



Course Syllabus

CJ 597: Social Class, Ethnicity and Crime

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbook, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

Gregg Barak, Paul Leighton and Jeanne Flavin, *Class, Race, Gender, and Crime: The Social Realities of Justice in America*. (Paperback, 2010 or the latest edition.) Lanham, Maryland: The Rowman & Littlefield Publications. ISBN: 978-0-7425-9970-3.

You can contact the Texas Book Store on our campus in Commerce; tel. 903-886-5215. Or you can buy it through online sources.

Optional

Other materials/readings as assigned and posted online

Course Description

The Criminal Justice Graduate Course CJ 597 is aimed at providing a thorough and critical examination of meanings, history, correlates, and consequences of serious forms of social inequalities and arbitrarily assigned privileges, particularly based on social class and race/ethnicity in the American criminal justice system from a criminological perspective. Implications will be made for inequalities based on gender biases as well. Although we will focus on the American criminal justice system, selected illustrations from other cultures are provided.

Prerequisites

Please note that prerequisites for this course include 501, 568, 530, and 531. Students who are registered for this class and who do not meet the prerequisites should contact Dr. Melinda Schlager, the Director and Advisor of the MS in Applied Criminology program.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Identify meanings, perspectives, forms, and historical background of racial and social class inequalities involved in administering law enforcement and the criminal justice system in the United States.
2. Critique various components, positions, and processes involved in the criminal justice work and the crime control enterprise on the bases of diversity as well as futuristic criteria.
3. Identify rationalizations and claims made by economic elites and White Americans for claiming privileges and prerogatives in society and the implications these claims have for the criminal justice system.
4. Report consequences of social and economic inequalities for victimization of middle and underclass as well as nonwhite people in the administration of justice in America.
5. Describe elements of the unequal enforcement of “the justice for all” principle in criminal prosecution, sentencing and imprisonment.

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. You will work toward achieving these outcomes through discussions/comments, papers, assignments, and tests. Below is an explanation of each course requirement including due date, assignment instructions, and other requirements.

Each week/unit starts on Monday and ends on Saturday and your grade for activities in it will be posted online on each Sunday by 8 PM.

Introduction: (1 Introduction post—not graded)

Students are asked to introduce themselves to each other. This introduction may include any information that you would like to share with others in the course, but must minimally include a statement that you have read and agree to abide by the syllabus and follow the rules of academic integrity and netiquette. You will not be allowed to continue in the course without providing this statement. This post is due by **11:59PM CST on Tuesday of Week #1** of the course.

Discussions & Comments

Discussion Posts (SLOs 1-5)

Upon completion of the assigned readings, you are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion/debate with your classmates. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for quality and a detailed analysis linking the material to a critical appraisal of theory, policy, and practice. In all cases, students must cite and provide a full bibliography/works cited at the end of their post for all citations mentioned in the post (follow guidelines for utilizing APA citation format).

These posts should be the equivalent of 1 page in length or a minimum of 250 words and should include one outside source (i.e., a source outside the regular readings assigned for the week/course). The specific discussion assignment is located in each weekly unit at the Homepage at eCollege. Posts are due by **11:59PM CST on Fridays** during each week of the course.

The Discussions are directly related to the assigned readings as well as your own conceptualizations and opinions.

Assessment Method: Discussion posts (100 points each) will be graded using the Discussion Post Grading Rubric located in DocSharing.

Comment Posts

Comment posts are responses you make to the discussion posts that your classmates post each week. You are required to make a minimum of **five (5)** comments each week. Feel free to quote your textbook and/or outside sources in your comments.

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**, and **relevance**. Your comments will also be graded based on your ability to engage in critical thinking.

NO LATE COMMENTS ARE ACCEPTED. All comment posts are due by **11:59PM CST on Fridays** for each week in the course.

Assessment Method: Comments posts (10 points for each of 5 comment posts = 50 points for each week multiplied by 5 weeks= 250 points) Postings will be graded using the comments grading rubric located in DocSharing.

Course Pre/Post-test (not graded)

Pre and post-tests allow the professor to assess your baseline (foundation) knowledge of a particular subject at the time that you enter a course and the degree of increase in knowledge at the end of the course. This pre/post-test is comprised of a list of questions that will assess course outcomes. You will be asked to complete the **pre-test** by **Friday of Week #1** and the **post-test** by **Friday of Week #5**. These tests will not be graded (they are used for assessment purposes only).

Assigned Work for Five Weeks

Popular Media Reflection Paper in Week 1 (SLO 1)

1. Locate one article on any aspect of racial and class inequalities related to our criminal justice system that has been published in a popular magazine or newspaper (e.g., *Time*, *Newsweek*, *M.S.*, *Redbook*, *Popular Psychology*, *Psychology Today*, *Dallas Morning News*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, etc.).
2. Discuss your chosen article by writing a 3 to 4 page critical review based on the following questions:
 - What are implicit or explicit meanings, forms, and explanations of racial and class inequalities in our criminal justice in the popular media? How do these compare in general with scientific literature (such as your text book)?
 - According to your article, how common is racial/class inequality?
 - What was done to the offender? For the victim?
 - What treatment or prevention program is recommended in the article?
 - How do you estimate the value of this article, particularly from a criminal justice perspective?
 - Assess the value of popular media in shaping public attitudes and perception related to prejudice and discrimination in the criminal justice system.

This assignment is due by **11:59 PM CST on Saturday of Week #1** of the course.

Assessment Method: Grading will be based on completeness of presentation as per the assignment instructions.

Short Essay Assignment for Week 2 (SLO 2)

Essay Topic: The Impact of Racial or Class Bias on the Crime Control Enterprise.

The essay should be 3 to 4 pages in length (does not include references), maximum 12-point font, 1-inch margins, include your name, and utilize proper APA citation format. This assignment is due by **11:59 PM CST on Saturday of Week #2** of the course.

Assessment Method: Students will be assessed using the Short Essay Assignment Grading Rubric.

Scholarly Article Review for Week 3 (SLO 3, 4)

Locate a peer-reviewed article published in a criminology journal of your choice (online journals are acceptable; www or Wikipedia type popular online entries are unacceptable), on any one subject of: (1) privilege based on race or class, (2) hate crime, (3) any form of prejudice discrimination in the legal system based on race or class, or (4) reforming our criminal justice/legal system for overcoming racial/class bias. Read, review, and summarize this article. Address the following questions:

1. Is it a research article based on theoretical argument, literature review, or empirical data?
2. What is the specific aim of the article?
3. Does it say anything new and/or important?
4. What problems with the article can you identify?

This paper should be at least 3 to 4 pages in length (does not include references), 12-point font, 1-inch margins, include your name, and utilize proper APA citation format. This assignment is due by **11:59 PM CST on Saturday of Week #3** of the course.

Assessment Method: Student will be assessed using the Scholarly Article Review Grading Rubric.

Position Paper for Week 4 (SLO 1-5)

Students are required to prepare a position paper on any one topic (addressed in your textbook) during Weeks 1 through 4 of the course. The purpose of a position paper is to generate support on an issue. It describes a position on an issue and the rationale for that position.

- The position paper is based on facts that provide a solid foundation for your argument. In the position paper you should:
 - Use evidence to support your position, such as statistical evidence, or dates/ events.
 - Validate your position with authoritative references or primary sources.
 - Examine the strengths and weaknesses of your position.
 - Evaluate possible solutions and suggest courses of action.
- Choose an issue where there is a clear division of opinion and which is arguable with facts and inductive reasoning. You may choose an issue on which you have already formed an opinion. However, in writing about this issue you must examine your opinion of the issue critically.

- Prior to writing your position paper, define and limit your issue carefully. These issues are complex with multiple solutions.
- Narrow the topic of your position paper to something that is manageable.
- Research your issue thoroughly, consulting experts and obtaining primary documents.
- Consider feasibility, cost-effectiveness and political/social climate when evaluating possible solutions and courses of action.
- You must utilize a minimum of relevant material and two to three outside sources to inform your paper. These outside sources must be peer-reviewed publications or governmental reports.
- This paper should be a minimum of 3 to 4 pages in length (does not include references) maximum 12-point font, 1-inch margins, include your name, and utilize proper APA citation format. Refer to the position paper guidelines in the assignment module.
- This assignment is due by **11:59 PM CST on Saturday of Week #4** of the course.

Assessment Method: Grading will be based on completeness of presentation as per the assignment instructions.

Final Examination for Week 5 (SLO 1-5)

I will develop four short essay questions in a closed book final exam timed for maximum one hour, specifically based on the following list of topics:

- Difference between classical, positivist, and critical perspectives in criminology.
- Major causes/correlates of racial and class inequalities in the criminal justice system.
- Role of class and class conflicts in leading to inequities in the justice system.
- White privilege and its consequences for the justice system.
- Relationship between race and class while affecting the justice system.
- How and why selected improvements have as well as not have taken place in overcoming racial and economic discrimination in our justice system.
- Racial profiling.
- Hate crime.
- Criminal justice system’s response to dealing with racial discrimination in effective manner.

The final exam will be given online on **Thursday of Week #5 by 11:59 PM CST.**

Assessment Method: Students will be assessed using the exam grading rubric located in DocSharing.

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
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Introduction	1	0	Not graded
Course Pre-test	1	0	Not graded
Discussion Posts	5	100	500
Comment Posts	25	10	250
Popular Media Reflection Paper	1	100	100
Short Essay	1	100	100
Scholarly Article Review	1	100	100
Position Paper	1	100	100
Final Examination	1	100	100
Course Post-test	1	0	Not graded
		Total Point:	1250

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/grading schema for the course.

Total points possible for the term = 1250.

1125—1250= A
1000-1124 = B
875-999= C
750-874= D
749 and below = F

Grades will be available in the Grade book so that students can track their progress in the course on an ongoing basis.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements for the Epic Web Client are:
 - Any current Flash-compliant browser (eg. Internet Explorer 7 or Firefox 3.0)
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required – courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display – 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- A sound card and speakers or headphones
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date

- Some classes may have specific class requirements for additional software. These requirements will be listed on the course offerings page. Most home computers purchased within the last 3-4 years meet or surpass these requirements.
- You will need some additional free software for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - Adobe Reader
 - Adobe Flash Player
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2003, XP, 2007 or OpenOffice. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

eCollege Access and Log in Information

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:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>

You will need your CWID and password to log 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@tamuc.edu

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.

Course Navigation

All aspects of this course, including presentations, assignments, readings, and exams will be completed / turned in through eCollege. Your grades will also be available in eCollege. After logging in to the course, students will notice that the weekly/unit content area is located on the left navigation bar. These weekly/unit content areas are identified as Week 1, Week 2, etc. (this corresponds to the course schedule located in the syllabus.)

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

Students should then click on the weekly content items links and take the time to read/view any material/presentations/assignments that are posted. The lecture/presentation is an attempt to integrate information from the course readings and includes information from the text/readings as well as other information that are considered important to your understanding of the subject.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

My primary form of communication with the class will be through Email. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students in this way via your official University Email address available to me through MyLeo and in Announcements. It will be your responsibility to check your University e-mail as I plan to send you important messages regularly.

Students who e-mail me outside of regular office hours can expect a reply within 24 hours. Students who Email me during holidays or over the weekend should expect a reply by the end of the next regularly scheduled business day.

Virtual Office

Welcome to my office. This space is set aside for students to ask course related questions. Place any questions or concerns about the course here and they will answered within 24 hours on weekdays. (It is possible that I will answer all threads during my office hours as posted on the syllabus.)

Please feel free to answer one another's questions. I will check answers (as well as questions) for correctness, but do not hesitate to respond to a posting if you feel you can answer the question thoroughly and directly.

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, and 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.tamuc.edu/library> not from within eCollege.

Policy for Reporting Problems with eCollege

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

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at
2. helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
3. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
4. 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
5. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the help desk. You are strongly encouraged 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.

myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at <https://leo.tamuc.edu>.

Internet Access

An Internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your professor. View the requirements as outlined in Technology Requirements above for more information.

Learner Support

Go to the following link [One Stop Shop](#)- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location.

Go to the following link [Academic Success Center](#)- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.

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 [Criminal Justice web site](#) for more information.

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 15-20 hours/week of time to this course, of which approximately 1 hour/week 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/assignment. 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 manual while Psychological Psychological Association) format. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they 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 Tutorial and the sources listed below:

- www.apastyle.org
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>
- www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

It is the student's responsibility to understand how to cite properly. If you have questions, feel free to ask.

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 term and that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they plan accordingly to submit their assignments in a timely manner. However, I also do understand that sometimes there are circumstances outside one's control that may impact timely submission of assignments. To that end, I have developed a policy on late work. Please note that this policy applies ONLY to your reflection paper assignments and not to discussion or comment submissions.

Late assignments will be accepted after the due date and time up to 1 day (24 hours) late. Twenty (20) points will be deducted from all late assignments. Assignments turned in more than one day late **will not** be accepted/graded.

Drop Course Policy

Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary.

University Specific Procedures

ADA Statement- Student with Disabilities

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@tamuc.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*). Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<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, unforeseen circumstances may require changes to the schedule. In that case, changes will be announced via University e-mail and in Announcements. I reserve 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 turn your assignments in on time.

Please note that all discussions/comments/papers are due by 11:59PM CST in eCollege on the day they are due as outlined in the syllabus.

Week #1

Monday	Read the syllabus carefully. Post a Week #1 Introduction where you introduce yourself, accept the conditions of the syllabus, agree to the Rules of Netiquette, and answer the question I pose. Please note that this post is required for ALL students and will be graded. The link to the Rules of Netiquette may be found under Course and University Procedures/Policies under Student Conduct or at: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html
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	<p>Textbook Readings During this Week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preface (pp. xi-xi) • Introduction (pp. vii-xxxvi) • Chapter 1 – Criminology and the Study of Class, Race, Gender, and Crime • Chapter 2 – Historical Perspective on Family Violence <p>Start Work on Assignment on Popular Media</p> <p>WORK ON DISCUSSION/COMMENTS</p>
Friday	<p>All Discussions and Comments Postings are Due for this Week by Midnight</p> <p>Course Pre-test Due (not graded)</p>
Saturday	<p>Popular Media Reflection Paper Due by Midnight</p>

WEEK #2

Monday	<p>Textbook Reading:</p> <p>Chapter 2 – Criminal Justice Work and the Crime Control Enterprise</p> <p>Read: Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2009a. "Jail Incarceration Rates by Race and Ethnicities: 1990-2008." Office of Justice Programs. Retrieved July 6, 2009, from http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/jailrairtab.htm.</p> <p>Start Work on Assignment: Short Essay</p> <p>WORK ON DISCUSSION/COMMENTS</p>
Friday	<p>All Discussions and Comments Postings are Due for this Week by Midnight</p>
Saturday	<p>Short Essay Assignment Due by Midnight</p>

WEEK #3

Monday	Textbook Readings: Chapter 3 – Understanding Class and Economic Privilege Chapter 4 – Understanding Race and White Privilege Chapter 5 – Understanding Gender and Male Privilege Chapter 6 – Understanding Privilege and Intersections of Class, Race, and the Gender Start Work on Assignment: Scholarly Article Review WORK ON DISCUSSION/COMMENTS
Friday	All Discussions and Comments Postings are Due for this Week by Midnight
Saturday	Scholarly Article Review Assignment Due by Midnight

WEEK #4

Monday	Textbook Readings: Chapter 7 – Victimology and Pattern of Victimization Chapter 8 – Lawmaking and Administration of Criminal Law Start Work on Assignment: Position Paper WORK ON DISCUSSION/COMMENTS
Friday	All Discussions and Comments Postings are Due for this Week by Midnight Course Post-test Due (not graded)
Saturday	Position Paper Assignment Due by Midnight

WEEK #5

Monday	Textbook Readings: Chapter 9 – Law Enforcement and Criminal Prosecution Chapter 10 – Punishment, Sentencing, and Imprisonment Conclusion – pp. 285-320 WORK ON DISCUSSION/COMMENTS
Thursday	Take Final Exam on topics provided earlier in the syllabus. The final exam will be timed for one hour. It is closed book exam to be given online on Thursday of Week #5 by 11:59 PM CST.
Friday	All Discussions and Comments Postings are Due for this Week by Midnight