Ethical Issues in Criminal Justice

CJUS 3700

SPRING 2017

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Class Hours:  TR 12:30pm – 1:50pm
Classroom:  TH 120
Office Hours:  T 10:00am – 11:00am by appointment

Required Text and Reading


Course Notes and Important Information

There are a number of important things you need to take note of and keep in mind during the course.

Please be sure that your official UNT email is forwarded to your preferred email address to ensure you receive all course updates and other information relevant to the course. Also, when communicating with me, please use the email address indicated above. Do not use the messaging system or email feature of Blackboard. I can only respond to emails sent from your official unt.edu email address.

Exams in the course will be administered on-line through Blackboard. It is your responsibility to make sure you have access to a computer that works and is compatible with the UNT on-line system/Blackboard Learn. Please do not wait until the last minute when taking exams/quizzes. Unforeseen problems can occur and may not be sufficient reason to allow a make-up. Finally, do not attempt to take exams using a mobile device (smart phones/tablets). If that is all you have there are computers on campus available for you to use. You only receive one reset during the semester due to internet connection issues.

Course Description

A study of ethical theory, its application and relevance to issues facing the criminal justice system. Ethical issues faced by the various components of the criminal justice system, including the police, courts, and correctional system will be examined. Examples will be drawn from current events and notable prior incidents.
**Course Objectives**

After completing the course students will:

- Understand the context in which ethical decisions are made by the various components of the criminal justice system, to include the development of policy
- Understand the positive and negative influences on ethical decision-making
- Be able to apply ethical theory to situations confronted by the actors in criminal justice system
- Have gained a practical understanding of the importance of ethical behavior and the consequences of unethical behavior

Students will successfully demonstrate the attainment of these objectives through exams and student presentations.

**Course Overview**

The course will consist of lecture and discussion of the assigned readings. Material from the text will be supplemented by news articles, scholarly readings and videos relevant to the course. Subject to their availability, guest speakers will be invited to discuss their role in the criminal justice system.

**Course Requirements**

**Student Presentations – 70% of total course grade**

Students will be placed in groups of 5 and complete 3 PowerPoint presentations, 100 points each, concerning a current (within the last 5 years) ethical issue involving the criminal justice system. The group will provide an introduction of the ethical issue, the current state of the ethical issue, possible ways of dealing with the ethical issue, and a conclusion. Each presentation should attempt to incorporate text material when appropriate. Each presentation will last 20 minutes and all group members must actively participate (all members must present material). Your group is not allowed to just read the PowerPoint slides. All material must be covered during the group presentation, meaning if a group member is missing you cannot just skip that section.

Group members will also be given a chance to offer peer feedback of other members of their group. This will be done on the day of the presentation. If you do not actively take part in your group, you can fail a presentation.

Attendance is mandatory during group presentations. If you miss 3 (class days when presentations are given) your grade will be reduced by one letter grade. Missing 4 (class days when presentations are given) or more will result in a F for the course.

**Exams-20% of total course grade**

Two exams, consisting of 100 points each, **will be given on the dates indicated in the course outline**. These exams can be true/false, multiple choice, or short answer and will be taken online via Blackboard. Any and all material covered in this course can be included in the exams (text, presentations, movies, current events, etc.).
IRB – 10% of total course grade

Students will complete the Institutional Review Board training (online – see handout) and turn in a printed copy of their certificate.

Grading Scale

A= 90 - 100 points
B= 80 - 89 points
C= 70 - 79 points
D= 60 - 69 points
F= Less than 60 points

*The only extra credit opportunity is the Extra Credit Final. This will be a comprehensive exam via Blackboard. This exam is worth a maximum of 10% of extra credit. More information on this extra credit will be provided in class. No individual extra credit will be provided.

**Grade related questions or concerns must be addressed within 1 week of the grade being posted to Blackboard.

** Grades are not automatically rounded; this is based on student performance throughout the semester. Rounding will not occur in all cases.

Make-up Policy

Make-up of exams and other course requirements will be allowed under the following circumstances: prior consent and arrangement with the instructor, in the case of documented emergency, exceptional circumstances found by the instructor to be beyond the student’s control, or as provided for by University policy.

Attendance Policy

Regarding attendance, all students will comply with the requirements set forth in Section 15.2.5 of the UNT Policy Manual.

I assume that if you have enrolled in the course you will attend class. If a student chooses not to attend they cannot participate, and the learning experience for everyone will be diminished. Lecture and class discussions will be supplemented by other material. Students will be responsible for this material as well. Attendance at all class meetings is therefore assumed for purposes of exam construction. If there are any circumstances preventing you from attending class, however unique, please advise me as soon as possible. I am more than willing to work with students experiencing legitimate attendance problems to ensure they remain current with their coursework.
Attendance is mandatory during group presentations. If you miss 3 (class days when presentations are given) your grade will be reduced by one letter grade. Missing 4 (class days when presentations are given) or more will result in a F for the course.

**Acceptable Student Behavior in the Classroom**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.deanofstudents.unt.edu](http://www.deanofstudents.unt.edu)

The use of cell phones during class, whether texting or otherwise, is distracting to both me as an instructor and the other members of the class. If I see one in use and we are not engaged in an activity where the use of such a device is necessary, I will assume it is being used to fact check something we are discussing and I will most certainly involve the user in the discussion. If you are contacted regarding an emergency during class, quietly excuse yourself and attend to the call then. **Please be respectful of others and refrain from cell phone use during class.**

**Additional Classroom Policies**

Recording devices are not allowed in the classroom unless specifically approved by the instructor. Tobacco products of any kind (including e-cigs) are not allowed in the classroom. Cell phones, pagers, or any other electronic device that makes noise should be turned off before class. Due to liability concerns and the content of course discussions, children are not permitted in the classroom at any time.

Laptops and similar devices can be used during class as long as they are used for taking notes and/or other related classroom functions. If used for surfing the web, instant messaging, sending emails or otherwise, they will not be allowed in the classroom.

Also, to ensure that you receive timely course related correspondence, make sure your official email address at UNT is forwarded to your preferred email address.

**Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy**

Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable amount of time after the absence.

**Academic Integrity**

Standards of academic integrity are expected with regard to any course related work or submission. Students should consult the UNT website for questions, guidelines, appeals, and other information related to these policies:

[http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf](http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf)
Academic violation of UNT policy consists of the following:

A. Cheating. The use of unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, including but not limited to:
   1. use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes or other assessments;
   2. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments;
   3. acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic materials belonging to a faculty or staff member of the University;
   4. dual submission of a paper or project, or re-submission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor;
   5. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment.

B. Plagiarism. Use of another’s thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student’s intent, including but not limited to:
   1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.
   2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials.

C. Forgery. Altering a score, grade or official academic university record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student.

D. Fabrication. Falsifying or inventing any information, data or research as part of an academic exercise.

E. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty. Helping or assisting another in the commission of academic dishonesty.

F. Sabotage. Acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting the academic work of others.

Any violation of academic integrity will be handled on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, the student will receive a zero on the assignment in question, but more serious academic violations may be subject to the assignment of a failing grade for the course. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor with questions related to citations or other academic integrity concerns.

**ADA Statement and Disabled Student Policy**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty
member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, HARRASSMENT, & ASSAULT**

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

**Ensuring Student Success**

College can be a challenging and hectic time for many students as they struggle to adapt to a new environment or attempt to balance multiple competing interests. As your instructor, I am very aware that life exists outside the confines of this course and you will find me to be very reasonable in assisting you with any issues that may arise—**provided that I am made aware that one exists**. I am available during office hours, via email and at other times to assist in any way I can to help you do your best in this course.

Similarly, the University is prepared to assist in making your college experience both enjoyable and enlightening. **Succeed at UNT** is a University initiative offering helpful information and resources to help students do their best in a broader sense. I would encourage you to go to succeed.unt.edu to learn more.

**Students will be provided with timely feedback on all assignments throughout the course and I am available during office hours, by appointment or via email to discuss course material, your progress or other issues you feel I should know about which are relevant to you doing your best in the course.**

**Course Outline***

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week of 1/17</td>
<td>Course Introduction/Syllabus Review, Group Sign-up, and presentations. Chapter 1: Introduction to Ethical Theory and Practice</td>
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Week of 1/24  
Chapter 2: The importance of Ethics in criminal justice  
Group One, Two, and Three Presentations.  
IRB Certification Due 1/26 at the beginning of class  
Video – 1

Week of 1/31  
Chapter 3: Is acting on principle the answer? Immanuel Kant said yes  
Group Four, Five, and Six Presentations

Week of 2/7  
Chapter 4: Consequentialism-Mill: Considering the Ethical Consequences  
Group Seven, Eight, and Nine Presentations

Week of 2/14  
Chapter 5: Aristotle: A Virtuous Man  
Group Ten, Eleven, and Twelve Presentations

Week of 2/21  
Chapter 6: Ethics and the Police  
Group One, Two, and Three Presentations

Week of 2/28  
Chapter 7: Police Deviance  
Group Four, Five, and Six Presentations

Week of 3/7  
3/7: Exam 1 via Blackboard (Chapters 1 – 7) and any other material  
Access Starts: 12:01am  
Access Ends: 11:59pm  
*Class does not meet on exam days, just take the exam. Course expectations are that you are taking the exam during class time.  
Chapter 8: Ethics within the American Judicial System

Week of 3/14  
3/13 – 3/19 Spring Break – No Class

Week of 3/21  
ACJS – No Class

Week of 3/28  
Chapter 9: The Rationale of Punishment: Moral Dilemmas, Human Rights, and Capital Punishment  
Group Seven, Eight, and Nine Presentations

Week of 4/4  
Chapter 10: Ethical Issues in Probation and Parole  
Group Ten, Eleven, and Twelve Presentations

Week of 4/11  
Chapter 11: Ethical Issues and the Juvenile Justice System  
Group One, Two, and Three Presentations
Week of 4/18  Chapter 12: Racial Discrimination in the Criminal Justice System
Group Four, Five, and Six Presentations

Week of 4/25  Chapter 13: The Ethics of Criminal Justice Policy Making
Group Seven, Eight, and Nine Presentations

Week of 5/2  5/2: Chapter 14: Ethics and International Terrorism
Group Ten, Eleven, and Twelve Presentations

5/4: Exam 2 via Blackboard (Chapters 8 – 14) and any other material
Access Starts: 12:01am
Access Ends:  11:59pm
*Class does not meet on exam days, just take the exam. Course expectations are that you are taking the exam during class time.

Finals Week 5/6 – 5/12  Extra Credit Final via Blackboard
Access Starts: 5/6 at 12:01am
Access Ends:  5/12 at 11:59pm
*There are no resets on the extra credit final. Class does not meet for the extra credit final.

** These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.**

SPOT

The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class was taught. The Criminal Justice Department and I are very interested in feedback from students as we work to continually improve your learning. Please take a few moments to share your thoughts with us.