

# SYLLABUS

## 3385 Criminal Law

### Fall 2024

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Class Information:** Hybrid course. In person on Wednesdays from 7:00-8:15 pm in room 105 in the Science & Technology bldg. Beginning on Wed., September 4th

Welcome to the course! If you approach this course with an interest in learning about courts and criminal procedure and remain focused on the goal of learning, you may well find this to be a fascinating course. Before we begin, please read this syllabus which provides a roadmap of the semester, outlines course policies and expectations, and provides some tips for improving your chances of succeeding in this course. This syllabus will also serve as a reference throughout the semester which you can consult to answer many of your questions and to guide you towards resources which may be of assistance. By remaining enrolled in this course (choosing not to drop the course), you are agreeing to abide by all course policies set forth in this syllabus.

## Course Description

This course is the study of criminal law including application of definitions, statutory elements, defenses and penalties using Texas statutes, the Model Penal Code, and case law. The course also analyzes the philosophical and historical development of criminal law and criminal culpability.

## Textbook

### Criminal Law

Author: Gardner & Anderson  
Publisher: Cengage  
Edition: 13th Edition

Cengage MindTap by Gardner & Anderson 13th edition. You will be able to access MindTap within our course on the first day of class, Aug 18th. A free ebook comes with MindTap once you access it from within our course. Go to Course Content to set up your Account.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify the elements of crimes and defenses under Texas statutes, Model Penal Code, and case law.
- Classify offenses and articulate penalties for various crimes.
- Compare culpable mental states when assigning criminal responsibility.
- Assess the impact of history and philosophy on current criminal laws.
- Evaluate the application of criminal law to other areas of criminal justice such as law enforcement and corrections.

## Grading

Late assignments will not be accepted

Type of Assignments	Value of Assignments	% of Overall Final Course Grade
Chapter Quizzes	100 points per quiz available	30% of overall final course grade
Mid-Term Exam	100 points available	20% of overall final course grade
Final Exam	100 points available	20% of overall final course grade
Video Cases	100 Points each	15% of overall final course grade
"You Decide" Assignments	100 Points each	15% of overall final course grade

## Course Requirements and Expectations

### *Class Attendance and Participation*

Students are expected to attend our in-person class on Wednesdays from 7:00 pm-8:15 pm in room 105 Science & Technology Bldg. Students are expected to log in and complete work each week. You are expected to have read the assigned material(s) prior to answering discussion questions, taking exams, and quizzes.

### **Video Case Assignments** (100 points each)

Located in Cengage MindTap, the link for each **Video Case** Assignments is located under Course Content for each week. You will click the link within that week's Module to take you to the MindTap website. It is important that prior to attempting your **Video Case** Assignments, that you read the corresponding chapter first. This will provide the information that will help

you be successful on your **Video Case** Assignment. You will need to watch the short video in its entirety prior to attempting to answer the questions covering the video. **Video Case** Assignments are not timed. You are allowed two attempts and your highest score is recorded. **Video case** assignments are worth up to 100 pts each. **Video case** assignments constitute 15% of your overall final course grade. **"You Decide" Scenarios:** After you finish reading your Chapter and complete your Video Case Assignment, you will be prepared to complete the "**You Decide**" assignment for each Chapter. Like the Video Case assignment, you will have a short scenario to watch or read and then complete the assignment. "**You Decide**" Assignments also allow for two attempts, are not timed, and worth up to 100 pts each. "**You Decide**" assignments constitute 15% of your overall final course grade.

#### **Chapter Exams** (100 points each)

In this course, you are required to complete **Chapter Quizzes** (called Chapter Exams each week. These **Chapter Quizzes** are located within MindTap and should be accessed under each week's Unit. Each **Chapter Exam** will cover material from that particular chapters text readings and other Mindtap information such as "You Decide" and Video Case assignments. There are 25 multiple choice questions per **Chapter Exam**. Unlike Video Cases and "You Decide" assignments, **Chapter Exams** are timed for 60 minutes. You only have one attempt on **Chapter Exams** and they are worth up to 100 pts each. **Chapter Exams** constitute 30% of your overall final course grade.

#### **Mid-Term Exam** (100 points)

In this class, you are required to complete a comprehensive **Mid-Term Exam**. The **Mid-Term Exam** will come from the Chapter readings, quizzes, and other material found under each week's unit as well as what we cover in class up through Week 7. The **Mid-Term Exam** will be timed (90 minutes) and you will have 50 questions worth 2 points each for a total of up to 100 pts. It will be taken here within our Blackboard course. The **Mid-Term Exam** counts 20% of your overall Final Course grade.

#### **Final Exam** (100 points)

In this class, you are required to complete a comprehensive **Final Exam**. The **Final Exam** will cover all material after the Mid-Term. The **Final Exam** will be timed (90 minutes) and you will have 50 questions worth 2 points each for a total of up to 100 pts. It will be taken here within our Blackboard course. The **Final Exam** counts 20% of your overall Final Course grade.

### **IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

**Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for individuals with disabilities. Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations of their disability. If you have a disability that may require an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu).

**Academic Learning Center:** All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. The Academic Learning Center is an appointment based center where appointments are made through the Navigate platform. Students access Navigate through Jagwire in the Student Services tab. The Center is active on campus outreaching to students to highlight services offered. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu) or calling (210)-784-1332. Appointments can also be made through JagWire under the services tab.

**Counseling Resources:** As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you or someone you know is experiencing life stressors, emotional difficulties, or mental health concerns at Texas A&M University – San Antonio, please contact the Student Counseling Center (SCC) located in Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance) or call 210-784-1331 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday – Friday. After-hours crisis support is available by calling 210-784-1331. Please contact UPD at 911 if harm to self or harm to others is imminent.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free, confidential (to the extent permitted by law), and are not part of a student's academic or university record. SCC provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

**Emergency Preparedness:** JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification system. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff, and faculty who are registered in JagE Alert, will have the option to receive a text message, email, and/or phone call with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Preparedness and the Emergency Response Guide can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/upd/index.html>.

**Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance:** According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

**Jaguar Writing Center:** The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in JagWire under the student services tab. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found

on our website at [www.tamusa.edu/Writing-Center](http://www.tamusa.edu/Writing-Center). The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing [writingcenter@tamusa.edu](mailto:writingcenter@tamusa.edu).

**Meeting Basic Needs:** Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students ([DOS@tamusa.edu](mailto:DOS@tamusa.edu)) for support. In addition, you may notify the instructor if you are comfortable doing so.

**Military Affairs:** Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, about special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots' Casa in-person, Room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at [military@tamusa.edu](mailto:military@tamusa.edu) or (210)784-1397.

**Religious Observances:** Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under A&M System policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

**Respect for Diversity:** We understand that our students represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. When we are equity-minded, we are aware of differences and inequalities and are willing to discuss them so we can act to resolve them. The University is committed to building cultural competencies, or the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that enable individuals and organizations to acknowledge cultural differences and incorporate these differences in working with people from diverse cultures. Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the classroom, on campus, and as a future professional in the global community. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate respectfully.
- Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the A&M-San Antonio community.

**The Six-Drop Rule:** Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

**Statement of Harassment and Discrimination:** Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism, and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or

discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the university. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and other healthcare providers) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about an incident of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331, Modular C.

**Students' Rights and Responsibilities:** The purpose of the following statement is to enumerate the essential provisions of students' freedoms and responsibilities to learn at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. All students are required to follow all policies and regulations as set forth by The Texas A&M University System, including the A&M-San Antonio Student Code of Conduct.

#### *Students' Rights*

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no university rule or procedure that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition, and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the university, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

#### *Students' Responsibilities*

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and staff, and the administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted and compliant with the University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and in the University Catalog.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their University email for any updates or official University notifications.
6. We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual

orientation, or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.