

## University of Houston-Downtown

**Course Prefix, Number, and Title:** CJ 1301: Introduction to Criminal Justice (previously, CJ 1301: Crime, Law, and Society)

**Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours:** 3/3/0

**Foundational Component Area:** Social and Behavioral Sciences

**Prerequisites:** Completion or co-enrollment in ENG 1301

**Co-requisites:** None

**Course Description:** An overview and description of the criminal justice system is presented, including its goals, its relationship to other governmental bodies and its relationship to society. Also included is the study of the basic components of the criminal justice system.

**Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:**

<b>Assigned Core Objective</b>	<b>Learning Outcome Students will be able to:</b>	<b>Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome</b>	<b>Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated</b>
Critical Thinking	Evaluate assumptions and develop defensible conclusions based on interpretation and analysis of information relevant to course content.	<p>Through readings, lecture, and/or class discussion students will evaluate their assumptions regarding offending, victimization, and system behavior. For example, there exists what we call the "CSI Effect," in which students wrongly assume what is shown on the television show, CSI, is realistic.</p> <p>In preparation for and participation in class discussion, students will interpret and analyze course material, such as the measurement of crime and related trends, in the development of defensible conclusions regarding crime control methods.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate this by participating in a class discussion regarding misperceptions about crime and criminal justice. This discussion may involve the use of media representations of crime and criminal justice.</p> <p>Students will demonstrate this through their participation in class discussions on various topics (see attached syllabus for examples), through written assignments such as the reflection paper, and through responses to exam items.</p>

<p>Critical Thinking Communication</p>	<p>Synthesize and deliver organized and well-constructed arguments about course content using multiple modalities (including written, oral, and visual formats) to include the use of technology.</p>	<p>Through reading, viewing videos, participating in class discussion, and reviewing lecture material, students will prepare for course assignments across multiple modalities.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate their ability to synthesize and deliver organized and well-constructed arguments through the following:</p> <p>Short answer exam questions and/or a written assignment (e.g. book review, reaction paper, or research paper).</p> <p>Participating in class discussion and/or delivering a group or individual presentation. Online students will deliver recorded individual/group presentations related to course content.</p> <p>Interpreting visuals such as the criminal justice system flowchart, crime trend tables, or photographs representing crime or the criminal justice process on assignments or exams. Students may also participate in class discussions or answer exam items related to videos viewed for the course.</p>
<p>Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning</p>	<p>Analyze or interpret empirically derived information and infer logical conclusions.</p>	<p>Through readings, lecture, and/or class discussion students will be exposed to evidence-based criminal justice practices. Students will also examine how official crime rates are derived (Uniform Crime Reports) and other ways to measure crime</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate their ability to analyze and interpret crime measurement techniques and/or other research findings and how they have been applied to practice through written</p>

		including the National Crime Victimization Survey.	assignments such as the application paper, research paper or the article summary and/or responses to multiple choice exam items.
Critical Thinking  Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning	Apply theory or findings from empirical research to a contemporary social problem.	Through readings, lecture, and/or class discussion students will be introduced to various criminological theories put forth to explain offending, victimization, and system behavior.	Students will demonstrate through a written assignment (e.g. article summary, research paper, book review), an oral presentation, and/or exam items.
Social Responsibility	Identify the interplay among individuals, groups, institutions, and events within the context of society and culture.	Through readings, lecture, and/or class discussion students will identify how components of the criminal justice system interact with one another. Students will also identify the impact of crime, criminal justice policy and criminal justice practice on communities and other social institutions and how this impact is relative to time and place.  Some faculty may utilize guest speakers to enhance this discussion.	Students will demonstrate this through items on exams, completion of written assignments (e.g. reflection paper, application paper) participating in small or large group discussion and/or developing an individual or group presentation.

**Additional Course Outcomes:**

- Describe the history, function, and goals of the criminal justice system in the United States.
- Examine the interactions among the components of the criminal justice system (i.e. law enforcement, courts, and corrections) and between the criminal justice system, other governmental and social institutions, and society at large, including the impact of crime on the victim and communities.
- Critically evaluate the criminal justice system and formulate improvements.

**Course Outline:**

- *Criminal Justice Today*  
An overview of crime trends and the current state of the criminal justice system including the system framework and process.
- *Causes of Crime*  
An introduction to criminological theories (e.g. classical, positivist) related to crime causation.

- *Defining and Measuring Crime*  
An introduction to crime measurement including, but not limited to, official (e.g. Uniform Crime Reports, National Incident Based Reporting System) and unofficial strategies (e.g. National Crime Victimization Survey or other self-report surveys).
- *Criminal Law*  
An introduction to law including, but not limited to, the development of law (historical to present day), different types of law (e.g. criminal law, civil law), legal classifications (e.g. misdemeanor, felony), elements of a crime, and how laws and related policies impact the criminal justice system and the community.
- *Law Enforcement*  
An introduction to law enforcement including, but not limited to, the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement (e.g. crime control, public servant), developments in policing by era, organizational structure, discretion and the rule of law (e.g. exclusionary rule, *Terry* stops), elements of arrest (e.g. *Miranda* warnings), and interrogation.
- *The Courts*  
An introduction to the court system including, but not limited to, types of courts (e.g. trial and appellate, state and federal), the courtroom working group (judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys), plea bargaining, elements of a trial, and the appeals process.
- *Corrections*  
An introduction to the correctional system including, but not limited to, goals of punishment (e.g. retribution, deterrence, rehabilitation), developments in corrections/incarceration from past to present, types of punishment (e.g. jail and/or prison, the death penalty, parole, probation, intermediate/community sanctions), and prisoner rights.
- *Juvenile Justice System*  
An introduction to the juvenile justice system including, but limited to, the definition of delinquency and status offenses, reasons why juveniles are treated differently, a historical overview of juvenile justice, juvenile courts, juvenile detention centers, and intermediate/community sanctions most utilized in response to juvenile delinquency.
- *Crime Typologies*  
An introduction to typologies of crime including, but not limited to, violent crime, property crime, cybercrime, organized crime, and “victimless” crimes (e.g. drug use).

**Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives:**

**Course Grade                    A: 90-100                    B: 80-89                    C: 70-79                    D: 60-69                    F: 0-59**

<b>Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, Activities, and Final</b>	
Small Group Discussions (1)	20%
Current Events Assignment – Written Article Summary (1)	20%
Empirical Research Assignment – Article Analysis and Presentation (1)	20%
Exams (3)	40%
	<b>100%</b>