

Texas A&M University-San Antonio
College of Arts & Sciences, Department of Social Sciences
CRIM3385 900 202520: Criminal Law
Class Hours
Spring 2025

Professor: Claire Nolasco Braaten, J.D., Ph.D.
Office: CAB 349C
Office Hours: 11:00-12:00 noon (Mondays) and online through Zoom link by appointment. Please email me first and we will set up an appointment through Zoom.
Office Phone: 210-784-2210
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Class Hours: 9:30-10:45 am Mondays
Classroom: Madla 237

TEXT:

Required Book:

Dowling, J. (2016). *Texas Criminal Law: Principles and Practices*. (2nd edition). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
ISBN-13: 9780133512571
DIGITAL ISBN-13: 9780133787658
ISBN-10: 0133512576

Supplementary Material: Any current version of the Texas Penal Code.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will analyze substantive criminal law that includes an overview of the law, definition of crime, general principles of criminal responsibility, elements of major crimes, punishments, and conditions or circumstances that may excuse from criminal responsibility or mitigate punishment. Particular emphasis is on the penal laws of the State of Texas.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will discuss various concepts and issues in criminal law. At various points and at the end of the semester, the students are expected to accomplish the following:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of the different types of crimes;
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the elements of the primary state criminal offenses as defined by the Texas Penal Code;
3. Identify and discuss the possible criminal liabilities, defenses and mitigations of different parties to a crime; and
4. Utilize and develop critical thinking in handling specific cases involving possible criminal liability.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING COMPONENTS:

Exams

This course will use three exams as methods of evaluation. All the exams will be posted online in Blackboard in the folder: "Exams & Quizzes." **Exams will be in multiple choice format.** All exams and other assessments will be *graded within two weeks of the due date* and grades will be posted to Blackboard. Grades will not be rounded/bumped up to next letter grade (i.e. students earning 89.4% will receive a B), so do not ask. Students desiring to discuss their individual grades should visit the instructor during office hours, as this is not an appropriate topic during class time.

Discussion Posts:

The blackboard discussions involve analyzing hypothetical cases or current news events that involve potential criminal liabilities. Online discussion forums are used to inspire thought and interaction between classmates. It is a critical part of the online course experience. Each discussion post is worth 20 points and constitutes 20% of your final class grade. 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.

Please check the document titled, "**Sample/Model Answers to Criminal Law Cases (Bar Exam Format)**" and "**Sample/Model Answers to Criminal Law Cases (Bar Exam Format) Example 2**" that I uploaded on Blackboard. You are expected to answer in the same format/style as the sample answers.

For each case scenario/discussion questions, identify the crime that was committed. Enumerate the elements of each crime that you think was committed. The elements of the crime are those that are listed in the Texas Penal Code. After enumerating the elements of the crime, identify the facts in the case scenario that you think describe the element of the crime. Note that each element of the crime must exist for the crime you chose to be the correct answer. If the facts do not support any element of the crime, the crime you chose is incorrect. Think again.

Classroom Activities

Throughout the semester, you will complete six in-class activities, each worth 10 points. These activities collectively make up 20% of your final grade and are designed to deepen your understanding of criminal law through interactive and reflective exercises. To earn credit for each activity, you are expected to actively participate during class, complete the assigned tasks, and submit a one-paragraph self-reflection at the end of the session.

Your self-reflection should include a self-assigned grade out of 10 points along with a justification for your score based on your participation, preparation, and contribution to the activity. Points will be awarded based on the attached rubric. Be honest and thoughtful in your self-assessment, using this opportunity to reflect on your learning and engagement.

An example of a self-reflection might look like this: "I would give myself 9 out of 10 points for today's activity. I participated actively in the group discussion, providing relevant examples from the reading. I was prepared and had reviewed the assigned material beforehand, which helped me contribute meaningfully. However, I missed one part of the worksheet, so I deducted a point." Make sure your reflections are submitted by the end of each class session unless otherwise instructed.

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:

First Exams	20%
Second Exams	20%
Final Exams	20%
Discussion Posts	20%
Classroom Activities	20%
Total	100%

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 assessments may be taken any time during the day of the exam but will be timed. This means that once you log on to take the exams, you will have the exact time period (usually 1 hour) within which to complete the exams. Once the time has lapsed, the exams will automatically close and your answers at that point will count towards the total credit. **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 Examinations: Make-up exams will not be given unless a student can provide appropriate cause for missing the exam. 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 exams will be given at a time and place convenient for the professor and the student concerned, upon mutual agreement of the parties.

Make-up exams will be in the end of the semester and will be comprehensive, covering all chapters discussed from the first week of classes. The professor reserves the right to change the format of the exams to essay or short answers.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

E-mail communications are an integral part of this course. It's 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>

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADAAA 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 accommodation of their disability. If you have a diagnosed 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.

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 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 8:00AM and 5:00PM. All mental health services provided by the SCC are free, confidential (as the law allows), and are not part of a student's academic or university record. SCC provides brief individual, couples, and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

In a crisis situation, please walk-in to the Student Counseling Center (SCC) any time between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM to be seen by a licensed clinician. After hours, please contact UPD at 911 or text "HOME" to 741-741 24/7/365 to connect with a trained crisis counselor. The National Suicide Prevention hotline also offers a 24/7/365 hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, 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. The Writing Center is currently holding all appointments digitally. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in JagWire under the student services tab. Students wanting to work in realtime with a tutor can schedule an “Online Appointment.” Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an “eTutoring” appointment. 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. The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing 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) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and 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 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 the 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 class, 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.
- Keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature.
- 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 a situation 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 for the student freedom and responsibility 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. This includes 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, 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.

- Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

- A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and the administration.
- A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, University Catalog and students must comply with them and the laws of the land.
- A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire university community.
- A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
- A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.
- 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.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS:

DAY	AREA OF DISCUSSION	ASSIGNED READINGS
WEEK 1 (JANUARY 21-25, 2025)		
20 Jan 2025 (no classes)	Martin Luther King Day- No classes Please get a copy of the book for this class.	No assignment
	Orientation; Review of Course Syllabus	
23 January 2025	Foundations of Criminal Law (watch my video in Blackboard) Overview of crime and criminal law, including sources, classification and purpose of criminal law	Chapter 1, Texas Criminal Law
25 January 2025	Elements of a Crime (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of basic elements of crime Analysis of hypothetical cases to illustrate the elements of a crime	Chapter 2, Texas Criminal Law
WEEK 2 (JANUARY 27- FEBRUARY 1, 2025)		
27 Jan 2025	The Criminal Law in Daily Practice (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of the process for filing criminal charges and the procedure under Texas Courts Discussion of various legal doctrines such as double jeopardy and ex post facto law Analysis of issues in sentencing and bias crimes	Chapter 3, Texas Criminal Law
	Parties to Offenses (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of nature and scope of criminal liabilities of parties to the offense under common law and Texas law Criminal liability of corporations	Chapter 4, Texas Criminal Law

27 Jan 2025	Classroom Activity No. 1- Should it be a crime?	
31 Jan 2025	Deadline for Blackboard Discussion No. 1	Deadline
1 February 2025	Deadline for responding to your classmate's discussion post	Deadline
2 February 2025	FIRST EXAMS (OPEN NOTES; ONLINE; CHAPTERS 1, 2, 3 and 4)- online through Blackboard	Any time during the day; timed exams
WEEK 3 (FEBRUARY 3-8, 2025)		
3 Feb 2025	Criminal Homicide (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of the elements of murder, capital murder, voluntary and involuntary manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. Interpretation of each of these elements according to cases decided by U.S. courts. Case Analysis- Analysis of hypothetical and decided cases to determine the type of criminal homicide committed and the criminal liabilities of parties.	Chapter 5, Texas Criminal Law
3 Feb 2025	Classroom Activity No. 2	
7 Feb 2025	Deadline for Blackboard Discussion No. 2	Deadline
8 Feb 2025	Deadline for responding to your classmate's discussion post	Deadline
WEEK 4 (FEBRUARY 10-15, 2025)		
10 Feb 2025	Assault and Sexual Assault (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of the elements of assault and sexual assault. Interpretation of each of these elements according to cases decided by U.S. courts. Case Analysis- Analysis of hypothetical and decided cases to determine the type of assault committed and the criminal liabilities of parties.	Chapter 6, Texas Criminal Law
10 Feb 2025	Classroom Activity No. 3	
14 Feb 2025	Deadline for Blackboard Discussion No. 3	Deadline
15 Feb 2025	Deadline for responding to your classmate's discussion post	Deadline
WEEK 5 (FEBRUARY 17-22, 2025)		
17 Feb 2025	Kidnapping and Related Offenses (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of the elements of kidnapping and related offenses. Interpretation of each of these elements according to cases decided by U.S. courts. Case Analysis- Analysis of hypothetical and decided cases to determine the type of crime committed and the criminal liabilities of parties.	Chapter 7, Texas Criminal Law
17 Feb 2025	Classroom Activity No. 4	
21 Feb 2025	Deadline for Blackboard Discussion No. 4	Deadline
22 Feb 2025	Deadline for responding to your classmate's discussion post	Deadline

23 Feb 2025	SECOND EXAMS (CHAPTERS 5, 6, and 7)- online through Blackboard	Any time during the day; timed exams
WEEK 6 (FEBRUARY 24- MAR 1, 2025)		
24 Feb 2025	Property Destruction Offenses (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of the elements of property destruction. Interpretation of each of these elements according to cases decided by U.S. courts.	Chapter 8, Texas Criminal Law Chapter 28, Texas Penal Code
24 Feb 2025	Classroom Activity No. 5	
WEEK 7 (MAR 3-8, 2025)		
3 March 2025	Theft and Fraud (watch my video in Blackboard) Discussion of the elements of theft and fraud. Interpretation of each of these elements according to cases decided by U.S. courts. Case Analysis- Analysis of hypothetical and decided cases to determine the type of crime committed and the criminal liabilities of parties.	Chapter 9, Texas Criminal Law;
3 March 2025	Classroom Activity No. 6	
WEEK 8 (MAR 10-15, 2025) SPRING BREAK (NO CLASSES)		
10 March 2025 (no classes)	Robbery, Burglary and Criminal Trespass (watch my video on Blackboard) Discussion of the elements of robbery, burglary and criminal trespass. Interpretation of each of these elements according to cases decided by U.S. courts.	Chapter 10, Texas Criminal Law
14 Mar 2025	Deadline for Blackboard Discussion No. 5	Deadline
15 Mar 2025	Deadline for responding to your classmate's discussion post	Deadline
WEEK 9		
17 Mar 2025	FINAL EXAMS (CHAPTERS 8, 9, 10)- online through Blackboard	Any time during the day; timed exams

Instructions for Classroom Activities

Overview:

Throughout the semester, you will complete six in-class activities, each worth 10 points. These activities collectively constitute 20% of your final grade. The activities are designed to enhance your understanding of criminal law concepts through interactive and reflective exercises.

Activity Requirements:

1. **Participation:**
 - Actively engage in the assigned activity during class.
 - Collaborate with classmates as required (e.g., group discussions, debates, role-play).
2. **Completion:**
 - Submit any work product created during the activity (e.g., notes, worksheets, or summaries).
3. **Self-Reflection Submission:**
 - After each activity, submit a one-paragraph self-reflection.
 - Include the following in your reflection:
 - A self-assigned grade out of 10 points.
 - A justification for your grade based on your participation, preparation, and contribution.
4. **Timeliness:**
 - Self-reflections are due at the end of the class session unless otherwise instructed.

Grading Criteria for Each Activity (10 points total): You will grade yourself based on the attached grading rubric.

- **Preparation (2 points):** Were you prepared for class by reading all assigned materials?
- **Frequency of participation in class or group discussion (2 points):** Were you engaged and actively contributing?
- **Quality of comments (2 points):** Was your submitted work accurate and thoughtful?
- **Listening skills (2 points)**
- **Classroom conduct and respect for others**

Self-Reflection Example:

"I would give myself 9 out of 10 points for today's activity. I participated actively in the group discussion, providing relevant examples from the reading. I was prepared and had reviewed the assigned material beforehand, which helped me contribute meaningfully. However, my answer was not completely accurate, so I deducted a point."

I may or may not agree with your self-reflection and will base your final classroom activity grade on multiple factors, including notes submitted, participation in classroom and group discussion, etc.

Class Participation Grading Rubric

Name and Student Id: _____ Classroom Activity No: _____ Total Score: _____ Date: _____

Please write in the blank box below your reason why you gave yourself your score based on this rubric for this classroom activity:

	Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (2 points)	Meets Expectations (1 point)	Below Expectations (0 points)	My grade (please indicate your score)
1	Preparation for class	Completes all readings, often re-reading assigned texts to develop novel and critical responses to them; completes, edits, and submits all work on time.	Completes all assigned readings far enough in advance to have developed thorough responses to them; completes and submits all work on time.	Does not complete multiple reading assignments; many assignments missing, completed late, or containing significant errors.	
2	Frequency of participation in class or group discussion	Initiates contributions and discussion more than once in each session.	Initiates contributions and discussion once in each session.	Does not initiate contributions or participate in discussion in each class sessions.	
3	Quality of comments	Comments are always insightful and constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions, and specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.	Comments are mostly insightful and constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or irrelevant to the discussion.	Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Doesn't use appropriate terminology and comments are not always relevant to the discussion.	
4	Listening skills	Listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks (i.e., the student hears what others say and contributes to the dialogue).	Mostly attentive when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement from instructor to refocus comment.	Often inattentive. Occasionally makes disruptive comments when others are speaking.	
5	Classroom conduct and respect for others	Avoids cell phone/laptop use during discussion; makes eye contact; encourages others to share conflicting viewpoints; looks to learn from others' experiences and backgrounds.	Demonstrates respect by avoiding cell phone and laptop use while others are speaking; makes eye contact; avoids personal attacks when disagreements arise.	Is often distracted and inattentive during discussions; may dominate conversation or lack courtesy when addressing others; interrupts others often.	