

# CRIM 490 (Special Topics) Course Descriptions

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## **Bioterrorism Law and Policy**

“A bioterrorism attack is the deliberate release of viruses, bacteria, or other germs (agents) used to cause illness or death in people, animals, or plants. These agents are typically found in nature, but it is possible that they could be changed to increase their ability to cause disease, make them resistant to current medicines, or to increase their ability to be spread into the environment.” (CDC) In this class, students will learn about the potential dangers of a biological attack and understand what steps the U.S. government is taking to reduce the threat. The class will include the following: what is a biological agent; history of biological weapons; why biological weapons are so dangerous and attractive to terrorists; homeland security presidential directives related to biological weapons of mass destruction; and criminal and international laws related to biological weapons.

Concentrations: applies to Law and Society and Homeland Security concentrations

## **Counterintelligence Concepts in a Democracy (Prof. Dennis Staszak)**

This course is an overview the 5 W's of the Intelligence Community's as well as law enforcement's role in counterintelligence(CI). The student will be exposed to historical, open-source investigations and concepts that illustrate the defensive, offensive, investigative, and collection efforts of CI activities and their integration with intelligence analysis. This course will also explore the ethical, moral, and legal foundations of open source methodologies, techniques, and sources used in the CI function.

Concentrations: applies to the Homeland Security concentrations

## **Counterterrorism**

The objective of this course is to provide the student with a coherent analytical framework by which he/she can better understand counterterrorism strategies, policies, and programs. This course will provide a current terrorist threat assessment to U.S. interests at home and abroad and examine how the U.S (federal, state, and local components) and the international community are trying to mitigate this threat. A brief history of the evolution of U.S. counterterrorism policy will also be provided. How terrorists market their cause and entice recruits will also be explored, as will potential counter-marketing strategies.

Concentration: applies to the Homeland Security concentration.

## **Crime and Justice in Popular Culture (Prof. Angela Reitler)**

This course analyzes attitudes, images, and narratives of crime and the criminal justice system in the United States through an examination of film, television, and literature. Students will explore mainstream and critical perspectives on the nature and causes of crime, as well as on how and why law enforcement, courts, and corrections agencies administer justice in the United States

and abroad. The role of film, television, and literature in constructing society's perceptions of crime, deviance, law, and justice will be a focus of this course. The authenticity of fictional portrayals of crime and justice, in comparison to actual statistics and empirical research, also will be assessed.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Criminal Investigations**

The principal objectives of this course will focus on creating fundamental awareness of criminal investigations and the role of a criminal investigator in the criminal justice system. It is essential that criminal justice professionals have a thorough understanding of investigative techniques and the application of scientific principles in the investigation, detection and apprehension of criminals. Although there is no substitute for experience with regard to criminal investigations, there is however, a direct correlation between understanding the fundamental principles, developing a passion for what we “*don't know*” and building the skills and confidence to take on the challenges and be a successful criminal investigator. This process for some will be a paradigm shift in the way many will view their fellow man. The extent to which you embrace the process of “*wanting to know who, what, when, where, why and how*” will determine your success. In a larger sense we will also address some of the broader policy and legal issues confronting the American criminal justice system, to include such areas as the role of the investigator in national security issues, public policy decisions, and the perceived fear of crime by the public. To some extent we will also cover some of the more contemporary techniques of law enforcement to include undercover operations, the use of informants, deceptive interrogation methodologies, and various “privacy” and due process issues that have taken on additional significance since the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks of 9/11.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Drug Trafficking**

The drug trafficking course will cover the history of drug trafficking from ancient times to today. The course will focus on the trafficking of heroin, cocaine, and amphetamine type stimulants (ATS). The class will begin by looking at heroin, its development as a trafficked commodity around the globe, the organizations and groups that engaged in the trafficking of heroin, and the social and political pressures that changed and in some cases guided the heroin trafficking patterns. The class will next tackle the history and trafficking of cocaine as it moved from a legal commodity to an illicit substance, the groups that made history and in some cases fame trafficking cocaine, and the social and political decisions that made cocaine trafficking what it is today. Following cocaine, the class will study the trajectory of methamphetamine and other ATS drugs and the unique groups and individuals that made methamphetamine trafficking what it is today.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Emerging Threats and Technology Solutions**

This course looks at the origins of terrorism and how it has evolved over time. Students will critically examine historical regional relationships and the types of conflicts that have lead to the

emergence of today's terrorist threats. Students will examine intelligence reports and generate their own based on open source materials. In addition, students will look at both technologies and policies that are used to combat terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Concentration: applies to Homeland Security concentration.

### **Firearms Law, Policy, and Politics**

The goal of the course is to educate students about the issues surrounding gun ownership, gun crime, gun control and other efforts to reduce gun violence in American society. The course will explore the social consequences of gun ownership and examine the extent and effectiveness of society's efforts to control gun violence. The course will highlight research on these issues and the implications of this research for public policy. In the process, the course will seek to give students more perspective in assessing policy positions in debates related to firearms and to make them better informed as voters and citizens. Key topics to be discussed will include: the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment and its interpretation; patterns and trends in gun ownership and gun violence; the social costs and benefits of gun availability; federal and state gun regulations; the operations of illegal gun markets and efforts to disrupt them; efforts to suppress illegal gun use; the effectiveness of gun control and other efforts to prevent gun violence; public opinion of gun control; and political aspects of the policymaking process.

Concentrations: applies to the Criminal Justice and Law and Society concentrations.

### **Foreign Nationals and Crime**

This course is designed to provide students with a general understanding of the foreign national-crime nexus in the United States. This class will survey major theoretical perspectives within the contemporary criminology field to provide a framework for understanding the relationship between foreign nationals and crime. In addition, this class will examine the available research and statistics on foreign nationals and crime, and the policy implications of this research. At the conclusion of this course, students will possess a working knowledge of; 1) types of foreign nationals, and the criminality of these foreign nationals in America, 2) the theories used to explain the criminality of foreign nationals, 3) the limitations of the available research on foreign nationals and crime, and 4) the policies that have been implemented in attempt to address the foreign national-crime nexus.

Concentrations: applies to the Criminal Justice and Homeland Security concentrations.

### **Forensic Evidence and Analysis (Prof. Juli Cruciotti)**

This course is designed to provide an introduction to the recognition and forensic examination of physical evidence in criminal investigations to those with a non-science background. The material covered will focus on the various disciplines within the forensic science laboratory, the examinations and capabilities of these disciplines, and their role in criminal investigations. A practical presentation of the basic science behind forensic examinations as well as legal and ethical issues concerning forensic science will be discussed.

Concentration: applies to Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Hate Crimes**

This course is designed to provide an introductory understanding of the history and development of hate crime legislation throughout the United States. Discussions regarding policy and elements of hate crime enhanced penalties will be examined. The course will ask the question, “What constitutes a hate crime” and open for deliberation the views of law enforcement officials regarding the reporting, investigation and prosecution of alleged offenses. The motivation of extremist groups will be debated leading to the question, “why do they hate?” Extremist propaganda and writings will be reviewed, including, but not limited to Mein Kampf, The Turner Diaries and the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion. Basic investigative techniques will be researched.

Concentrations: applies to Criminal Justice and Law and Society concentrations.

### **Homeland Security and Risk Assessment**

This course is intended to provide an understanding of threats, both natural and manmade, and the planning and strategy necessary to protect critical infrastructure and key resources (CI/KR) of the United States in response to the threats. Students will examine the role of justice and security organizations in the effort and the methods used to assess threat, determine impact of a terrorist attack on a given target, analyze criminal or terrorist targets, assess risk and prioritize the vulnerability of critical facilities, infrastructure and events. Finally, in a “hands on” exercise students will conduct a modified vulnerability assessment of an appropriate facility utilizing the Homeland Security Critical Asset Management (HLS CAM) methodology, which is one of the methodologies widely used by homeland security emergency responders.

Concentration: applies to the Homeland Security concentration.

### **Homeland Security Law**

Homeland Security Law introduces students to current legal and political issues relevant to the security of the United States. During the course, students should develop an understanding of the creation and organization of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and laws passed to manage threats. This includes the coordination of federal, state and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations which respond to threats that are vital to the security of people, property and our way of life. Specifically, students will look at the U.S. response to prepare for, mitigate, manage, and recover from emergencies and disasters. Students will examine topics including intelligence, counterterrorism, border security, transportation security, and cyber security. Issues relevant to the political, budgetary, and legal aspects of homeland security will also be addressed.

Concentrations: applies to Law and Society and Homeland Security concentrations.

### **Human Trafficking (Prof. Mark Harrington)**

Examines the historical and contemporary governmental actions designed to prevent, detect, respond to, and aid in the recovery of victims of human trafficking. Focuses on efforts to align international, federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and non-government agencies in identifying and combating the global problem of trafficking in humans.

Concentrations: applies to the Criminal Justice and Law and Society concentrations.

### **Immigration Law, Policy, and Politics**

Immigration Law and Policy will examine the current state of immigration law and corresponding policy issues in the United States. The course will cover the structure of our immigration system, how it works and its effect on our community and the United States. It will uncover the reasons for migration and the immigrant faces behind statistics as well as explore ways of controlling migration at a local and national level. Students will be exposed to real-life immigrant situations of family petitions, asylum, trafficking in persons and deportations and how deportation affects immigrants and the broader community. Participation in extra-curricular events of attending immigration court and/or participation in community events regarding immigration will be required. A willingness to be challenged, good writing and research are necessary for this class.

Concentrations: applies to the Homeland Security and Law and Society concentrations.

### **Innovations in Policing**

A well-rounded criminal justice education includes both bookwork and lessons from those in the field of policing. In this course, we will be doing some of each. The goal is to expose you to various aspects of policing and its innovative response to technological, legal, and societal changes. Through a variety of resources, lectures, and guest presentations, you will gain valuable insight to the inner workings of the modern police department and their innovative methods of change. You will supplement the material and lectures from class with independent research, readings, class discussion, and student presentations. Police Departments are the most visible and versatile branch of the criminal justice system. Their mission is defined by the credo "To protect and serve," which is accomplished by crime enforcement, prevention, and public service functions. These functions, however, are not static. They must respond to the various forces in society in order to maintain their relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness in the community. This response requires adaption and innovation on the part of police departments and their administrative staff. This course will present to you policing on three levels: where they were in the past; where they are now in the present; and where they will be in the future.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Insanity Defense, Diminished Capacity, and Duress**

This course examines the insanity defense and related defenses available to those accused of crime whose actions were attributable to mental illness or defect. In addition to the insanity defense, this course will discuss related defenses based on diminished capacity, duress, stress, intoxication, and mental retardation. Topics will include the potential applicability of these defenses to terrorism charges or to cultural defenses.

Concentration: applies to the Law and Society concentration.

### **Jails**

Every local jurisdiction-county, city or town-either has or is part of a local jail system. From early Colonial America to today, jails have played a critical role in the system of corrections.

The jail is the first stop on the “incarceration highway” where important information is gathered about criminal offenders. This course will explore the development, purposes and operations of the local jail. Also, the course will discuss theories of punishment, criminality and rehabilitation as they apply to both offenders and staff of the local jail. Students taking this class will gain insight as to the importance, philosophy, goals and operational environment of a local jail.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Media Coverage of Criminal Justice**

An in-depth look at how law enforcement and the courts handle the media, how the media approach stories on criminal justice, and how that interplay impacts the public’s view of the justice system. We’ll hear each week from participants in the system – prosecutors, judges, detectives, police chiefs, defense attorneys, crime victims, reporters and editors. We’ll discuss the hottest cases – Ferguson, Michael Jackson, Virginia Tech and the DC snipers, to name a few – and see how each side dealt with the pressure of a worldwide spotlight.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Police Use of Force**

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the issues surrounding the use of force by police. This class will survey empirical data on police use of force and the implications associated with using reasonable and excessive force. Students will gain a better understanding of the decision making framework and the surrounding issues associated with the police using force during a citizen encounter. Topics to be covered will include legal and constitutional issues, lethal and less lethal force, transparency, force tools, use of force in police pursuits, de-escalation strategies, policy issues and a number of case studies. This course will cover some of the most noted and contemporary police uses of force in the United States.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

### **Radicalization and Recruitment of Terrorists**

The course objective is to provide the student with a set of analytical frameworks by which he/she can better understand the methods that terrorist organizations use to recruit members and how militant movements radicalize individuals to become adherents.

While the focus will be on how the global jihadist movement radicalizes individuals, the course will also examine the methods used by pre-9/11 secular and religious terrorist organizations to recruit, and how violent movements like the animal liberation front, earth liberation front, anti-abortion movement, the militia movement, and the anarchist movement radicalized adherents. The emphasis will be on message construction, delivery methods, targeted audiences, and results. The concept of “leaderless terrorism” will also be examined as the primary operational manifestation of radicalization. Case studies of individuals radicalized in Western Europe and the United States will be surveyed. Counter-radicalization and de-radicalization approaches from the past and present will also be explored, as well as the concepts of propaganda and marketing. In addition, the course will look at the problems that law enforcement and intelligence agencies confront in attempting to detect in advance radicalized individuals.

Concentration: applies to the Homeland Security concentration.

**Serial Murder (Prof. Lucinda Hatton)**

This course examines legal, biological, social and theoretical parameters of serial murder. Particularly, this course explores relationships between paraphilias, violence and repeat offending. The curriculum includes serial murder & victim, typologies, serial murderer subtypes, predisposition, abnormal psychology & neurological-dysfunction, forensic analyses of high risk offenders, environmental risk factors and theory, the application of law and constitutionality, diminished capacity and public policy regarding violent homicide.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration.

**Technology in Policing (Prof. Stephen Bamford)**

This course will identify and examine a variety of technologies currently used in policing throughout the United States and their impact on police practices, policy, and crime reduction efforts. Students will identify and learn about current and future technology platforms in use by many police (local, state and federal) agencies. Students will also examine and discuss the relationship between the use of such technology and how such technology impacts police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy, community relations, privacy concerns and the law. The class will concentrate on the ethical consideration in the creation and administration of technology related policy as well as addressing both the intended and unintended consequences of the use of such technology. Additionally, this course will examine how technology has changed our basic human interactions; for better or worse

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration

**Threat Assessment: Managing the Path to Violence**

This course provides preparation for participation in threat assessment and management processes in government, education, and industry settings. Real cases are studied to identify missed opportunities for intervention and prevention. Media, internet, research, and published writings inform actual fact pattern analysis. Scheduled expert threat assessors include current and former agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the United States Secret Service, along with a Virginia Tech family member and a shooting survivor who share their experiences and expertise in the current state of the threat assessment process. The course is offered at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Concentration: applies to the Homeland Security concentration.

**White Extremist Ideology and Criminal Behavior**

With recent violent attacks committed by individuals who identify themselves as White Nationalists this course is designed to provide an introductory understanding of the White Extremist movement throughout the United States. Discussions will center on group and individual motivation, along with books and spokespersons that promote the ideology. Topics to be covered will include, political movements, such as American Nazism and Skinheads, along with quasi-religiously based groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, Odinism, Christian Identity (CI) and the Creativity Movement. Extremist propaganda and writings will be reviewed, including,

but not limited to Mein Kampf, The Turner Diaries, The White Man's Bible and the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion. Finally, a review of violent criminal incidents, including, but not limited to assault, arson, robbery and murder for but examined.

Concentrations: applies to the Criminal Justice and Homeland Security concentrations

### **Women Who Kill**

For many reasons, our society at large does not seem to accept the “reality” that women can have feelings of anger, aggression, and violence. Many people cannot understand why women act on these feelings and perpetrate violent crimes. Such women are usually seen simplistically as either mad or bad, rather than as complex human beings. This course will allow us to read, view, and discuss issues of female violence—in theory, the real world, and the representational world of fiction, film, and popular culture. Course materials will cover topics such as female violence (as compared to male violence) and how it is seen by others, Andrea Yates—a case of infanticide, Aileen Wuornos—the real life and Hollywood portrayal of a female serial killer, adolescent murder, women imitating violent men, and a strangely humorous “take” on female violence.

Concentration: applies to the Criminal Justice concentration

### **Wrongful Convictions**

To err is human; as the justice system is a human creation, a certain amount of error should be expected. However, such error must not go unexamined. Therefore, this course will survey contemporary understandings of wrongful conviction, including causes/correlates, individual and societal consequences, approaches to reducing these errors, and other topics related to the subject. Students should complete the course with a greater appreciation of the fallibility of the justice system and the challenging endeavor of reducing justice system error.

Concentration: applies to the Law and Society concentration.