- A. **CRIJ 1310 Course Description:** This course is a study of the nature of criminal law. Topics include philosophical and historical development, major definitions and concepts, classification of crime, elements of crimes and penalties, and individual criminal responsibilities. Emphasis will be on the Texas Penal Code and the substantive criminal law.

CRIJ 1310 satisfies a Core Curriculum Requirement

Core Curriculum Objectives addressed:

- **Communications skills**—to include effective written, oral and visual communication
- **Critical thinking skills**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- **Teamwork**—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- **Personal Responsibility**—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- A. The Nature and History of Criminal Law
- B. The Legal Essence of Criminal Conduct
- C. Additional Elements of Crime
- D. Extending Criminal Liability: Inchoate Offenses and Parties to Crime
- E. Justifications as Defenses
- F. Excuses: Defenses and Insanity
- G. Legal and Social Dimensions of Personal Crime: Homicide
- H. Legal and Social Dimensions of Personal Crime:
Assault, Battery, and Other Personal Crime
- I. Legal and Social Dimensions of Property and Computer Crimes
- J. Offenses Against Public Order and the Administration of Justice
- K. Terrorism and Human Trafficking
- L. Offenses Against Public Morality
- M. Victims and the Law
- N. Punishment and Sentencing

Fundamentals of Criminal Law – Class Policies

Required Materials for Class

Textbook: CRIMINAL LAW TODAY by Frank Schmalleger and Daniel E. Hall. Published by Pearson/ Prentice Hall. ***INCLUSIVE ACCESS*** (Paid for with your tuition!)

Materials: Highlighters, pens, pencils, notepad for taking notes

Technology Requirements:

1. SPC username and password
2. SPC email address

3. Regular access to a computer
4. Regular access to reliable internet service Free Access to Microsoft Word Office 365 (southplainscollege.edu)

Grades and Assessment of Work in Class

Grades are determined by the following scale:

720– 800 points = A

640 – 719 points = B

560- – 639 points = C

480 – 559 points = D

479 and below = F

Formative Assessments consisting of quizzes, Discussion Boards, journals and other assignments as assigned	200 points
Summative Assessments consisting of 3 Major Exams and a Final Exam	400 points
Attendance- 100	100 points
Semester PENAL CODE project	100 points
TOTAL	800 points

**I reserve the right to make changes in grade calculation policies at my discretion*

The grades you receive on your assignments, quizzes, homework, digital work, drafts, revisions, papers, and exams are indicators of your progress toward mastering the course objectives. Student grades will be posted in the Blackboard gradebook. It is each student's responsibility to continually monitor academic progress posted in each student's grade book on Blackboard.

General Assignment Information

- **Writing assignments:** Your writing assignments will consist of essays, journals or discussion boards of various topics, lengths, and styles. You will receive a set of specific instructions for each writing assignment. You are expected to turn in every part of an assignment according to the dates listed on the course outline, and announced in class.
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- **Reading Quizzes:** You will have reading quizzes covering the required reading material. Quizzes are designed to assess your understanding of the material reviewed in class and read about in the chapters. You will have the opportunity to take each quiz multiple

times. Your final submission will be counted as your grade. All quizzes are taken in Blackboard and are timed. Quizzes cannot be made up if missed.

- **Major Exams:** You will have three major exams, which will cover the concepts learned up until that point. Exams will be conducted in person or via Blackboard at the discretion of the instructor. During in person exams, everything you brought to class that day will be kept out of sight the entire time. This includes all electronic devices (i.e., cell phones, tablets, laptops, smart watches, etc.), notebooks, backpacks, textbooks, etc. Students may not wear headgear during the exam (e.g., no headphones/earbuds, no sunglasses).
 - **Missed exam:** If a student misses an in-person exam, the student will receive a 0 for the exam. **HOWEVER:**
 - if you have documentation for missing the exam (e.g., an official doctor's note), then you may make up the exam within the next week. It is the student's responsibility to schedule a time with the instructor to take the exam during the instructor's office hours. Failure to schedule a time to take the exam within the required time will result in a 0 for the exam.
 - Exams conducted on Blackboard cannot be made-up if missed.

Classroom Policies, Assignment Policies, and Due Dates

Assignment Deadlines and Requirements

1. Students are expected to submit college level work **on time, on the date on which the assignment is due**. **No late work will be accepted in the class. Please plan your time accordingly!**
2. All work is expected to contain professional and appropriate language, correct grammar, correct spelling, and complete sentences.
3. All writing assignments must be in the **APA format** (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html), unless otherwise noted.
4. Writing assignments are to be submitted in WORD format. Each student at South Plains College is given a Microsoft_365 account and it should be used for assignments. Assignments will be submitted via Blackboard or Turnitin per the assignment directions. Do not send assignments to the instructor's email unless specifically instructed to do so. If you do not understand the method of submission, speak with the instructor for further clarification.

Unforeseen Circumstances

If a student is dealing with an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., a death in the family, an illness), **the student should contact the instructor immediately, before the due date of an assignment**. Please do not assume that the instructor will change the date of an assignment, or extend the date, due to an unforeseen circumstance. *It is only at the instructor's discretion that a due date may be amended or extended.* If a date is changed, it will only be changed/amended/extended

once. After that, a grade of 0 will be given for additional missed assignments. The student is given plenty of time to complete each assignment. Failure to manage your time or waiting until the last minute is not a “unforeseen circumstance” that warrants and extension of the due date.

Attendance

- Students are expected to attend **all class sessions, and attend class on time**. Being late is disruptive and disrespectful to the class. Please see the Disruptive Behavior policy, below.
- Students will be given four (4) absences to be used throughout the semester.
- If a student has five (5) or more absences, the student may be dropped from the course with a grade of F.
- You are an important part of the class. If you can't be at class, please notify the instructor by email.
- Attendance for online classes is made by logging in to Blackboard, completing assignments and participating in any other online activities required by the class.

Cellphone/Laptop/Tablet Usage in Class

Cellphones, tablets, and/or laptops may be used in the class for note-taking and academic purposes only. These devices should be kept on mute or off mode. No audible or videotaping is allowed without prior approval of the instructor. Taking phone calls in class is prohibited. Everyone in class is an adult and should act accordingly. If an emergency exists or you must take a phone call, you need to leave the room. If your call becomes lengthy and you miss 15 minutes of class, you will be marked absent. If phone calls become excessive, you will be asked to leave class and will be marked as absent. If I see anything distracting such as texting, I will ask you once to put the item (e.g., cell phone) away. If the behavior continues, and I have to ask you a second time, you will be asked to leave the class, which will count as an absence for that day.

Disruptive Behavior

You are an adult, and as such, you will be treated as one, with respect and professionalism, in the class! Being an adult also means being respectful to those around you. Do your best to be respectful of others and their right to learn in a peaceful environment in all aspects of classroom behavior. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to creating distractions, talking out of turn, talking with classmates during lecture, wandering in and out of class, chronically showing up late, chronically leaving early, improper use of technology or sleeping in class. Earbuds or other personal headphone devices will not be used in class. “Failure to comply with lawful directions of a classroom teacher relative to maintaining good order is considered misconduct on the part of the student. Repeated violations of disrupting a class will result in the student being dropped from the course.” (See Student Guide)

****If the instructor deems a student unprepared in any manner (e.g., consistently not bringing required materials/homework to class), and/or, if a student disrupts the learning environment, he/she will be asked to leave*

the class. If a student is asked to leave the class, this will result in an absence for that day, and this absence does count towards the student's allowable total of absences for the semester. If the student is continually unprepared for class in any way, and/or continually disrupts the learning environment, that student may be dropped from this course with the grade of F.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, digital homework, exams, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant. Additionally, a student may be asked to meet with the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Turning in a paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill;
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation;
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
4. Missing in-text citations.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Two or more students turning in an assignment with the same answers;
2. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
3. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
4. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
5. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
6. Taking an examination for another;
7. Altering grade records;
8. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment;
9. Rewriting another student's work in Peer Editing so that the writing is no longer the original student's;
10. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

Student Responsibilities

As a student, you are responsible for:

1. the learning process, including preparation for class, such as reading and homework; participation in class discussions, including asking relevant questions; getting assignments and/or notes if absent; and accepting responsibility for not understanding an assignment or failing an assignment,

2. having an appropriate attitude and using appropriate language in academic environments; not use condescending, inflammatory, threatening, or profane rhetoric, whether verbally or in written form, in academic environments,
3. having respectful behavior toward instructor and classmates in order to contribute to the atmosphere necessary for learning,
4. courteous actions to others, especially by putting away cell phones and other distractions while in class,
5. consistently monitoring grades and academic progress in the course (in the gradebook in Blackboard),
6. submitting all assignments in accordance with due dates, formats, and requirements,
7. avoiding all forms of cheating and plagiarism on all assignments, including improper collaboration with others,
8. asking questions (to the instructor) when something is unclear.

Institutional Policies

The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by faculty of the Professional Services and Energy Department at South Plains College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for South Plains College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives. However, instructors also are encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course's subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

Institutional Policies

**All institutional policies including statements for. Academic Integrity/
Plagiarism, Campus Carry, Title IX, Disabilities, Diversity, COVID 19,
Non-Discrimination and Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be found here:**

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

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