

CJUS 3700: Ethical Issues in Criminal Justice

University of North Texas

Spring 2011

Course Information:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday

10:00 am – 10:50 am

Location: Wooten Hall, Room 112

Professor Information:

Dr. Scott H. Belshaw

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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:

- 1) Students should grasp the leading theories and foundations of ethics;
- 2) Become familiar with various ethical challenges and dilemmas that criminal justicians (including police, parole, probation and correctional officers) will likely encounter in their future work;
- 3) And gain principles and tools to help them successfully resolve these challenges and dilemmas.

GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS:

In addition to the above objectives, the more general goals of this course are to provide the student with the following tools to help develop his or her potential:

1. Development of the student's analytical thinking capabilities through comparison and contrast in the application of theories and concepts to social problems
2. Enhancement of the student's literacy skills through assigned readings, discussions, examinations, and other requirements;
3. Utilization of the historical perspective which helps with student understanding of evolutionary developments over time;
4. Understanding of the scientific method through research requirements and in-depth case studies;
5. Improvement in social interaction skills and understanding human behavior through consideration of the impact legal and social systems have on individuals;

6. Increased student awareness of cultural and multi-cultural issues through study of how social problems and social movements are related to, and affect, minority groups

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 2). Sage Publications.
ISBN: 0-7619-2588-0
2. Case Studies in Criminal Justice Ethics (Braswell, Miller & Pollock)
Waveland Press. ISBN:1-57766-466-3 or 978-1-57766-466-6

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: 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. The use of listening devices (MP3 players, etc.) and electronics (including cell phones) is prohibited during testing. Anyone answering cell phone calls, text messages, etc. during the exam will receive a 0. If you have an extreme exception, please see me prior to the exam.

IMPORTANT: Make-up exams will absolutely NOT be considered unless there is documented proof of a hospitalization or emergency and I am contacted **BEFORE THE EXAM BY EMAIL**. Your doctor saying you are sick or you feeling sick is NOT A VALID EXCUSE FOR A MAKEUP EXAM. All makeup examinations will be full essay and will be administered on a date at my discretion. **PLEASE DO NOT TRY TO MAKE UP AN EXCUSE IF YOU MISS THE EXAM!** If an emergency situation comes up on test day please notify me immediately by calling my office or the undergraduate office. For any other questions please contact instructor.

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.

Blackboard Assignments: During the semester the instructor will assign various blackboard discussion assignments. The Blackboard discussion tool is a great place to post assignment questions so that everyone in class may follow the discussion/solution. I will reply to assignment questions in the discussion forum. When you have assignment questions, check the discussion forum first to see if an answer to your question has already been posted.

Assignments for discussion sections are posted on Blackboard. They will include additional readings, video clips, discussion questions, and projects. These assignments need to be completed before the next class period. These online assignments might take place in lieu of our standard class period.

Blackboard Assignments Dates: TBD by Instructor

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

Test #1 -----	22%
Test #2 -----	22%
Test #3 -----	22%
Test #4-----	22%
Class Participation/Blackboard Assignments-----	12%
Total-----	100%

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

Spring 2011 Course Calender: Class and Reading Schedule*

- Week
- 1 Introduction to the course and syllabus. Chapter 1-Ethics and the CJ System
- 2 Banks Chapter 9 Kant-Duty and Principle
- 3 Banks Chapter 9- Kant-Duty and Principle
- 4 Banks Chapter 10 **Test 1-Friday**
- 5 Banks Chapter 11 Aristotle and Character
- 6 Banks Chapter 12 Egosim, Pleasure and Indifference
- 7 Banks Chapter 13 **Test 2-Friday**
- 8 Banks Chapter 2 Ethics and Police

- 9 **** SPRING BREAK ****
- 10 Banks Chapter 3 Racial Discrimination in the CJ system
- 11 Banks Chapter 4 **Test 3-Friday**
- 12 Banks Chapter 5 Criminal Punishment Philosophies
- 13 (Death Penalty Debate Week) Banks Chapter 6
- 14 Banks Chapter 7 Ethics of Policy Making
- 15 Prepare for Final Exam
- 16 **Final Exam: TBA**

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

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

The professor expects that each student regularly and promptly attend class sessions. A student who is absent from a class session is responsible for the subject matter discussed during that particular session. It will be extremely difficult for you to obtain an acceptable grade in this course if you consistently miss class.

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 cannot 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:

It is the policy of UNT not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the University, through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and educational goals. Direct questions or concerns to the equal opportunity office, (940) 565-2456, or the dean of students, (940) 565-2648.

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.

GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Cell Phones and Pagers: Please turn all cell phones and pagers to vibrate if you have that setting or silent if you do not. Please do not make a habit of text messaging during class. I understand emergencies arise. If you receive an emergency call that you must take, please leave class immediately and take the call or page.

Laptops: A student may use a laptop or PDA to take notes but the sound must be turned off. If you are using a laptop or other electronic device to take notes, I expect that you will be taking notes, not “surfing” the Internet or working on other course assignments.

Talking During Class: Students should only be talking during class when they are addressing a comment to the class, asking a question, or participating in class discussion. Now, admittedly you will always have one or two things to share with a neighbor or friend in the class. What I am referring to here is engaging in a lengthy conversation or overly loud talking with another person(s) while we are having a class discussion, watching a video, or while I’m lecturing.

Sleeping: Sleeping during class will not be tolerated. If a student is found sleeping, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. While I understand that you may be extremely tired, lying down and sleeping is not only rude, but also distracting.

Children in the Classroom: Due to University policy, liability concerns, and the course material, children are not permitted in this class, no exceptions.

Civility: Students are expected to display tolerance for others’ views and statements given in class. When disagreement occurs, students are to act considerately. All comments and language should be respectful and appropriate for a college community. If you feel you cannot act respectfully or appropriately, please exit the classroom and return only when your emotions and language are under control. I understand that every once in awhile a student may need to exit the class early. If you know you will need to leave early, please sit near the door so you do not distract other students when you exit.

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 0.5 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.

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 (or run a scan through Turn-it in.com) and it will pull up the entire text. You will not receive a good grade for doing this!!
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.