CJUS 3700: Ethical Issues in Criminal Justice

University of North Texas

Course Information:
Online

Professor Information:
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Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
A study of ethical issues facing the criminal justice system. Problems confronting police, the courts and the juvenile and correctional systems are addressed. Prerequisite(s): CJUS 2100 or equivalent.

This course will serve as an intense (but hopefully enjoyable) "ethical boot-camp," investigating the ways that ethics is pertinent to professionals working in the criminal justice system. Although (approximately) the first third of the course will cover ethical *theory*, we will spend the remainder of the course "in the trenches," learning about the day-to-day ethical dilemmas and experiences that such criminal justice professionals may expect to encounter in their future *practice*.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
By the end of the course, at least the following three objectives should be accomplished:

- ✓ Students should grasp the leading theories and foundations of ethics;
- ✓ Articulate a comprehensive understanding of how various ethical traditions impact the form and function of our criminal justice systems;
- ✓ Become familiar with various ethical challenges and dilemmas that criminal justice professionals (including police, parole, probation and correctional officers) will likely encounter in their future work;
- ✓ Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how ethics is constructed and evaluated in criminal justice work;
- ✓ Evaluate criminal justice legal policies based on how they impact people's lives and serve the interests of our communities;
- ✓ Shape and understand their individual perspectives of what is good and bad, right and wrong in our administration of justice;
- ✓ Communicate their interests and ideas with others in a way that demonstrates an openness to change.

Students will also be responsible for additional reading, video links, and other material that will be posted on Blackboard. Students are responsible for examining all assigned material. Such material will be fair game in the course, and in particular, for examinations.

COURSE NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Please make sure to have your official UNT email forwarded to your preferred email address (if different) to receive important updates, class cancellations (if applicable), and generally, so I can reach you if necessary.

The announcement board in Blackboard will be used for primary communication to the class as a whole. I advise you check the announcements section frequently.

I would like you to send me questions regarding the class to scott.belshaw@unt.edu. instead of through Blackboard. With that said, if I do receive several emails regarding a common topic, I will post an announcement or mass email addressing the issue instead of responding to each individual email.

It is your responsibility to utilize a computer system that works and is compatible with the UNT online system/Blackboard Learn. This is especially critical during examination times. I would recommend that you take your exams on the UNT campus if possible. If that is not possible, I would recommend you avoid waiting until the last minute to take your exam in case problems arise.

TEXTBOOKS:

The assigned texts listed below are required for all students enrolled in this class. Reading assignments are noted in the course calendar. All students are expected to read the assigned chapters prior to the date specified in the course calendar. The assigned readings will serve as a foundation for the discussion of issues in class as well as examination material.

1. Banks, Cindi. Criminal Justice Ethics (Edition 3). Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1-4129-9545-0

2. Zimbardo, Phillip. Lucifer Effect. Random House Trade Paperbacks; Reprint edition (January 22, 2008) ISBN-10: 0812974441 ISBN-13: 978-0812974447

3. Rodriguez, Jose A. (2012). Hard measures. with Bill Harlow. New York: Threshold Editions. ISBN 9781451663471.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The following section lists the required components of this course as well as the points that may be earned toward the final course grade for each component.

Readings:

Students should follow the schedule of reading assignments found on the course calendar. The reading assignments need to be read ***before*** you come to class. This will not only facilitate class discussion, but will also allow you time to formulate questions as we go over the material in class. In addition to the required texts, the course will utilize video presentations, additional handouts, and guest lectures that concern issues pertinent to the study of ethical problems. Information from all sources (textbook, lectures, video

presentations, handouts, guest speakers) may be included on course examinations.

Examinations:
There will be 3 exams that will be given at various intervals throughout the course. Each exam will consist solely of essay questions. In most philosophy courses, rote memorization of facts is not the goal of the course. As a professor, I want you to be able to apply the theories that you will learn to numerous ethical situations. Note that any material covered in the textbook, class discussions, or any supplemental material (such as extra assigned readings, in-class movies, etc.) is "fair game". All exams are closed book and closed note.

Reflection Papers

Each student will be required to write three "reflection" papers on the supplemental text required in this course (Lucifer Effect and Hard Measures). After finishing each supplemental book, students are required to reflect upon what they learned in each book and provide their thoughts and opinions on the topics within the books.

A reflection paper is **not** meant to be a regurgitation of information presented in the book. *Do not provide me with a review of the book's content*. Rather, provide your own thoughts, opinions, and unique insight from the information learned in your reading—in short, your reaction to the information.

Each reflection paper must be at least 5 pages in length. It should be focused and concise clearly setting out your organized reactions to the reading. It should be well-organized by utilizing descriptive headings to organize your paper. Failure to reflect on the material and provide thoughts and opinions on the substantive content in the book will result in loss of points. Point loss may also result from failing to adhere to the requirements and for papers with grammatical, spelling, and organizational issues.

Late papers will not be accepted.

Blackboard Discussions/Assignments/Activities

Each week you will be required to make at least four substantive comments on the discussion board. The instructor will propose the question or dilemma and the student must answer the question and make 3 more comments on other students discussion comments.. To earn points such comments must be more than trivial and in fact substantial and substantive (think of these as the discussion you would engage in if we had an on campus class). These discussion board contributions must be completed by Tuesday night at 10 pm on the week they are due. Discussion board contributions are worth 30 points total. Homework will be graded each week and feedback will be given to the student. The only exception to this is a unforeseeable circumstance.

Lackadaisical discussions will result in a loss of points for Blackboard discussions.

Makeup Policy:

There are no make-up tests/quizzes/assignments in this class with the exception of authorized absences according to University policies prescribing authorized absences in certain situations. I

reserve the right to consider extreme circumstances and modify this rule. Those in athletics, those who are absent for religious holidays, and/or those involved in other school supported activities that require being absent from class will be allowed make up if proper procedures are followed in requesting an excused absence. I must have written documentation in advance that you will be away from class for the absence to be excused (e.g., traveling for a basketball game).

There is absolutely no make-up for assignments turned in late unless authorized as a result of university related absence or through prior consultation and approval by myself. Assignments as a result of authorized absences must be turned in within 3 days of returning from the authorized absence.

Note: I am reasonable, so if you must miss an assignment for an unavoidable and "legitimate" circumstance, please let me know as soon as possible so as to get you back on track. Communication is the key.

Authorized Absences: Absences are authorized only in cases of participation in school sponsored activities and/or religious holidays. For an excused absence due to a school sponsored activity, students must be approved in advance by the department chair and academic dean. Within three days after the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the Dean of Students for presentation to instructor. Students who wish to request an excused absence for religious holidays can do so and will be excused from class as long as they make a request within the required time frame set by the University (see the most recent undergraduate catalog). Notification must be in writing so that I may have it for my records. You must arrange to make up any work missed during the excused religious absence or school sponsored activity.

GRADE BREAKDOWN: Grades are based on your earned point totals for the semester.

Test #1 ---------- 20%
Test #2 ---------- 20%
Test #3 ---------- 20%
Discussions---------- 20%
Reflection Papers---------- 20%
Total---------- 100%

A- 100% -90%
B- 80%-89%
C- 70%-79%
D- 69%-60%
F- Below 60%

Online Course Calendar: Class and Reading Schedule*

Week

1 Introduction to the course and syllabus. Chapter 1 (Intro to CJ Ethics)
2 Banks Chapter 1 and Chapter 10 (Intro, Ethical Philosophy, Duty and Principle)
3 Banks Chapter 10 (Duty and Principle) See Ethical Video 1
4 Banks Chapter 11 (Consequentialism)
5 Banks Chapter 12(Virtue Ethics) Test 1
6 Banks Chapter 13 (Egoism, Pleasure and Indifference)
7 Banks Chapter 2 (Ethics and Police) & See Ethical Dilemma Video 2
8 Banks Chapter 3 (Racial Discrimination)

9 Banks Chapter 4 (Lawyers and Ethics)
10 Banks Chapter 5 (Criminal Punishment) Test 2
11 Banks Chapter 5 & 6 (Criminal Punishment/ Ethics in Corrections)
12 Banks Chapter 6 (Ethics in Corrections)
13 Banks Chapter 7 & 8 (Ethics and Policy Making and Terrorism)
14 Banks Chapter 7 & 8 (Ethics and Policy Making and Terrorism)
15 Catchup Week
16 Test 3-Final Exam

*This reading schedule includes any University holidays. Even if we do not have class you will be still responsible for the material covered.

PARTICIPATION, PREPARATION AND BEHAVIOR

To be successful at learning and understanding the material in this class, it is essential that you read and complete the assigned material and engage in thoughtful online discussions. Your attendance and active participation, along with your willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions regarding correctional systems will be taken into account at all times during the semester.

An online classroom, at least during times of online discussion, is a place to express ideas, opinions, and engage in thoughtful discussions. Students will respect the views and opinions of others at all times *or their status in the course will be examined*. In sum, simply be appropriate during online interactions. Each student brings unique insight and perspectives, and that can make for a very interesting and lively discussion forum, but just please be appropriate and respectful of others. **Please review the undergraduate catalog concerning conduct which adversely affects the university community.**

Miscellaneous:

The material posted online is my personal intellectual property or that of the University of North Texas. You may not utilize the material for other than class purposes.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

I reserve the right and have the discretion to change this syllabus. While every effort will be made to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, it is sometimes the case that the syllabus must be modified. In the case that the syllabus needs to be adjusted, I will announce such adjustments in class. I will make every effort to ensure that any changes to the syllabus benefit the class as a whole. It is the student's responsibility to check announcements so that any and all syllabus changes are documented. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of failure to check and read announcements does not constitute a defense against missed assignments, test dates, and other applicable changes.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

It is expected that each student will do his/her own work. Cheating, including plagiarism, on any assignment will result in a zero for that assignment. This is criminal justice, how could anyone even contemplate cheating when you are studying to work in a system based on trust and honor? With that said, I reserve the right to pursue the formal channels for plagiarism/cheating set down in the UNT Policy Manual. All students are **urged** to

read the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline located in the UNT Policy Manual (Section 5.2). Academic dishonesty will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the final disposition being at the discretion of the professor.

A GRADE OF "INCOMPLETE"

I – Incomplete; a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course; (2) has justifiable reason (medical or other emergency circumstance) why the work cannon be completed on a schedule; and (3) arranges with the professor before the end of the semester to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements that the professor must list on the grade sheet. All work in the course must be completed within the specified time (not to exceed one year after taking the course). If you do not meet the specifications for this grade, you will need to see the Registrar's Office about resigning from the University.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

My lectures are protected by state and common law and by applicable federal copyright laws. You are not authorized to make any commercial use of them without express prior permission from myself. Persons who do make use of my lecture notes for commercial purposes (i.e. sell your class notes to an internet site or other commercially-related business) will be held legally liable.

ODA STATEMENT:

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.Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. 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.

I will make every attempt possible to accommodate anyone with a documented disability. *Please let me know in advance* of exams or other class requirements so I have enough time to send exams or other materials to ODA. You must provide me with the appropriate exam request forms from ODA prior to the exam in order to take the exam at ODA.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses:

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at http://www.oea.gov/index.php/links/electronic-code-of-federal-regulations. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at "Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f) (6) (i) (G)" and can be found buried

within this document: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2012-title8-vol1/xml/CFR-2012-title8-vol1-sec214-2.xml

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F–1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F–1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Grades: Every semester, at least a couple of students come to my office around **the end** of the semester asking, "What can I do to raise my grade?" My policy and statement concerning that question is this:

• If you focus on learning and being responsible (i.e., keeping up with assignments, completing extra credit when given, etc.), your final grade will reflect this.

• I do not give individual extra credit. If and when I offer an extra credit assignment it will be offered to the entire class. I suggest you take advantage of extra credit whenever it is offered.

• Borderline grades will be evaluated on a case by case basis and my policy is this: if a student is 1 percentage points away from the next letter grade (borderline grade), has completed all extra credit opportunities, and has not missed more than the allotted number of absences, I will bump them to the next letter grade. I will not raise any grades that are not borderline grades. Not all borderline grades will be raised. Grades are not

based on how much I like a person. They are based on work and performance, period. ALL GRADES ARE FINAL AFTER ENTERED IN THE COMPUTER. The final decision on whether or not to raise a grade is solely at the discretion of the professor. Do not email me to change your grade because you did not like the grade you earned!

FINAL POINTS:
Please do not hesitate to come to me with any questions, problems, or issues you may have. Do not wait to address these issues until it is too late for you to receive an acceptable grade. I think you will find me to be very approachable and eager to address any problems with you in a professional manner.

1. To do well in this class the student must complete all assigned readings prior to that class date. (READ!, READ!!, READ!!!) This will allow for a better discussion and understanding of the material. I take test questions from the book and discussions!!!

2. DO NOT highlight and copy text from the internet and turn it in as your own work. It is easy for me to catch you doing this. I type a sentence into Google or Yahoo and it will pull up the entire text. You will not receive a good grade for doing this!! This includes when doing blackboard assignments.

3. If you are having academic or even a personal problems please feel free to talk to me. I am here to help. I might understand more than you think!

Although we will attempt to adhere to the schedule of topics listed and described below, the course schedule should be viewed as ***highly flexible***. I am not interested in covering the material as fast as possible simply for the sake of covering it. Rather, I want to cover the material that we do cover thoroughly, and at a pace that is conducive to *learning* the material instead of simply *covering* the material. Consequently, it is your responsibility to come to class, know where we are in the listing of assigned readings *irrespective of this schedule*, and know the material that we have covered prior to any reading assessment, examination, and/or presentation. Further, there may be additional items added to the calendar throughout the course of the semester (i.e. video presentations and/or handouts). It will be your responsibility to keep up with these as well.