



COURSE SYLLABUS

Winter Mini 2013	CJ 360.01W Mass Media and Crime Online	Dec 17, 2012- Jan 7, 2013
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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Required Reading:

Surette, Ray (2010). *Media, crime and criminal justice: Images, realities and policies*. 4th ed. Cengage Learning. ISBN-13:9780495809142

Other materials as maybe assigned and located in DocSharing in ECollege

Course Description:

The course examines the media's effects on perceptions of crime and justice in America. An examination is performed on media generated crime and criminal justice policies. An example of media-generated crime would be when politicians/media "emphasize" a problem to essentially 'create' a crime or crime wave. A discussion of the effect of social constructionism and the ability of the various types of media to create a new type of crime will occur. An investigation of the impact of various types of media (radio, television, motion pictures, and printed sources, etc.) on criminals, crime fighters and the courts will be conducted. An example of the topics to be discussed is the drug problem, sex offenders, murders and etc.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. To demonstrate an understanding of core concepts of sociology, criminology, and cultural studies as applied to mass media and its portrayal of crime. This will be achieved through a combination of written and discussion-based activities.
2. To demonstrate the academic skill of researching a topic reflective of mass media and crime scholarship through creating an annotated bibliography.
3. To apply the core concepts by reflectively and informatively contributing to dialogues on a variety of topics including but not limited to fictional and journalistic construction of crime, of law enforcement, of the judicial process, and incarceration.
4. To demonstrate an understanding of how historical and cultural context contributes to one's consideration of issues of mass media and crime.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course will provide a variety of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course. Each week you will work toward achieving these outcomes through discussions and comments, a course project, and exams. Below is an explanation of each course requirement including due date, assignment instructions, and other requirements.

A core component of this course is critical thinking. Critical thinking requires students to think through situations, facts, and issues in an open-minded and objective way in an effort to analyze and evaluate information in an informed manner. Qualities of a critical thinker (and of arguments that embody critical thinking) include:

- **Certainty is not always necessary for a critical thinker; possibility and probability should always be a consideration**—in other words, just because the book tells you it is true, does not mean that there may not be another solution or possibility to consider. The way that facts relate to one another—and not just fact alone—should be used to determine truth.
- **Critical thinkers are not only independent thinkers; they are also fair-minded in that they are willing to consider all points of view, and they are careful to take every aspect of an argument into consideration**—your way of thinking may not necessarily be the only way or the right way of thinking. Consider other perspectives
- **Consider evidence (facts), source (from what source did your evidence come from), and motivations (what might be the underlying motivation behind these facts)**—in other words, gather information from credible sources and evaluate these sources/factual information in the context of what you have been asked to discuss/evaluate.

When posting discussions/comments, preparing the homework assignment, and taking exams, use the following to help you critically think through the question being asked. You will be graded (in part) on how well you perform these tasks.

- Determine the problem/issue you are trying to solve. Make sure you remain open-minded and objective and be aware of your own biases on the subject and put them aside
- Develop a hypothesis and/or possible solution to the problem/issue. Brainstorm other possible solutions. Think about the pros and cons of the problem/issue
- Gather information on the problem/issue that may support or contradict your position
- Analyze your facts. Do not assume anything. Evaluate the facts objectively
- Determine a reasonable conclusion based on all of the facts
- Make sure your facts (and the reporting of the facts) are accurate. You may assume a causal relationship but there might be other possible conclusions to be drawn based on other factors. Be sure to evaluate what those might be.

This course also requires that you utilize APA citation format for all discussions/ assignments/exams. See Course and University Policies/Procedures for more information on how to cite using APA.

Discussion Posts: (5 discussion posts @ 50 points each = 250 course points)

Student Learning Outcomes #1, #3, and # 4: The student will obtain a basic understanding of important issues in mass media and crime. The student will learn to utilize critical thinking skills. The student will learn how to apply course concepts to ‘real life’ victimization/issues. The student will be an active and engaged participant in discussion forums by analyzing and evaluating information presented within the textbook, external readings/resources, student research, and class activities

The discussion forums are related to the chapter readings and other materials. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned readings and activities, you are expected to engage in an **ongoing** discussion/debate with your classmates. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for **quality, timeliness** of your contributions, and a **detailed analysis** linking together theory (readings) to application (activities/‘real life’ CJ/mass media issues).

Discussion posts will be posted within the first day class. The content of these posts may be found in eCollege (See below under Technology Requirements for more on accessing/turning in assignments using ECollege). Posts are due by 11:00PM CST on the following dates/days.

Discussion Comment Post #1 due on Day 4, December 20, 2012 Thursday

Discussion/Comment Post #2 due on Day 8 December 24, 2012 Monday

Discussion/Comment Post #3 due on Day 13 December 29, 2012 Saturday

Discussion/Comment Post #4 due on Day 17 January 2, 2013 Wednesday

Discussion/Comment Post #5 due on Day 21 January 6, 2013 Sunday

You are required to answer the discussion questions using your textbook/additional materials (if applicable/required) as your primary source(s). Additional source materials are always welcome and should be cited accordingly and are sometimes required in order for you to complete the assignment. Please read the assignment directions carefully.

Your main posts/initial response to the question should be **A MINIMUM** of 250 words in length. Please keep in mind that **ALL** posts must be substantive and meaningful. Proper grammar and word usage are required. I will take this opportunity to remind you that your discussion posts are formal assignments and will therefore be graded as such.

Comment Posts: (10 posts @ 10 points each = 100 course points)

Student Learning Outcomes #1, #3 and # 4: The student will learn to utilize critical thinking skills. The student will be an active and engaged participant in discussion forums by analyzing and evaluating information presented within the textbook, external readings/resources, student research, and class activities.

Comment posts are responses you make to the 5 discussion posts that you and your classmates have posted during the course. **You are to post two (2)** substantive peer comments for each discussion question and not all on the same day. Comment posts should be a **MINIMUM** of 50 words in length.

Comment posts should be meaningful. Merely agreeing or disagreeing with a classmate will not be looked upon favorably and will result in a loss of points. A meaningful post is one that moves the discussion forward in some substantive way through providing one's perspective, additional information through research, or reframing the discussion in some new way. You are expected to engage in an **ongoing** discussion/debate with your classmates. Your comments will be graded for **quality, timeliness** of your contributions, and **relevance**. Further you are expected to 'be' in the class a minimum of every other day during this 22 day session. **NO LATE COMMENTS ARE ACCEPTED. Specifically for each discussion board, you are expected to be visible a minimum of two days. All discussion and comments on one day will result in the downgrading of points.**

Please note that comments will be tallied by me and entered into the gradebook on an ongoing basis. This will allow students to 'follow' their comments grade in real time.

Assessment Method: Discussion assignments will be graded using the Discussion Post/Comments Grading Rubric provided in Appendix A of the syllabus.

There will be **1** exam in this course. Exam will be 1 hour in length and will be accessible for a 17-hour period beginning at 6:00AM until 11:00PM CST that evening. Students will be notified of the precise format of the test prior to exam day. **YOU WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO ACCESS THE EXAM ONCE.** See under Course and University Policies/Procedures for more information regarding taking tests on eCollege.

Final Exam covering Chapters 1-9 of the text and any other assigned materials will be **taken on January 7, 2013**

Assessment Method: Multiple choice, True/False and/or short answer questions.

EXTRA CREDIT: Do not ask, there will not be any. Two types of students usually want to do extra credit work: those who would like to make an even “higher” A; and those who are failing the course. In either case, extra credit makes no sense. Put in the time, energy, and effort on the “regular” work and you will not need any “extra” credit.

(See syllabus tool for content suggestions)

GRADING

Assignments for this course will be scored using a points system. Below is an explanation of how each assignment type will be scored.

Assignment Type	# of Assignments	Point Value	Total Points
Discussion	5	50	250
Comments	10	10	100
Final Exam	1	100	100
		TOTAL	450

Grades earned on each assignment will be added together and will be divided by the total number of points possible in the course. Below is the overall point scale for the course.

Total points possible for the semester = **450**.

450-405 = A
404-360 = B
359-315 = C

314- 270 = D
269 and below = F

You will find your course grades in the gradebook located in ECollege. This gradebook will keep a 'real-time' accounting of the points you earn on assignments for this class. In this way, you may track your progress in this course throughout the course of the semester.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The following hardware and software are necessary in order to use ECollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, ECollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to ECollege, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

For those of you who are not familiar with ECollege, I **strongly** suggest you take the tutorial offered online. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the personnel in Technology Services.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To log in to the course, go to:

<https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to long in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu. Once you log in to eCollege, click on My Courses and select CJ 360.01W—Mass Media and Crime.

Please note that this is an online course and as such, all aspects of the course (including assignments/discussions/comments/exams) will be turned in/completed through eCollege. Your grades will also be available in eCollege.

This class will run continuously for 22 day schedule. After logging in to the course, students will notice that the daily/unit content area is located on the left navigation bar. These weekly/unit content areas are identified as Day 1, Day 4, etc. (this corresponds to the course schedule located in the syllabus.)

Student should access course materials by clicking on the proper day/unit content area. Students should read the overview that contains information about what is to be covered in class, along with a series of daily tasks (these tasks correspond to the links available and each unit and to what appears in the syllabus).

Students should then click on the lecture link and take the time to read the material I have posted. The lecture is an attempt to integrate information from the course readings and includes information from the text/readings as well as other information that I consider important to your understanding of the subject matter.

Students will complete discussions by clicking on the **Discussion** link that will be visible if a discussion forum is scheduled for that week (students will know if discussions are required based on information contained in Daily Tasks and in the syllabus). At that time, students will be able to read the discussion question and post accordingly (keep in mind that all discussion forums are open and available for posting on December 17, 2012—the first day of class). Students should pay particular attention to the requirements for discussion posts as outlined in the syllabus. Students should plan to respond to the posted online course discussion questions with an original discussion post (Discussions) and by replying to their colleagues' posts in the discussion forum (Comments).

Students will complete assigned exams by clicking on the **Exam** link that will be visible if an exam is scheduled for that day. Students should click on the **Exam** link on Day 22 in order to access the Final Exam.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

My primary form of communication with the class will be through Announcements in eCollege and Email. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students via Announcements and your official University Email address available to me through MyLeo. It will be your responsibility to check your University Email regularly.

Students who wish to discuss an issue with me personally should do so through Email. Students are encouraged to discuss issues/questions that are relevant to the class through the eCollege **Virtual Office**.

Students who Email me can expect a reply within 24 hours M-F. Students who Email me during holidays should expect a reply by the end of the next regularly scheduled business day.

ECollege Student Technical Support:

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chat Support: Click on *'Live Support'* on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the *'Help'* button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

For assistance with the library: To access the Library databases and Library tutorials you must open a separate browser session. Minimize your eCollege session and open another browser window going to the Library's web site directly: <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/library> not from within eCollege.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) receiving a failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In **ALL** instances, incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head. Please be aware that academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating is defined as:

- Copying another's test or assignment
- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e. written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source

Collusion is defined as:

- Collaborating with another, without authorization, when preparing an assignment

If you have any questions regarding academic dishonesty, ask. Otherwise, I will assume that you have full knowledge of the academic dishonesty policy and agree to the conditions as set forth in this syllabus.

Students should also reference the following link for more detailed information.

<http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/sociologyCriminalJustice/frequentlyAskedQuestions/academicHonesty/default.aspx>

Policy for Reporting Problems with eCollege

Should students encounter eCollege-based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed.

- Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
- Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
- Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should Email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
- At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the helpdesk. I strongly encourage you to check for compatibility of your browser BEFORE the course begins and to take the eCollege tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the eCollege platform. ONLY eCollege-based problems are legitimate.

Examination Policy

There will be no make-up quizzes/exams (including the final) except for students with documented medical excuses, students observing official religious holidays, and students on official college business. It is up to the student to advise me in advance if the student will not be able to take the exam due to official college business or religious holiday and to make alternative testing arrangements.

Attendance Policy

While this is an online course, students are expected to 'attend class' and actively participate. Student participation/activity will be monitored by the professor. Students should plan to dedicate approximately 30 hours/course of time to this course, of which approximately 1

hour/on alternate days should be spent in the discussion board (reading posts and comments and conversing with others).

APA Citation Format Policy

It is very important that you learn how to cite properly. In some ways, citations are more important than the actual text of your paper. Therefore, you should take this task seriously and devote some time to understanding how to cite properly. If you take the time to understand this process up front, it will save you a significant amount of time in the long run (not to mention significant deductions in points).

In the social and behavioral sciences (including Criminal Justice), we use APA (American Psychological Association) format. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people's words or when they quote other's words directly. You may learn to cite from a variety of different sources including the APA Style Sheet that is located in DocSharing in ECollege. You may also choose to access the following websites:

www.apastyle.org

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>

www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

Late Work

In principle, I do not accept late work and do not believe in allowing students to turn in work after the due date. My position is that everyone knows the rules of engagement at the beginning of the semester and that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they plan accordingly to submit their assignments in a timely manner.

Drop Course Policy

I do not have a policy on nor do I condone the curving of grades. Your grades in this class will be an accurate reflection of your time, effort, and commitment to the subject matter at hand. Everyone begins this class with an 'A'. What you choose to do with that grade as the term progresses is up to you. You know up front what the requirements of this course are. If you are not willing or able to commit the time and effort to this class, you cannot and should not expect me to 'give you a break'. Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary. I will not do it for you.

University Specific Procedures

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that

provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*). This includes, but is not limited to, providing an environment where all students feel comfortable to express their viewpoints freely and not being disrespectful to other students or the professor. For more on web-specific conduct, see: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Every effort will be made to adhere to the course schedule as noted below. However, circumstances may require changes to the schedule. In that case, changes will be announced via University Email and in Announcements. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule if necessary and depending on the progress of the class. I highly recommend that you follow the schedule outlined below **VERY CAREFULLY** so that you are sure to complete readings as assigned and submit your assignments on time.

Please note that all homework assignments/discussions/comments/exams are due by 11:00PM CST in eCollege on the day they are due as outlined in the syllabus.

Please note that your book for this class is a combination textbook and reader. What that means is that each chapter in the book begins with information as you might find in a textbook, followed by readings (some original to the book, others adapted from other sources). Your assignments for this course require that you read the textbook information. In some cases, additional materials are available for download in DocSharing in eCollege.

Day 1- 4 December 17-December 20

December 17	<p>Class begins-- Read the syllabus carefully</p> <p>Read chapter 1: Predators, Pictures and Policy, AND chapter 2: Social Constructionism</p> <p>Post a Week #1 Discussion where you introduce yourself and accept the conditions of the syllabus/agree to the Rules of Netiquette/answer the discussion question (this does NOT count as part of your discussion/comment grade)</p> <p>The link to the Rules of Netiquette may be found under Course and University Procedures/Policies under Student Conduct</p>
	<p>Complete first discussion and comments by (Thursday) both at 11:00PM CST on alternate days</p>

Day 5- 8 December 21- December 24

December 21	<p>Read the following chapters for this week</p> <p>Chapter 3 Crime and Criminality <i>and</i></p> <p>Chapter 4 Crime Fighters</p> <p>Complete first discussion and comments by (Tuesday) both at 11:00PM CST on alternate days</p>
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Day 9-13 December 26- December 29

December 26	<p>Read chapter 5 The Courts <i>and</i></p> <p>Chapter 6 Corrections</p>
	<p>Discussion Assignment/comments #3 by (Saturday) both at 11:00PM CST on alternate days</p>

Day 14- 17 December 30- January 2

December 30	Read: Chapter 7 Crime Control <i>and</i> Chapter 8 The Media and Criminal Justice Policy
	Discussion Assignment/comments #3 by (Wednesday) both at 11:00PM CST on alternate days

Day 18 – 22 January 3- January 7

January 3	Read Chapter 9: Media and Crime and Justice in the Twenty-First Century 15 Discussion Assignment/comments #5 by (Sunday 1/6) both at 11:00PM CST on alternate days.
January 7	Final Exam covering Chapters 1-9

Note: While I intend to follow this syllabus, instructor reserves the right to amend and will provide advance notice in writing to students if such a change becomes necessary for the successful completion of this course.

Appendix A

Discussion Assignment/Comments Grading Rubric

Discussion Post (50 points)

Assignment instructions: Student follows the assignment directions /10

Analysis: Student evaluates the issue/situation sufficiently to demonstrate an understanding of the material /10

Critical thinking: Student employs critical thinking skills /15

APA format: Student provides citations in proper APA citation format /10

Grammar/Word usage: student uses proper grammar and word usage /5

Comments Posts: submitted two substantive posts /20

Comments on Post:

Comments Grade