

Texas A&M University-San Antonio
College of Arts & Sciences, Department of Social Sciences
CRIM 5303 600: Law and Policy in Criminal Justice
Fall 2024

General Information

Course & Section #	CRIM5303
Term & Year-	Fall 2024
Course schedule (day and time of class)-	online asynchronous
Course location-	Remote

Instructor Information

Name and Title:	Dr. Claire Nolasco Braaten, Professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice
E-mail	claire.braaten@tamusa.edu ; cnolasco@tamusa.edu
Phone Number	210-784-2210
Office hours for students	By appointment
Office location	CAB 349C

Course Overview

This course provides an examination of current legal issues in criminal justice, liability of criminal justice practitioners, and corrections law relating to conditions of confinement and prisoners' rights. The policy making process in criminal justice and current criminal justice policy debates and developments will also be discussed.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course will discuss various legal developments and critical issues in policing, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice. At various points and at the end of the semester, the students are expected to accomplish the following:

1. Develop an understanding of the history and development of legal issues in policing, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice;
2. Familiarize themselves with the contemporary legal cases and laws relating to issues in n policing, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice;
3. Discuss the laws and procedure applying to offenders in contact with the police, including privacy expectations involving surveillance technology, law on interrogations, exclusionary rule, and racial profiling;
4. Identify the Constitutional rights of the offender in courts as decided by the United States Supreme Court in relevant cases;
5. Explain and distinguish the legal rights of inmates incarcerated in various prisons and detention facilities, with specific focus on inmate litigation, due process, and collateral consequences;
6. Analyze the nature and extent of legal rights of juvenile offenders in modern U.S.;
7. Utilize and develop critical thinking in analyzing various legal issues in criminal justice.

Required Course Materials

Hemmens, C. (2015). *Current Legal Issues in Criminal Justice*. Oxford University Press.
ISBN-13: 978-0199355334
ISBN-10: 0199355339

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING COMPONENTS:

Discussion Posts:

The blackboard discussions involve responding to questions related to the week's readings. There are five discussion assignments worth 30 points each for a total of 150 points. Online discussion forums are used to inspire thought and interaction between classmates. It is a critical part of the online course experience. It is the place where you will not only respond to questions posed by the instructor, but where you may post questions concerning the material presented. It is also the place where you are to ask for and provide help and encouragement to your classmates. **You are required to respond to one of your classmate's posts.** Your online participation will be evaluated on a quantity and quality basis. Your comments should advance the discussion, add value, and be relevant. Comments such as "I agree" and "ditto" are not considered value-added participation. Therefore, when you agree or disagree with a comment, please state and support your agreement or disagreement.

Reaction Papers

You will be asked to read an article and to write a paper recording your response or reaction to the class material for the week. There are five reaction papers worth 30 points each for a total of 150 points. The reaction paper should be a **minimum of 500 words (1 page single spaced or 2 pages double spaced) and a maximum of 1,000 words (2 pages, single spaced or 4 pages, double spaced)**. In these reports—often referred to as response or reaction papers—I will expect you to do two things: summarize the material and detail your reaction to it. Please see guidelines on writing a reaction paper below.

Policy Memorandum

A policy memo is a document that provides analysis and/or recommendations for a particular audience regarding a particular situation or problem. A well-written policy memo reflects attention to purpose; it is well organized; and it has a clear, concise style. **The length of your policy memo assignment is a minimum of 750 words and a maximum of 1,500 words.** Do not exceed this length limit! Please see guidelines on writing a policy memorandum below.

Peer Review of Policy Memorandum

The peer review process is an important part of the research and publishing process. As a peer reviewer, you will provide constructive feedback on your classmate's policy memorandum using a rubric and a detailed analysis of the paper's arguments and supporting evidence. The written feedback on your classmate's policy memorandum should be substantive, with a view of improving your classmate's work. Please see guidelines on writing a peer review below.

Extra Credit

Individual student requests for extra credit will not be entertained. The instructor may or may not, in her discretion, offer and announce an extra credit opportunity for the entire class if there is something the instructor feels strongly about encouraging participation in.

All of the following components are **REQUIRED** for the course completion. The breakdown of the final grade is as follows:

	Points
Essay Assessment on Article	50
Five Discussion Assignments (20	100
Five Reaction Papers (30 points	150
Peer Review of Policy Memo	100
Policy Memo (Final)	100
Total Points	500

The final grade will be based on the following grading scale:

GRADE	EQUIVALENT POINTS
A	90% to 100%
B	80% to 89%
C	70% to 79%
D	61% to 69% or less
F	60% or less

Note on the written assessments and deadline for discussions: Unless otherwise indicated, the written assignments may be submitted before the end of the day (midnight) of the deadline indicated in the class schedule. **The time used for written assessments and deadlines for discussions refer to Texas time (central time zone).** If you are in another time zone, please make sure to check your calendars and watches to be aware of Texas times.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Every student is responsible for familiarizing himself/herself with the specific academic regulations contained in the university catalog including degree requirements. For a detailed explanation of policies on class attendance, absence due to religious holidays, field trips, degree planning and withdrawal from the university, please refer to the catalog or the online version at <http://www.TAMUSA.edu/academics/catalog/>.

The University Attendance Policy provides that any absences tend to lower the quality of a student's work in a course, and frequent or persistent absences may preclude a passing grade or cause a student to be dropped from one or more courses upon the request of a faculty member to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Students will be excused in this class for no more than two missed classes without proper documentation or prior approval. Thereafter, each absence must be properly documented or approved by the professor. Absences that exceed the number described herein or incurred without proper documentation will result in a grade of F. Complete class attendance without any absence during the semester, on the other hand, will result in a letter increase in grade in borderline cases, at the instructor's discretion. It is the student's responsibility to obtain missed material from other class members. Participation and engagement on the part of the student will be an integral part of this course.

Cellular Phone Policy: All cellular phones, pagers, and other forms of electronic communication must be silenced during the class period. If you need to have your device on for emergency purposes, inform the teacher as well as take steps to minimize the disturbance in class.

Make-Up Assignments: Make-up assignments will not be given unless a student can provide appropriate cause for missing the deadlines. Examples of this would be: (a) illness that is certified with a licensed physician's note stating that the student should avoid participating in class functions; or (b)

certifiable death or cataclysmic life course event that has an adverse effect on the student and that can be documented and/or verified. Make-up assignments will be given at a time and place convenient for the professor and the student concerned, upon mutual agreement of the parties.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

E-mail communications are an integral part of this course. It is recommended you make sure you:

1. Check your e-mail at least twice per week (more often is better).
2. Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.
3. Include "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or topic.
4. Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.
5. Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
6. Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or e-mail).
7. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
8. Sign your e-mail messages.

RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION

Many of the "rules of the road" or protocols that apply to e-mail also apply to the use of discussions. Use the following conventions when composing a discussion posting:

1. During a Discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the Discussions multiple times during the week.
2. If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use e-mail rather than the discussions (see above E-mail Protocols).
3. Use the appropriate Discussion Topic; don't post everything on the "Main" Discussion Topic.
4. Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message.
5. A helpful hint for use with both discussions and e-mail --- Compose your message in your word-processing application in order to check spelling, punctuation, and grammar --- then copy and paste your composition into e-mail or the discussion. This also saves online time.
6. Everyone should feel free to participate in class and online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
7. Respect each other's ideas, feelings and experience.
8. Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
9. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
10. "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or discussion topic when applicable. Some assignments will specify the subject heading.
11. Use the "reply" button rather than the "compose" button if you are replying to someone else's posting.
12. Do not use postings such as "I agree," "I don't know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the Discussions, and will not be counted for assignment credit.

13. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
14. Use the Technical Discussion topic for assistance with technical issues. Use the Help Discussion topic for questions about course material or assignments. There will be specific discussion topics for particular discussions - pay close attention to the assignment, and post appropriately.

PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The faculty of the Department of Arts and Sciences expects students to conduct their academic work with integrity and honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in the failure of a course and dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion- the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentation of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the College. Students are expected to do their own course work. Cheating or plagiarism by an individual student will result in a grade of F on the particular paper or in the course.

The University's policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found in <http://www.tamusa.tamus.edu/undergraduate-catalog-2011.pdf>.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

All forms of prohibited conduct are outlined in the TAMU-SA student handbook. In addition, guidelines and procedures for handling instances of student misconduct are contained therein, which can be viewed on line at: <http://www.tamusa.tamus.edu/studenthandbook.html>.