

Instructor: Dr. Kathy Latz  
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Class Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30-10:50 am  
Class Room: A201  
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays (9:00am-1:00pm) (or by appointment)

## **CJ 261W: Introduction to Criminal Justice (Fall Semester 2007):**

### **I. Course Description:**

The government's compelling interest in public safety is tempered by its mutual obligation to safeguard the rights of the accused, and frequently these imperatives collide in the course of investigation, adjudication, and sentencing. A primary purpose of this course is to illuminate the tension between due process principles and crime control policy and practice. We will explore the history and function of police, court, and correctional agencies, and the processing of criminal defendants through the system. Additionally, we will examine philosophies of punishment, defenses to criminal charges, and theoretical explanations for crime.

### **II. Course Objectives:**

Students will acquire a comprehensive understanding of crime and justice in American society, and increased tolerance and respect for opposing viewpoints.

### **III. Required Readings:**

Siegel, Larry J. & Joseph J. Senna (2007). Essentials of Criminal Justice, 5<sup>th</sup> edition.  
Canada: Thompson Wadsworth.

### **IV. Statement of Teaching Philosophy:**

Of the various lessons I choose to impart in the course of any semester, principal among them are: 1.) tolerance and respect for opposing viewpoints; 2.) writing as a means of expression; and 3.) an appreciation for the American criminal justice system and its processes.

As an educator, I aspire to promote a learning environment in which my students may express their convictions freely. By emphasizing the fact that we are all students of the world who can learn from one another, I encourage them to engage with their fellow classmates, and to open their minds to new ideas. Facilitating lively classroom discussions, I introduce students to multiple sides of an argument. Provided the opportunity to question their own beliefs, they may come to understand *why* they believe what they do--and thus develop skills to form stronger written and verbal arguments.

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At the college level, students are expected to express themselves in a clear and intelligent fashion. Yet, while many exhibit sufficient verbal skills, some have difficulty expressing themselves proficiently in writing. It has been my experience that practical, written exercises not only measure students' comprehension of course material, but also provide them an opportunity to improve their writing skills. Through regular feedback, extra credit incentives, and, where necessary, individual tutoring, they may exponentially improve problem areas by the semester's end.

Recognizing that students are unique individuals, who learn in a variety of different ways, I employ a multi-faceted teaching strategy to most effectively meet the needs of my class. An advocate of cooperative learning, I frequently supplement lectures, homework assignments, and required readings with small group activities and discussions. Relating abstract, theoretical principles to real world events, I facilitate a "hands on" approach to studying the crime control and due process ideologies that have governed American jurisprudence throughout history. By exploring the nexus between the past and the present, students may develop a greater appreciation for contemporary criminal justice trends.

Fundamentally, my teaching philosophy is predicated on educating my students and preparing them for life outside of the classroom. Learning to embrace diversity, to express themselves intelligently, and to appreciate the legal institutions and processes which govern their everyday existence -- these are tools that they may take with them, and apply long after the semester has gone.

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#### **V. Grading Policy, Scale and Requirements:**

Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

**A.) Mandatory Attendance and Active Class Participation:** Students are required to attend each class, complete reading and homework assignments on time, and contribute positively to classroom discussions. **Students will be granted two "free" absences. Subsequent missed classes will result in a lower grade.**

**B.) Midterm Examination:** A midterm examination will be used to measure students' comprehension of course material. The test will consist of both multiple choice and true-false questions. **Late examinations will not be administered.**

**C.) Paper:** Students will submit a term paper on a crime topic of their choice. Specific instructions will be provided at a later date.

**D.) Final Examination** (non-cumulative): A final examination will be administered to assess students' mastery of the subject matter. The test will consist of both multiple-choice and true-false questions. **Late examinations will not be administered.**

**\*Course Requirements:**

Midterm Exam  
Paper  
Final Exam  
Total

**\*Maximum Point Values:**

25  
50  
25  
100

**\*Grading Scale:**

A=100-90  
B=89-80  
C=79-70  
D=69-60  
F=59 and below

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**VI. COURSE CALENDAR:**

*(\*Please Note: The following schedule is tentative, and subject to change at the Instructor's discretion.)*

- Week 1:      8/21: Course Introduction  
                      (Handout: Class Syllabus)  
                      **\*Readings: Ch. 1**
- 8/23: Crime Control and Due Process  
                      Case Studies: Sex Offenders, Missing & Murdered Children  
                      (Film Clips: I-45 & Oprah)  
                      *Discussion: Megan's Law*
- Week 2:      8/28: Nature vs. Nurture: Theories of Crime Causation
- 8/30: Causal Theories (Cont.)  
                      Discussion of Term Paper  
                      **\*Readings: Ch. 2 (pp. 31-65)**  
                      **\*Handout: Term Paper Assignment**
- Week 3:      9/4: Library Day—Meet in Rm. 155 for Instruction on How to Access CJ  
                      References
- 9/6: Conceptualizing the Crime Problem  
                      Questions and Modes of Measurement  
                      Index Offenses  
                      Victimless Crimes  
                      (Film Clip: Andrea Dworkin's "Pornography")  
                      **\*Readings: Ch. 3**
- Week 4:      9/11: Understanding the Criminal Law: Key Terms, Definitions, and



Concepts  
Defenses to Criminal Charges  
**\*Readings: Ch. 4**

9/13: Defenses (Cont.)  
Case Studies: (Francine Hughes, Andrea Yates, Susan Smith, Collin Ferguson, John Hinckley, Jr., Matthew Shepard)

Week 5: 9/18: The Criminal Justice System  
The Process: Beginning to End  
(Class Activity: Extralegal Factors in Rape Case Rejections)  
(Film Clip: Cross-Examination of Robbery Victim)  
**\*Readings: Ch. 5**

9/20: Peer Editing Day—Bring first three pages of term paper to class with complete reference page  
Instructions on APA format

Week 6: 9/25: Policing: History, Organization & Management  
(Film Clip: Inside The FBI)  
**\*Readings: Ch. 6**

9/27: Police Culture: The Working Personality  
Brutality, Corruption & Racial Profiling  
(Film Clip: Racial Profiling)

Week 7: 10/2: Search & Seizure  
(Film Clip: Hypothetical Police-Citizen Encounters)  
**\*Readings: Ch. 7**

10/4: Policing Strategies  
Case Study: Missing & Murdered Children Investigations  
Privatization  
[Case Study: (Protective Services) Gavin DeBecker and Associates]

Week 8: 10/9: **Midterm Review**

10/11: **Midterm Exam**

Week 9: 10/16: Occupational Hazards of Policing  
(Film Clip: Dangers on the Job)  
Celebrity Justice in the United States  
Case Studies  
**\*Readings: Ch. 8**

10/18: Introduction to the Courts

Trial and Appellate Courts  
(Class Activity: Analyzing Appellate Court Briefs)

- Week 10: 10/23: Pretrial Procedures  
The Jury  
The Trial: Beginning to End  
(Film Clip: Trial Consultants)  
(Film Clip: Child Abuse Trial)  
**\*Readings: Ch. 9**
- 10/25: Torture & the History of Punishment  
Due Process and Civil Liberties  
The Defense Attorney  
(Wrongful Convictions: Northwestern University Case Studies)  
*Discussion: Should Defense Attorneys Defend Guilty Clients?*
- Week 11: 10/30: Executive Clemency  
(Activity: Clemency Petitions for Battered Women Who Kill)  
**\*Readings: Ch. 10**
- 11/1: Goals & Philosophies of Punishment  
Sentencing & Appeals: Three Strikes, Mandatory Minimums, Truth in Sentencing
- Week 12: 11/6: The Death Penalty  
(Film Clip: The Illinois Moratorium)  
Ethnography of the Walls Unit  
*Discussion: Death Penalty Pros and Cons*  
**\*Readings: Ch.11**
- 11/8: Film: Paradise Lost (part 1)
- Week 13: 11/13: Film: Paradise Lost (part 2)  
*Film Discussion*  
**\*Readings: Ch. 12**
- 11/15: A History of Corrections  
Community-Based Alternatives  
(\*Film Clip: Monitoring Sex Offenders)
- Week 14: 11/20: Prisons vs. Jails: Distinguishing features  
Special Populations  
The Estelle Unit  
(Film Clip: Diane Sawyer: Inside a Women's Prison)  
**\*Readings: Ch. 13**



- 11/22: No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday
- Week 15: 11/27: **\*Library Day—Finalize Term Papers**  
**\*Readings: Ch. 14**
- 11/29: **\*Term Papers Due**  
Prison Life: The Inmate World (Cont.)  
Gangs, Rapes & Riots  
(Film Clip: Texas Prison Gangs)  
(Film Clip: Attica)  
Inmates' Rights  
*Discussion: Weightlifting, Television & Educational Privileges*
- Week 16: 12/4: Juvenile Justice  
*Discussion: Should Juveniles Be Tried as Adults?*  
**\*Readings: Ch. 15**
- 12/6: Summary and Conclusion  
**Final Exam Review**
- Week 17: 12/11: **Final Exam**  
**8:00-10:00 am (\*Note Time Change)**
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**Refer to the following websites for information concerning academic dishonesty, services for disabled students, and religious holy days:**

**\*Academic Dishonesty:**

<http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty>

**\*Disabled Student Policy:**

<http://www.shsu.edu/schedule/>

**\*Services for Disabled Students:**

<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html>

**\*Student Absences on Religious Holy Day Policy**

<http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/scholasticrequirements.html#holyday>