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" and an introduction to basic legal research methods to locate them.

REQUIRED READING:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Final course grades will be based on performance on the following activities in the following proportions: three examinations (25% of final course grade each); case analysis (20% of final course grade); and class participation (5% of final course grade). Each of these activities will be evaluated on a 100-point scale.

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 Tuesday, October 11, 2011. The second examination is Tuesday, November 8, 2011. The final examination will be given from 8:00-10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 13, 2011. There will generally be no make-up exams.
CASE ANALYSIS: Each student will be required to select, read, and analyze a Texas state court decision primarily concerning the validity of or interpreting some aspect of the law defining one of the crimes or defenses covered in this course. We will discuss in class the required case analysis format as well as the procedures for locating and analyzing a court decision. The court case selected for analysis must be at least 6 book text pages (or 20 LEXIS pages) long and must have been decided within the last 10 years. The case analysis regarding the decision should be 2 - 4 typed pages long (10 or 12 pt. font and 1.5 spacing).

Each student must select a different court decision to read and analyze. Court decisions will be chosen on a first come-first served basis, but all students must identify in writing (by case name and citation) the court decision they propose to analyze by the beginning of class on Thursday, September 22, 2011. Any change in court decisions to be analyzed should be approved by the instructor. The case analysis will be due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, October 25, 2011. A copy of the case should be turned in with the analysis. The analysis will be evaluated on the basis of content, organization, form, and style. Any late papers will be penalized.

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 the instructor and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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

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20, 25** Chs. 7, 13.7.1-13.7.6 (Property Offenses); Reeves, Bruce; TPC 28.01-28.03, ch. 30

25** **Case Analysis Due**

27 Chs. 8, 13.8.1-13.8.7 (Theft Offenses); Olivo, Robinson, Lattimore; TPC 31.01-31.03, ch. 29

November

1 Ch. 8-related materials continued

3 Chs. 9.1-9.3, 13.9.1 ( Forgery Offenses); Wasson; TPC 32.21-32.22

8** **Second Exam**

10, 15 Chs. 10.1-10.5, 14.10.1-14.10.7 (Morality Offenses); Harwell, Schein, Crosby; TPC ch. 43, 25.01-25.02

17, 22 Chs. 11.3-11.5, 14.11.3-14.11.5 (Public Peace and Alcohol Offenses); TPC 42.01, 42.03, ch. 49; Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code 106.01-106.071 Chs. 11.6, 14.11.6 (Drug Offenses); Wynn

24 Thanksgiving

29 Chs. 4.2, 13.4.2 (Attempt); TPC 15.01; Chs. 3, 13.3.1-13.3.7 (Defenses); Graham, Jacobson, Ferrell; TPC chs. 8, 9; Texas Code of Criminal Procedure ch. 12

December

1, 6 Ch. 3-related materials continued

8 Conclude/Review

13 ** Final Exam, 8:00-10:00 a.m.