

SOCIOLOGY 397 – CRIME, COURTS

Fall Term 2010

August 30, 2010 – December 15, 2010

Course Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR: Hon. Emil Giordano
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TEXT: Criminal Procedure and the Constitution, 2007 Edition.
By: Jerold H. Israel; Yale Kamisar; Wayne R. LaFave; Nancy J. King.
Thomson/West, Publisher.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an in-depth examination and study of selected topics in the field of criminal law. It focuses on contemporary issues which involve consideration of whether and how traditional law should change as society and its values change. Areas of study will include the jury system, the rules of evidence, sentencing, capital punishment, the media and the juvenile justice system.

GOALS OF THIS COURSE:

At the end of this course:

- Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge and proficiency in the field of criminal law, as well as appreciate the relevance of other disciplines to this field.
- Students will be able to research, write and report their results concerning a matter of importance to the criminal justice system, as well as present the same.
- Students will be able to offer opportunities for meaningful discussion and reflection about significant issues in criminal law.
- Students will have an understanding and appreciation for the criminal justice field in the 21st century.
- Students will have an understanding of the mechanism of criminal law.
- Students will be able to demonstrate good written and verbal communication skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to be prepared for each class. Inadequate preparation may result in the lowering of the grade for the course!

Testing counts for 50% of the final grade. Each test will be equally weighted.

There will be no unannounced tests. Considerable notice will be given for the date of each of the tests addressed above.

Class attendance and class participation will account for 25% of your final grade.

The final 25% of a student's grade will be taken from special research assignments, which will be presented orally and in writing. These assignments must be submitted on time to avoid grade reduction. The requirement will be explained at the first class.

There is no research paper requirement for the course. However, a paper may be done for extra credit. This is optional with the student. Extra credit will be given for a course paper which will be due two weeks before the last class. I expect a well-written and well-research paper of 7 to 10 pages. If a quality paper is submitted with a grade higher than your test average, your grade for the course will be raised. If the grade for the paper is less than the testing average, the grade for the paper will be disregarded and the final grade will be calculated exclusively on testing. If the student opts for the extra credit paper, I will work with the student to decide a topic. If the student chooses to do the paper, he/she must advise me by the mid-point of the course.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular attendance is fully expected. It is understood that there are circumstances that would prevent a student from attending class (illness, family emergency). The student, in such a case, is expected to notify the instructor as soon as possible of the situation. Students should also check with the instructor regarding missed work or assignments.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Students should acquaint themselves with the college's policy on Academic Honesty in the current Student Handbook. Any student found to have violated the college's policy shall be dismissed from the course and assigned a grade of F. Students are urged to see the instructor if they have any questions regarding this matter.

COURSE OUTLINE AND LECTURE TOPICS:

The instructor, with cooperation from the class, will make every effort to cover the following list of topics. This list, however, is subject to modification to best fit the needs of the class. Reading assignments will also be given on a weekly basis.

The study of criminal law and procedure can be exiting. It is hoped that you feel that excitement as you proceed through the course. Knowledge increases with challenge. Challenge occurs when the students are prepared for class and bring their preparation and experiences to the class discussion. Thus, we plan to make the course challenging for you. Best wishes!

Judge Emil Giordano

