

Introduction to Criminal Justice

CRIM 100 – DL1 – Spring 2020

Monday 7:20 pm to 10:00 pm COVID – 19 Online

Instructor: Adjunct Faculty Kevin B. Fornshill, MCJ

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Office and Meetings

Due to COVID – 19 there are no opportunities to meet on-campus. If you wish to speak with me, please feel free to email or call.

***“When a man is denied the right to live the life he believes in,
he has no choice but to become an outlaw.”***

Nelson Mandela

Course Goals and Policies

This course is designed to provide an introductory understanding of the history and development of the criminal justice system in the United States.

This course will identify institutions of the United States-based criminal justice system. Develop an overall working knowledge of the legislative process. Address the history behind the American system of policing. Discuss and become familiar with the concept of due process.

General knowledge discussions will be held to understand the three-layers of criminal justice; administration of law enforcement, court processes, and corrections. Furthermore, the need for each of these separate entities will be examined.

Please be aware of Mason’s policy requiring instructors to submit final course grades within 2 days of the final exam and prohibiting instructors from changing submitted grades for any reason other than a computational or recording error (see page 37 of the University Catalog). This means that I cannot allow, nor is there any time, for you to do a last-minute paper or

other extra work at the end of the semester to raise your grade. The time to do the work is when it is assigned, and the work to do is the work that is required as class assignments. There are, however, several extra credit opportunities available.

Another relevant Mason policy specifies that incompletes can only be given to students who are passing a course but cannot complete scheduled coursework for causes beyond reasonable control (see page 36 of the University Catalog). Because incompletes are to be used when students cannot complete scheduled coursework, I cannot grant incompletes to allow you time to do extra work to raise your grade. If some sort of personal or family crisis arises for you during the semester, and it provides a compelling reason that is beyond your control and prevents you from finishing scheduled coursework, I will be more than willing to work with you to take that into account, but you must let me know right away. Your circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please note that according to Mason policy, "Although many students must work to meet living expenses, employment must not take priority over academic responsibilities." (see page 33 of the University Catalog.)

Privacy Policy

Please respect the privacy of any students who may disclose personal information in the class. Please also respect everyone's right to freely choose whether to disclose or not disclose personal information.

Required Readings

*"Outside of a dog a book is man's best friend.
Inside of a dog it's too dark to read."
Groucho Marx*

Reading assignments are for outside the classroom. Be prepared to discuss the designated chapter at the beginning of each class. There will be selective in-class lessons. There will be time allotted for complete assignments given during class time.

The textbook is Introduction to Criminal Justice: Systems, Diversity and Change, by Callie Marie Rennison and Mary Dodge, 3rd Edition.

You are always welcome to ask me questions about the readings or course work if you need clarification. Please complete the readings before coming to class, this will allow for a active exchange of ideas. Exams will also include material covered in class, including lectures, videos, guest speakers, and discussions.

Grading Scale

A+	97-100% (4.0)	C+	77-79% (2.33)
A	93-96% (4.0)	C	73-76% (2.0)
A-	90-92% (3.67)	C-	70-72% (1.67)
B+	87-89% (3.33)	D	60-69% (1.0)
B	83-86% (3.0)	F	0-59% (0)
B-	80-82% (2.67)		

Course Grade Components

25%	A midterm exam
25%	A final exam
25%	Research paper
25%	Class participation

The Exams

**“Real knowledge is to know the extent of one’s ignorance.”
Confucius**

The midterm and final exams will be conducted online. These will be closed-book and will most likely use a combination of structured response formats (such as multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blanks, etc.) and unstructured response formats (such as short answer or essay). GMU student Honor Code is in effect during the testing process.

The final exam will focus on material covered since the midterm exam. Schedule permitting, I’ll try to reserve some time during the last class before each exam for a review session. I will answer questions to clarify the reading material, as long as the question shows that you have actually read the material and attempted to understand it on your own.

Obviously, the exams are to be taken on your own. Any evidence that a student used another person as a resource, whether that other person was in the classroom or accessed electronically, will result in a referral to the honor committee as a cheating violation. If the exams are closed book, then the same is true for any evidence that a student used any unauthorized hardcopy or electronic resource during the exam.

Make-ups will only be given under exceptional circumstances. If you know in advance that you will have to miss an exam, please notify me ASAP so we can discuss a make-up. If you miss an exam without notifying me in advance, you need to contact me ASAP to schedule a make-up. All make-ups must be completed within 3 business days (excluding weekends and holiday breaks) of the original exam date.

If you can provide written documentation from a professional (doctor, police, etc.) that demonstrates a compelling reason for missing the exam, and the reason was beyond your control, there will be no penalty applied for taking a make-up. Your circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please remember the Mason policy about employment not taking priority over academic responsibilities (referenced above). If you cannot provide such documentation, there will be a 10-point reduction from your exam score for taking a make-up (cf. pg. 35, University Catalog).

The Paper

"I write to understand as much as to be understood."

Elie Wiesel

Written assignment:

Due to COVID – 19 concerns one of required projects, from past classes, will be dropped. Students WILL NOT be required to take part in a police ride-a-long, since restrictions have been put in place by various law enforcement agencies.

Students WILL BE required to observe a formal criminal court proceeding.

You will watch a formal judicial proceeding (criminal) at a federal or local courthouse. You will have to meet with a government prosecuting attorney, whether an assistant United States Attorney, assistant State's Attorney, assistant Commonwealth Attorney or assistant District Attorney to have them sign the form uploaded on Blackboard.

The signature will be verification that you witnessed some form of criminal court case.

Plan on spending the day at court. You may observe more than one hearing or trial.

Your written assignment will be seven to eight pages, double spaced (not including a coversheet and reference page), 12 font size, where you will discuss your experience. Nor does it include the form signed by the government attorney, which must be submitted with your final project.

Provide a summary of the case(s) you observed. What did you observe regarding the proceedings? Was it a preliminary hearing, arraignment, or trial? Explain the difference in these three. What were the defendant(s) charged with? What was/were the defendant(s) name? Were there any witnesses? What did they testify to? Explain your understanding of the legal process based on experience and what you have learned during this course. What was the outcome of the hearing or trial?

Most all courts are open nationwide. I suggest that if your local city or county courthouse has COVID – 19 restrictions in place, try a federal courthouse. If you live in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, there are federal courthouses in Washington, DC, Alexandria, Virginia, and Greenbelt, Maryland.

It is not my responsibility to locate a courthouse for you. If the criminal courthouse in your jurisdiction is not open to the public, you must provide me with authentication.

If you cannot attend an open court proceeding, you must submit to me an alternative suggestion for a class project.

The purpose of the experience is to allow the student, who may be unfamiliar with the American criminal justice system a firsthand look at the court system (the prosecution).

This paper is due by midnight May 8th, 2021. You are to email me your final paper.

I will assess a penalty for papers received after the agreed due date.

Level of Effort: Your Participation, Your Learning Experience, and Your Grade

*“Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence –
is the key to unlocking our potential.”*

Winston Churchill

With COVID – 19 restrictions in place at the university since Spring 2020, the educational process is challenging. As such, you will be responsible for responding to Blackboard discussion questions and emails sent to you. Finally, to add to this semester challenges, students will be sent “scavenger hunt” questions. You will be graded on your response to a 1) a question submitted to you, or 2) must conduct research on a topic. The grade get a scavenger hunt question can range from 1 to 5 points.

I want to stimulate open dialogue and debate. The Socratic method comes to mind. I want to generate critical thinking. So, participation is critical! Be prepared to debate and defend your point of view.

All opinions are to be respected. Come to class, pay attention and talk. Take notes and read the material. Since 25% of your course grade is class participation, *participate!*

Participation is to include in-class discussions and postings on Blackboard. I cannot make someone actively participate but remember that this counts for 25% of your overall grade.

I will make a screen capture of the participants logged on during class time. I will base my attendance record on that screen capture. Furthermore, I keep a record of those who ask and answer questions.

I do take classroom attendance. Failure to appear in class will result in contact from me seeking an explanation regarding your absence. Lack of attendance, without an authorized excuse, will be reflected in your final grade.

In conducting any research online, whether for classroom discussion or written presentation, I do not recognize Wikipedia as a legitimate source of information.

I do not allow my classroom presentations to be audio or video recorded. There is no need to do so since all PowerPoint presentations will be posted on Blackboard at the conclusion of each class. I am a private citizen, please respect my wishes.

You are all university students, so I expect that level of effort in your final project.

Though I grant some leeway for simple grammatical or spelling errors, if your work product lacks quality and college-level achievement, your grade will reflect what I read.

Your project is both research-based, through direct observation and can contain personal opinions.

Extra Credit Opportunities

You can earn extra credit points, to be added to your overall grade by proposing a topic. Any suggested topic should center on the history of the American criminal justice system, or a critical analysis of a select subject, e.g. capital punishment, community policing, theories about criminal behavior.

Bad Weather and Other Emergencies

Check Mason's homepage (www.gmu.edu) to see if classes are cancelled for bad weather or other emergency circumstances. You can also register for Mason's emergency alert system at <https://alert.gmu.edu>. If I should have to cancel a class due to a personal emergency, I'll make every attempt to email you ASAP at your Mason email address. Be sure to stay on top of your Mason email so that you can receive urgent information when you need it.

University Services and Resources

If you have (or think you may have) a learning disability or other condition that may affect your academic performance, you should: 1) make sure documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (703-993-2474; ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) see me to discuss your accommodation needs. By Mason policy, I cannot make any accommodations for students without certification from ODS on the existence of a disability and the specific accommodations needed.

If you feel you need to improve your writing skills, seek assistance from the University Writing Center (writingcenter.gmu.edu/). Your writing needs to be sufficiently fluent to make your meaning clear.

If you are in personal distress, you can get help from Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu).

If you are not a native English speaker and may be interested in linguistic and cultural enrichment services, you can contact Mason's English Language Institute (eli.gmu.edu).

If you'd like to improve your academic skills, you can get help from Learning Services caps.gmu.edu/learningservices. They offer workshops on the study cycle, effective note-taking techniques, individual learning styles, ways to prepare for exams, and effective time management. I've heard from former students that these services can be very helpful.

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Enrollment Responsibilities and Deadlines

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the schedule of classes, see registrar.gmu.edu. The last day to add a class and the last day to drop a class without tuition loss is Tuesday September 3. The last day to drop a class with tuition loss is Wednesday September 18. After this date the class can be dropped by using a selective withdrawal option by Friday September 27 -- but you only have 3 selective withdrawals during your entire time at Mason, so use them wisely. Any other type of withdrawal requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

University Honor Code

The following is a summary of Mason's honor code; see the Undergraduate Catalog and honorcode.gmu.edu for additional information. Mason's honor code will be strictly enforced in this class and all violations will be reported to the Honor Committee.

The Honor Code of George Mason University specifically prohibits cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing.

Cheating and attempted cheating include "willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students." Examples include the use of unauthorized resources during an exam, copying off another student's work (with or without their permission), allowing another student to copy your work, using an assignment or test from another student who took the class previously, accessing tests or grades electronically for the purpose of getting an unfair advantage, and any other behavior that fits the general definition above.

Plagiarism includes "presenting as one's own the words, the work, the ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge." Examples include taking or buying a paper from someone else or the internet and presenting it as your own, and submitting as your own work a paper with substantial unacknowledged contributions from others. Information and graphics obtained from the internet (except for freeware clipart) must include source citations to avoid plagiarism.

Lying includes “the willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement relating to academic work.” Examples include making up source materials or source citations in a paper, pretending to use an actual source that you didn’t really use, making up an excuse for missing a test or assignment due date, pretending you attended a class or an extra credit opportunity when you did not in order to write a paper or get points without justification, falsifying any written or electronic document, or presenting any other falsehoods through any method and in any context.

Stealing includes “taking or appropriating without the permission to do so, and with the intent to keep or to make use of wrongfully, property belonging to any member of the George Mason University community or any property located on the university campus. This includes misuse of university computer resources (see the Responsible Use of Computing Policy section in the “General Policies” chapter). This section is relevant only to academic work and related materials.”

Planned Course Schedule (Changes Will Be Announced ASAP)

Date	Topic	Special Notes
Jan. 25 Week #1	What is the Criminal Justice System? <i>Police-Courts-Prisons</i>	Textbook, Part 1 – Chapter 1
Feb. 1 Week #2	What is a crime? What if . . .	Textbook, Part 1 – Chapter 2
Feb. 8 Week #3	What is 'due process'? What is probable cause?	Textbook, Part 1 – Chapter 3
Feb. 15 Week #4	Do we need Police?	Textbook, Part 2 – Chapter 4
Feb. 22 Week #5	American law enforcement Mid-term review	Textbook, Part 2 – Chapter 6
March 1 Week #6	Mid-term	
March 8 Week #7	Civil v. Criminal	Textbook, Part 3 – Chapter 7
March 15 Week #8	Is it about the truth?	Textbook, Part 3 – Chapter 8
March 22 Week #9	Guilty, what now?	Textbook, Part 3 – Chapter 9
March 29 Week #10	Shame on you	
April 5 Week #11	Corrections Retribution or Rehabilitation	Textbook, Part 3 – Chapter 11
April 12 Week #12	Prisons	Textbook, Part 3 – Chapter 12
April 19 Week #13	Media and Criminal Justice	Textbook, pages 340, 349
April 26 Week #14	American Society and Criminal Justice	Textbook, pages, 333, 335
May 3 Week #15	Last day of class** Final review	

****All papers and projects due by midnight, May 8th, 2021. No further postings on Blackboard will be allowed after midnight.**

May 10th Final exam online, time to be determined