



Criminal Justice: CJS 294: Contemporary Issues in CJ (CRN 3187)
Middlesex Community College
Criminal Justice Department
Course Syllabus: Online

TIME: Fall 2016 Online Accelerated 5-Week Course: November 11th – December 16th
CRN 3187

PLACE: Room 509 Snow Hall

INSTRUCTOR: Mrs. R. Rist-Brown
Office Hours: Snow Hall Room #508
Monday – Thursday: 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
Office Phone: 860-343-5849
E-Mail: Please contact via the Message feature in the Blackboard shell.
If Blackboard is down email: Ristbrown@mxcc.commnet.edu
Cell phone for emergencies only: 203-430-0718

COURSE PREREQUISITES: ENG 101, ENG 101 E or ENG ALP with a “C-” or better AND instructor approval.

TEXT: Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Crime and Criminology: Eleventh Edition. Hickey. ISBN: 9780078139598

I. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In this course students will be exposed to the contemporary issues that impact the functions, and organization of Criminal Justice agencies in the United States. Topics in the course includes issues such as; racial profiling, torture, capital punishment, gender, social stratification, social class, politics, and use of force. The focus and content of the course will change each year to reflect the changes in political and social thought and their impact on public policy.

II. SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Identify the critical arguments for and against various contemporary issues within the field of criminal justice.
2. Appreciate how research is being utilized to support or disprove various theories of crime and punishment.
3. Utilize critical thinking and problem solving skills to successfully defend their stance on a controversial topic.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS- LECTURE:

1. Course materials will be delivered via Blackboard and will enable student to complete their academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. The course is broken down into five units: Unit #1: Topics 1-4, Unit #2: Topics 1-5, Unit #3: Topics 1-4, and Unit #5: Topics 1-3. There is total of 21 topics.
2. The “lectures” for this course consist of PowerPoint presentations with an audio component. PowerPoint presentations will be posted on Blackboard for students to access. It is strongly recommended that students read the PowerPoints AND listen to the audio lectures.
3. You must contact the instructor **in advance** if you have a good reason to miss an assignment, discussion board, or quiz.
Only students with a prearranged absence will be permitted to make up assignments or quizzes.
4. Reading assignments must be completed before each class.
5. Assignments must be turned in on time. **Late work will not be accepted.** Instructor reserves the right to modify this rule only in exceptional cases.
6. Your grade is the average of points earned and total possible points based on the results of:

Reading Quizzes (10 of 12)	(30 points each)	300 points
Discussion Boards (5)	(50 points each)	250 points
Syllabus Quiz	(50 points)	050 points
Final Research Project	(400 points)	400 points

		Total: 1000 points

IV. IMPORTANT DATES: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

1. Quizzes:

11/20: Reading Quiz #1: Topics 1.1 and 1.2
11/20: Reading Quiz #2: Topics 1.3 and 1.4
11/27: Reading Quiz #3: Topics 2.1 and 2.2
11/27: Reading Quiz #4: Topics 2.3 and 2.4
11/27: Reading Quiz #5: Topic 2.5
12/04: Reading Quiz #6: Topics 3.1 and 3.2
12/04: Reading Quiz #7: Topics 3.3 and 3.4
12/04: Reading Quiz #8: Topic 3.5
12/11: Reading Quiz #9: Topics 4.1 and 4.2
12/11: Reading Quiz #10: Topics 4.3 and 4.4
12/16: Reading Quiz #11: Topics 5.1 and 5.2
12/16: Reading Quiz #12: Topic 5.3

2. Research Project:

11/20 Topics Due – 50 Points
12/04 Annotated Bibliography Due – 150 Points
12/14 Pamphlet/Brochure – 100 Points
12/14 Presentation Forum – 100 points

3. Discussion Forum: Legal Puzzles: Initial Posts Due on **Wednesday**.

11/16 Discussion Forum: Initial Post Due
11/23 Discussion Forum: Initial Post Due
11/30 Discussion Forum: Initial Post Due
12/07 Discussion Forum: Initial Post Due
12/14 Discussion Forum: Initial Post Due

V: QUIZZES:

- Quizzes will be online with a **20 minute** time limit.
- 12 reading quizzes will be assigned and only the top 10 grades will be counted towards the final grade.
- They are a combination of multiple choice, true and false, fill in the blank, matching, and short answer. Quizzes are not generally cumulative, but may be semi-cumulative if necessary. Quiz material comes from textbook reading, lecture material, chapter PowerPoints, or any other material posted in the Blackboard Shell.
- Quizzes must be completed before the deadline of 11:59 pm on the due dates. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- Please make certain to read all the chapters and complete all assignments prior to starting the exam.
- Please note that it is the student responsibility to make certain that they have a continuous internet connection for the duration of the quiz. Quizzes will not be reset if they lose internet access during the exam.
- **Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of “F” for the course and immediate referral to the Academic Dean for further disciplinary action.**

VI: DISCUSSION FORUMS: RESPONSE QUESTIONS:

DISCLAIMER: The views and opinions expressed in articles discussed during this class are those of the authors’ and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Middlesex Community College or Mrs. Brown. Assumptions and conclusions made within the articles are not reflective of the position of MxCC or Mrs. Brown.

At the end of each topic discussed in class are two discussion questions. Students must utilize their critical thinking skills and apply information that they are learning in the course when answering each question.

There will be several topics to select from for each discussion form. Each topic has at least two questions in which students must respond. Students will select a set of topic questions and write a response. The topic questions are located in Blackboard within each discussion. Students must complete **all 5** forum discussions.

Each student must post his/her individual response to the topic discussion questions on the Discussion Board by 11:59 pm on Wednesdays. Late submission will not be accepted; however, students can still submit response posts for partial credit.

Students must interact with at least two other students in the course by posting questions and addressing the initial posts of **TWO** of their classmates. Response posts are due by Sunday evening, 11:59 pm. These responses must be informative and contribute to the advancing knowledge of the topic. “Good job,” or “nice post,” are not acceptable. Please note that the final discussion board responses are due by 11:59 pm on December 16th (the last day of class).

Initial Post: Discussion Question Requirements: Due Wednesdays

- 200 to 250 words in length – no more no less (refers only to the body of your response)
- 12 font – Times New Roman
- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure
- Do not use first person.
- Label your legal puzzle with a title indicating which puzzle was selected.
- Supported by Two Scholarly Sources – one will be the textbook and the second is the student’s choice.
- **In text citations and references required.**
- Please note that all rules in regards to plagiarism and proper citations must be followed.
- **Type your legal puzzle in WORD and then paste it into the discussion forum AND submit it through the Safe Assign assignment module. The assignment module will check the document for plagiarism. Submission with a high match rate will not be accepted.**
- ****When you have a question about citing information correctly – ASK FOR HELP!****
- DO NOT send assignments via a message or email – they will not be accepted.

Response Posts: Requirements: Due Sundays

- Respond to at least 2 classmates’ initial posts.
- Each post must be at least 125 words in length.
- Response posts must be made on different days of the week: ex. Thursday and Sunday.
- 12 font – Times New Roman
- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure

Please adhere to all Netiquette rules when responding to other students’ posts.

- Respect others’ opinions and perspectives. It is perfectly acceptable to agree to disagree on a topic. It is also acceptable to disagree with the authors and/or Mrs. Brown, as long as the argument is formed in a respectful manner.
- Avoid using stereotypes.
- The purpose of the course is to use peer reviewed journal articles, data, and studies to support or refute your stance on a particular topic. Use the scholarly data to support your position.
- Absolutely no name calling or derogatory language on the discussion boards.
- Students who are unable to maturely and respectfully contribute to the class discussion may be asked to leave the class.

VII: RESEARCH PROJECT:

Since there are many interesting topics and articles constantly being published in law enforcement magazines, scholarly journals, and on the internet concerning the Criminal Justice System, students will complete a final research project instead of a final exam. Students will research their topic and summarize their findings. The project will consist of 4 parts: a topic, annotated bibliography, project/pamphlet, and a Power point presentation. Further instructions will be provided in class as well as posted under the “Research Project” link on Blackboard.

The main objective of this exercise is for students to become familiar with scholarly sources in the form of peer reviewed journal articles. Students will also learn how to identify the main points of the articles, summarize their findings, and present them to their peers.

VIII: SYLLABUS QUIZ:

Syllabus Quiz: Students will take a brief quiz on the syllabus and introductory material during the first two days of the course. Students should review the Introduction PowerPoint which will outline the expectations for the course. Questions on the syllabus quiz will pertain to policies, procedures, and the general format of the course. The quiz is meant as a vehicle to test students’ understanding of the expectations for the course.

IX: CRIMINAL JUSTICE GRADING SCALE:

<u>Letter Grade:</u>	<u>Percentage:</u>	<u>Letter Grade:</u>	<u>Percentage:</u>
A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	Below 60

X: WITHDRAWAL:

Withdrawal: Student may withdraw from the class with a grade of “W” before the 11th week of classes. After that date, students will receive a “W” or an “F.” Students may withdrawal from the course only after speaking with the instructor and filing all the proper paperwork. Note: The primary responsibility for initiating a withdrawal rests with the students. Withdrawal from the course is official only when initiated in writing through the Records office, all requested signatures are obtained, and the proper papers are filed with the Records Office by the indicated deadlines.

THE FINAL DAY THAT I WILL SIGN A WITHDRAWAL WILL BE DECEMBER 7th (75% Point in Class). No withdrawals will be signed after that point.

XI: CLASS CANCELLATION AND OTHER MxCC POLICIES:

In the event of inclement weather either before the start of the day when classes are in session or during the school day, you may check for information on delayed openings, college closings, class cancellations, etc, but listing to the local radio stations and television stations. Additionally, a message will be posted on the MxCC website at www.mxcc.commnet.edu and an announcement is made on the college’s main phone number (860) 343–5800. When calling the main phone number, be sure to choose option #1 from the menu for school closings. If classes are already in session, everyone on campus will be notified of any changes. Decisions to cancel classes or close the college early will be made as soon as practicable.

Additional Syllabus Information: For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather/emergency closings, and more, please go to the following website: www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/

XII: ANTI-PLAGIARISM DETECTION SOFTWARE

SafeAssign, TurnItIn or other anti-plagiarism detection software products may be used in this course. Anti-plagiarism detection software products assist faculty and students in preventing and detecting plagiarism. Professors may utilize such software in order to check the originality of the academic work students submit in a course by comparing submitted papers to those contained in its database consisting of submitted papers and other sources. Anti-plagiarism detection software returns an “originality report” for each submission. The report is limited in scope to merely identifying passages that are not original to the author of the submitted work and which may include correctly cited quotations and information. Professors and students must carefully review such reports. No adverse action may be taken by a professor with respect to a student solely on the basis of an originality report which indicates the potential for plagiarism.

In this course you may be asked to submit your academic papers and other creative work containing personally identifiable information for originality reporting. By doing so, your work along with personally identifiable information will be retained in the product database and may be subsequently reported out containing your personally identifiable information not only to your professor, but also to professors of other universities and colleges within Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) as part of subsequent originality reports.

You may decline to submit your work for originality reporting. If so, you must be provided an alternative method in which to submit your work. However, your professor, after removing your personally identifying information, may nonetheless submit limited portions of your academic work for originality reporting.

All Article Summaries will be submitted via a Safe Assign Assignment in the Blackboard Course Shell. Please note that assignments that are not submitted via Blackboard will not be accepted.

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to amend any portion of this syllabus to meet the educational needs of the students in the course.

IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICIES!! PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather and emergency closings, and more, please go to the following website: www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/ or scan the QR code with your smart phone. Also, please become familiar with the policies regarding nondiscrimination, sexual misconduct, and general student conduct at the following website: www.mxcc.edu/nondiscrimination/.



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Middlesex Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

- Primary Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Adrienne Maslin
Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123|
- Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Queen Fordham
Coordinator of the Meriden Center Welcome Desk
qfordham@mxcc.edu; 203-608-3011

November and December 2016: CJS 294 Due Date

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
					First Day of Class	
					Intro material	
					Intro PowerPoint	Topic 1.1
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
				Unit #1		
				Forum Discussion		
Syllabus Quiz Due	Topic 1.2	Topic 1.3	Topic 1.4	Initial Post Due	Research Project	Research Project
					Topic 2.1	Topic 2.2
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Reading Quiz #1				Unit #2		
Reading Quiz #2	Topic 2.3	Topic 2.4	Topic 2.5	Forum Discussion	Research Project	Research Project
Topics Due				Initial Post Due	Topic 3.1	Topic 3.2
Response posts Due						
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
Reading Quiz #3				Unit #3		
Reading Quiz #4	Topic 3.3	Topic 3.4	Topic 3.5	Forum Discussion	Research Project	Research Project
Reading Quiz #5				Initial Post Due	Topic 4.1	Topic 4.2
Response posts Due						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Reading Quiz #6				Unit #4		
Reading Quiz #7	Topic 4.3	Topic 4.4		Forum Discussion	Research Project	Research Project
Reading Quiz #8				Initial Post Due	Topic 5.1	Topic 5.2
Response posts Due			Last day to withdrawal			
11	12	13	14	15	16	
Reading Quiz #9				Unit #5	Last Day of Class	
Reading Quiz #10	Topic 5.3	Research Project	Research Project	Forum Discussion	Reading Quiz #11	
				Initial Post Due	Reading Quiz #12	
				Final Projects Due		
Response posts Due				Presentation Forum	Response posts Due	

It is STRONGLY recommended that students print this calendar and post it by their computer.

*Lecture Schedule may be subject to change due to extenuating circumstance or to meet the educational needs of the students in the course.

Topics Covered In Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice:

Below is a list of topics that will provide a guide for students during the semester. The students should become familiar with each of these topics. Each topic includes important concepts and vocabulary with which the students will develop competencies. Lectures will be used to present and elaborate on these topics. Readings from the text will provide the students with an introduction to these topics and a means for the student to continue their learning and as a review of the material presented in lecture.

Unit #	Instructional Unit	Topics	Specific Objectives of Unit
1	Explanations of Crime	1.1: Is Crime Beneficial To Society? 1.2: Is Criminal Behavior Determined Biologically? 1.3: Is a Person's Body Type Clearly Linked to Criminal Behavior? 1.4: Does a "Warrior Gene" Make People More Prone to Violence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the arguments for and against crime being beneficial to society. Explain the different theories on whether criminal behavior is determined biologically. Outline the argument that a person's body type links them to criminal behavior.
2	Contemporary Public Policy Issues in Criminology and Criminal Justice	2.1: Does the U.S have a Right to Torture Suspected Terrorist? 2.2: Is Racial Profiling an Acceptable Law Enforcement Strategy? 2.3: Should Juvenile Courts be Abolished. 2.4: Is Exposure to Pornography Related to Increased Rates of Rape? 2.5: Should it be a Crime to Download Copyrighted Music from the Internet?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline the pros and cons for the controversy in regards to whether the United States has the right to torture suspected terrorists. Define racial profiling and explain if it is an acceptable law enforcement strategy. List the arguments for and against abolishing juvenile courts. Explain how exposure to pornography related to increased rates of rape.
3	Punishment	3.1: Are Supermax (Control Units) Prisons an Appropriate Way to Punish Hardened Criminals? 3.2: Do 3-Strikes Sentencing Laws and other "Get Tough" approaches to Crime Really Work? 3.3: Does Imprisoning Drug Offenders Reduce Crime Rates? 3.4: Should Private "For-Profit" Corporations be Allowed to Run U.S Prisons? 3.5: Is Capital Punishment Bad Public Policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the controversy in regards to using Supermax (Control Unit) Prisons as a way to punish hardened criminals. Outline the "three strikes" law and explain the "get tough" approach. List the pros and cons for private "for profit" corporation running U.S prisons. Explain the arguments for and against the use of capital punishment.
4	Modern Trends in Criminology and Criminal Justice	4.1: Should Serious Sex Offenders be Castrated? 4.2: Do Strict Gun Control Laws Reduce the Number of Homicides in the United States? 4.3: Should the Police Enforce Zero Tolerance Laws? 4.4: Should Marijuana be Legalized?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between the arguments for and against castration of serious sex offenders. Explain the pros and cons for stricter gun control and does the policy reduce homicides in the United States. Outline the pros and cons for police enforcement zero-tolerance laws. List the various rationales both for legalizing and criminalizing marijuana. Explain whether a juries should be able disregard the law and free "guilty" persons in racially charged cases.
5	The U.S Supreme Court, Crime, and The Justice System	5.1: Does the 2 nd Amendment of the Constitution Protect the Right to Possess a Firearm? 5.2: Should it be Lawful for the Police to Conduct Jailhouse Strip Searches of Persons Arrested for Minor Offenses? 5.3: Does an Imprisoned Individual have a Constitutional Right to Access the State's Evidence for DNA testing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain whether or not the U.S Constitution protects the rights to possess firearms. Outline the arguments for and against the death penalty as an unconstitutional punishment for juvenile offender. List the various arguments for and against confining sex offender indefinitely in mental hospitals after they have served their prison sentence and does it violate the constitution. Explain whether or not incarcerated individuals have a constitutional right to access the state's evidence for DNA testing.

