



Course Syllabus

CRIJ 1310 – Fundamentals of Criminal Law

Catalog 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.

Lecture hours = 3, Lab hours = 0

Prerequisites: None

Semester Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours per Week: 3

Lab Hours per Week: 0

Contact Hours per Semester: 48

State Approval Code: 43.0104.54 24

Class section meeting time:

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure: In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Panola College to move to altered operations. During this time, Panola College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online learning management system (CANVAS), online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Panola College's website (www.panola.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, CANVAS for each class for course-specific communication, and Panola College email for important general information.

A.I. Policy: The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for students who wish to use it. Students must cite AI-generated material that informs their work. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty and may result in the student failing the assignment. Any written assignment generated by the student may not contain more than 50% A.I. generated materials. The overall purpose of the written assignment is to test the students understanding of the materials/subject covered and their respective ability to communicate that understanding.

Core Components and Related College Student Learning Outcomes

This course counts as part of the academic requirements of the Panola College Core Curriculum and an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree. Yes No: If no, skip to Instructional Goals.

The items below marked with an X reflect the state-mandated outcomes for this course **IF this is a CORE course:**

- Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation and syntheses of information
- CT1: Generate and communicate ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing

information

- CT2: Gather and assess information relevant to a question
- CT3: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information
- Communication Skills – to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
 - CS1: Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication
 - CS2: Develop, interpret, and express ideas through oral communication
 - CS3: Develop, interpret, and express ideas through visual communication
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills – to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
 - EQS1: Manipulate and analyze numerical data and arrive at an informed conclusion
 - EQS2: Manipulate and analyze observable facts and arrive at an informed conclusion
- Teamwork – to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
 - TW1: Integrate different viewpoints as a member of a team
 - TW2: Work with others to support and accomplish a shared goal
- Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
 - PR1: Evaluate choices and actions and relate consequences to decision-making
- Social Responsibility – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
 - SR1: Demonstrate intercultural competence
 - SR2: Identify civic responsibility
 - SR3: Engage in regional, national, and global communities

Instructional Goals and Purposes:

The purpose of this course is to:

1. Present an overview of criminal law and examine Texas criminal statutes.
2. Explain the historical and philosophical development of the nature of criminal law.
3. List the elements of crimes using the Texas statutes as an illustration.
4. Discuss criminal responsibilities as they apply to the criminal statutes.

Learning Outcomes: [from the ACGM catalog]

After studying all materials and resources presented in the course, the student will be able to:

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

Course Content:

A general description of lecture/discussion topics included in this course are listed in the Learning Objectives / Specific Course Objectives sections of this syllabus.

Students in all sections of this course will learn the following content:

1. Foundations of Criminal Law
2. Elements of a Crime

3. The Criminal Law in Daily Practice
4. Parties to Offenses
5. Criminal homicide
6. Assault and Sexual Assault
7. Kidnapping and Related Offenses
8. Property Destruction Offenses
9. Theft, Fraud, and Related Offenses
10. Robbery, Burglary, and Criminal Trespass
11. Offenses Against Government Operations
12. Public Order, Indecency, Health, and Safety Offenses
13. Intoxication Offenses
14. General Defenses and Justifications

Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery:

This course is offered in online, face-to-face, and/or Hybrid formats. For the traditional classroom course, teaching approaches are expected to vary with individual instructors who should employ those techniques that work best for them and their students. Although lecture and reading assignments are the primary forms of delivery, other instructional methods may involve classroom discussion, student presentations and lectures, audio-visual instruction, invited speakers, critical thinking activities, in class writing exercises designed to stimulate critical thinking, and group activities. Distance learning is also available for students who cannot attend lectures and who are capable of the amount of self-direction and discipline required to complete such a course. Reading the materials, communication via email, and on-line discussion are some of the methods used for distance learning.

Academic Freedom:

The Sociology/Criminal Justice departments recognizes the right of the instructor and the students to address controversial subjects. Academic freedom is in essence the freedom of speech in the classroom through which ideas may be challenged and truth may be pursued. Consequently, the department firmly upholds the right of instructors and students to express in writing, speech, or symbolism their understanding, opinions, and knowledge on controversial subjects. The US Supreme Court has consistently upheld that the freedom of speech "concerning public affairs is more than self-expression; it is the essence of self-government." (*Garrison v. Louisiana*): that "speech on public issues occupies the highest rung of the hierarchy of First Amendment values and is entitled to special protection" (*Connick v. Myers*): and "that Government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable" (*Texas v. Johnson*). Therefore, academic freedom in this public, government funded course protects the instructor and students who express opinions on public issues which some may deem offensive.

Academic freedom does not protect the libel or slander of private persons. Libel and slander consist of written and verbal defamation of a person's character through the intentional disbursement of patently false information. (*New York Times v. Sullivan* and *Gertz v. Robert Welch*). Furthermore, academic freedom does not protect obscenity as it is possible to freely discuss controversial issues without being obscene. Obscenity follows three basic guidelines: (a) whether "the average person, applying contemporary community standards" would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest, (b) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law, and (c) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. (*Miller v. California*). In an appeal to the "community standards" of the classroom, students are required to wear modest clothing and maintain a standard of behavior consistent with the college code of conduct so as not to disrupt the learning environment. The instructor and the college reserve the right to remove students from the class, fail students, and hold disciplinary actions in accord with college policy for issues of libel, slander, and obscenity.

Finally, academic freedom and free speech are not excusatory protections for the violation of the student code of conduct, for the poor performance on graded materials, or for the failure to submit graded materials.

Major Assignments / Assessments:

The following items will be assigned and assessed during the semester and used to calculate the student's final grade.

Assignments

Faculty may assign both in and out of class assignments, essay projects, and exams to assess the student's knowledge and abilities. Faculty may also choose from the following assessment criteria:

1. Exams
2. Tests
3. Quizzes
4. Internet Assignments
5. Journal Assignments
6. Library Assignments
7. Written Assignments
8. Attendance
9. Class Participation/Discussion
10. Class Preparedness

Assessment(s):

1. Students must demonstrate their mastery of the course objectives by scoring 70% or better on Test 1.
2. Students must demonstrate their mastery of the course objectives by scoring 70% or better on Test 2.
3. Students must demonstrate their mastery of the course objectives by scoring 70% or better on Test 3.
4. Students must demonstrate their mastery of the course objectives by scoring a 70% or better on a written assignment.
5. Students must demonstrate their mastery of the course objectives by scoring a 70% or better on a comprehensive Final Exam.
6. Student semester grades are calculated in accordance with the Course Grade weights as listed below. The student is considered to have mastered the course objectives if the student has a final semester grade of 70% or higher.

Course Grade:

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

- Test 1 – 20% (proctored)
- Test 2 – 20% (proctored)
- Test 3 – 20% (proctored)
- Chapter Quizzes – at the end of the semester, the chapter quiz average may substitute for either your Test 1, 2, or 3 grade, provided the quiz average is higher than the lowest Test 1, 2, or 3 grade. The quiz average constitutes all assigned quizzes, not just completed quizzes.
- Discussion Participation – Discussion Topics are a requirement of this course. Students may receive up to 5 points for Discussion, based on the subjective scoring of the Professor. The Discussion points will then be added back to the Quiz grade from the related chapter.
- Written Assignment – 15% (submitted via Canvas or current LMS)
- Final Exam – 25% (proctored)

For shortened semesters, i.e. Winter Term, Summer 1, and/or Summer 2 when time and testing facility hours are modified, the grading scale is modified as follows:

- Mid Term – 30% (proctored)
- Final Exam – 30% (proctored)
- Quiz Average – 25%
- Written Assignment – 15%

Subjective grading – in circumstances where student grades are borderline and the issue of rounding the grade up comes into question, the professor may consider your classroom attendance record, your class participation level, and/or your perceived preparedness level for class in determining to round up or not.

Test Proctoring:

Face to Face Courses – Instructors have the following options:

1. Test their students during class using the testing labs or paper and pencil.
2. Use the Testing Center for exams (students must be given at least two days)
3. Allow students to test online.

Online Courses – Instructors will use proctoring service for at least two assignments/exams.

Students must adhere to the following rules:

Dress appropriately – Students must follow the dress code outlined in The Pathfinder. Instructors have the right not to review exams if a student is inappropriately dressed and can require the student to retake the exam in the testing center.

Take the exam at a desk or table location in a quiet area of the house – If a student does not have a location like this in the house, the student must contact the instructor prior to the exam.

Complete a correct room scan; an incomplete room scan can result in the instructor not reviewing the test and the student being required to retake the exam in a testing center. A proper scan requires a complete 360-degree view of the room and a view of the desk and surrounding area.

Instructors can require additional requirements at their discretion – which must be in the respective syllabus.

Texts, Materials, and Supplies:

- Open Education Resources (OER) – course content is available online at no costs to the student via links available online to official State of Texas government websites. Additional materials are within the Canvas class shell.

Required Readings:

- Open Education Resources (OER) – course content is available online at no costs to the student via links available online to official State of Texas government websites. Additional materials are within the Canvas class shell.
- Links and/or Materials provided within the Canvas course.

Recommended Readings:

- Local and National newspaper and/or magazine/journal articles relevant to the subject matter issues discussed.

Other:

- Courses conducted via video conferencing may be recorded and shared for instructional purposes by the instructor.

- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <https://www.panolacollegestore.com>
- For testing services, use the following link: <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/student-support/academic-testing-center>
- If any student in this class has special classroom or testing needs because of a physical learning or emotional condition, please contact the ADA Student Coordinator in Support Services located in the Charles C. Matthews Student Center or go to <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/student-support/disability-support-services> for more information.
- Panola College welcomes pregnant and parenting students as a part of the student body. This institution is committed to providing support and adaptations for a successful educational experience for pregnant and parenting students. Students experiencing a need for accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting will find a Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations Request form in *The Pathfinder* or may request the form from the course instructor.
- Withdrawing from a course is the student's responsibility. Students who do not attend class and who do not withdraw will receive the grade earned for the course.
- Student Handbook, *The Pathfinder*: <https://www.panola.edu/> (located at the bottom under students)