CJUS 3201.001
CRIMINAL LAW
FALL 2013

Business Leadership Building, Room 070
T/Th 9:30-10:50 a.m.
Office: Chilton Hall, Room 265
Office Hours: T/Th: 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
& by appointment

Professor P.M. Tobolowsky
Phone: 940-565-4085
Metro 817-267-3731, ext. 4085
E-mail: peggy.tobolowsky@unt.edu
Fax: 940-565-2548

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on substantive criminal law: the basic crimes and criminal defenses. In this connection, we will explore the traditional and Texas and federal statutory definitions of the crimes and defenses, as well as cases that interpret these definitions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Through this course, students should gain:

1) an understanding of the constitutional, legislative, and judicial parameters of federal and Texas basic criminal law and

2) an awareness of judicial and legislative "outputs."

REQUIRED READING:
Reid, Sue Titus. *Criminal Law: The Essentials.* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013 and Statutory and Case Supplement.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Final course grades will be based on performance on the following activities in the following proportions: three examinations (30% of final course grade *each*); discussion boards and assignments (5% of final course grade); and class participation (5% of final course grade). Each of the exams will be evaluated on a 100-point scale; the discussion boards/assignments and class participation will each total 100 points.

GRADING SCALE:
A=90-100
B=80-89
C=70-79
D=60-69
F=0-59

EXAMINATIONS: The exams will consist of multiple choice, definitional, descriptive, listing, and/or short essay questions. The first examination is **Thursday, October 10, 2013**. The second examination is **Thursday, November 7, 2013**. The third examination will be given from **8:00-10:00 a.m.** on **Thursday, December 12, 2013**. There will generally be no make-up exams.

DISCUSSION BOARDS/ASSIGNMENTS: During the course of the semester, there will be 3 Blackboard discussion boards and 2 out-of-class assignments. They are attached to this syllabus, along with their due dates and related instructions. These discussion boards and assignments will be submitted through the class Blackboard site. Students can earn up to 20 points for *each* discussion board and assignment, for a maximum total of 100 points for these 5 activities. In the discussion board activities, students are expected to thoughtfully address the subject matter and to treat fellow students' postings with respect in their responses.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: The class participation component of each student's grade will be based on the number of times that the student actually participates in the discussions of class material. Students may volunteer to participate and they will be called upon to participate. A student will be awarded up to 20 points each time that the student participates in class, up to a maximum of 100 points for the semester. No points will be deducted from or added to the student's class participation score if the student gives an incorrect answer, is unable to respond to a question in class, or asks a question in class.

ATTENDANCE: No specific records will be kept regarding student attendance. Attendance, however, will strongly affect course grades because 1) at least 30% of each exam will be drawn from lectures, 2) lectures will elaborate on and review text materials, 3) class participation evaluations will be based on participation in class, and 4) each student will be responsible for the content of all lectures, as well as for any announcements, schedule changes, etc. that are made in class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: The university rules and policies regarding cheating and plagiarism will be strictly enforced.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: Disruptive behavior is not permitted in class. Students engaging in such behavior may be directed to leave the classroom and may be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities for consideration of a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

SETE: As part of the university-wide assessment of teaching effectiveness, students should complete the Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) online evaluations for this and all of their classes. Your input is valued.

ADA STATEMENT: The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe that you have a disability requiring accommodations, please see me and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class. Please notify me and your other instructors regarding any recommended accommodations as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following reflects the approximate schedule for required readings in the Titus text; the student should also read the cases and Texas Penal Code (TPC) provisions that relate to each chapter in the text. Dates for examinations and other assignments are also included.

Date	Class Topic
August	
29	Introduction
September	
3	Texas/Federal Court Systems
5*	Blackboard Discussion Board 1 – no class – board closes at 11:59 pm
10, 12	Crime Statistics
17, 19	Ch. 1 (An Introduction to Criminal Law); Winship; TPC 2.01, 2.03, 2.04, 12.01-12.35
24, 26	Ch. 2, pp. 50-51 (Parties to and Elements of a Crime); Sutton, Chadwell, Acosta; TPC chs. 6, 7
October	
1, 3,* 8	Ch. 5 (Homicide, Suicide); Bingham, Thornton; TPC ch. 19, 22.08
3*	Assignment 1 due at 9:30 am
10**	** *First Exam*
15, 17, 22*	Ch. 6 (Assault and Kidnapping); Mihas, Girdy; TPC 22.01, 22.02, ch. 20; Ch. 6 (Sex-Related Offenses); Liberta, Bixler; TPC 22.011, 22.021, 21.01-21.08; Texas Rule of Evidence 412
22*	Blackboard Discussion Board 2 (done out of class); board closes at 9:30 am
24, 29	Ch. 7 (Burglary, Arson, Malicious Mischief); Reeves, Bruce; TPC 28.01-28.03, ch. 30
31	Ch. 7 (Theft and Remaining Property Crimes), Ch. 6 (Robbery); Olivo,

	Robinson, Lattimore; TPC 31.01-31.03, ch. 29
November	
5*	(continued)
5*	Assignment 2 due at 9:30 am
7**	** *Second Exam*
12, 14, 19*	Ch. 8 (Public Order and Public Decency Offenses); Harwell; TPC ch. 43.01-43.05; TPC 42.01, 42.03, ch. 49; Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code 106.01-106.071 Ch. 10 (Drug Offenses); Wynn
19*	Blackboard Discussion Board 3 (done out of class); board closes at 9:30 am
21, 26	Pp. 41-45 (Attempt); TPC 15.01; Ch. 4 (Defenses); Graham, Jacobson, Ferrell; TPC chs. 8, 9; Texas Code of Criminal Procedure ch. 12
28	Thanksgiving
December	
3	Ch. 4-related materials continued
5	Conclude/Review
12 **	** *Third Exam*, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Discussion Boards and Assignments

Blackboard Discussion Board 1: Opens September 3 at 11 am and closes September 5 at 11:59 pm

The criminal law evolves slowly over time. Some acts, like murder, have generally always been and will always be considered criminal acts. Other conduct has been considered criminal – or non-criminal – in different societies at different times. Choose 1 of the following categories of conduct and describe, in at least 500 words, why you think this conduct should be considered a crime and be subject to criminal punishment. Include in your response how this conduct harms the individual engaging in it or others and what kind of punishment is appropriate for the conduct. In addition, respond to 1 other person's posting that has suggested criminalizing a category of conduct and describe, in at least 200 words, why you think that category of conduct should not be criminalized and how society should address the conduct other than through the criminal law.

Categories of Conduct:
Gambling
Prostitution
Bigamy
Public Intoxication
Obscenity/Pornography
Texting while Driving
Graffiti

Assignment 1: Due by October 3 at 9:30 am

The *State v. Thornton* case illustrates the traditional categories of criminal homicide. Discuss whether you agree with the first degree murder conviction Thornton originally received or the voluntary manslaughter conviction he received on appeal. Your answer should be at least 500 words long and should refer to at least 5 pieces of evidence presented in the case in support of your position. In addition, identify the most serious homicide offense Thornton could be convicted of under chapter 19 of the Texas Penal Code and describe how his conduct meets each element of the offense.

Blackboard Discussion 2: Opens October 15 at 11 am and closes by October 22 at 9:30 am

As described on pp. 121-127 in the text, domestic violence continues to be a problem in this country. Look at some of the web sites that address this topic, such as the National Center for Victims of Crime, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime. How widespread is the problem of domestic violence? What is the criminal justice system doing about it? What could the justice system do more effectively to reduce domestic violence? Your response should be at least 500 words and should include a reference to at least 1 internet or other source. In addition, respond to at least 1 other person's posting that has suggested a response to reduce domestic violence and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of that person's suggestions to reduce domestic violence in at least 200 words.

Assignment 2: Due by November 5 at 9:30 am

Identity theft has become an increasingly large crime problem in this country. Read the overview information, advice from an agent, and at least 2 of the identity theft stories found at the FBI web site at http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/cyber/identity_theft. Provide a commentary of at least 750 words regarding what you have learned about identity theft and what you think are the most effective ways to reduce it.

Blackboard Discussion 3: Opens November 12 at 11 am and closes November 19 at 9:30 am.

Colorado and Washington passed ballot initiatives that permit possession of small amounts of marijuana, and provide for its regulation and taxation. Search on the internet for information about the Colorado and Washington laws. In a posting of at least 500 words and with a reference to at least 1 internet or other source, describe these laws and discuss their advantages and disadvantages, as well as implementation problems you envision regarding these laws. In addition, respond to at least 1 other person's posting discussing the laws' advantages/ disadvantages or implementation issues in at least 200 words.