

SYLLABUS

CRIMINAL COURTS (CRIM 408-SECTION 001)
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
CRIMINOLOGY, LAW & SOCIETY
SPRING 2022
(updated 1/5/22)

Instructor: Randy I. Bellows, Adjunct Faculty
Email: rbellow@gmu.edu
Class Date/Time: Mondays from 4:30 PM to 7:10 PM
Class Location: DK 2053

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Criminal cases are in the news every day and the outcome of criminal trials often have profound consequences, not only for the actual participants but for society in general. Whether you are considering a career in criminal justice or are simply seeking a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of our criminal justice system, an understanding of how our courts operate in criminal cases is critical. Once an arrest is made, it is our criminal courts that determine whether justice is achieved.

The goals of this course are four-fold. The **first** goal is to give students an overview of the structure of our criminal court institutions: state and federal criminal courts, juvenile courts, and appellate courts. The **second** goal is to give students an understanding of how the criminal justice system operates at each stage of a criminal proceeding, from the initial processing of an arrestee, to pre-trial suppression motions, to the trial itself before either a judge or jury, to the sentencing hearing, and to post-conviction appeals. The **third** goal is to give students an appreciation of the strengths and frailties of our criminal courts, with particular focus on the ultimate question of how well our courts achieve justice. Are the guilty usually convicted? How frequently do innocent persons get convicted? What are the goals of sentencing and are they actually achieved? What are the differing perceptions of defendants, victims and witnesses? The **final** goal is to give students an understanding of the roles played by each of the five key players who work in the criminal courts: prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, jurors, and probation officers. At the completion of this course, you should have a solid grounding in the structure and operation of our criminal courts. This should be helpful in deciding what role you might wish to play in the criminal justice system and in exercising your own responsibility as a member of a community committed to the rule of law.

COURSE MATERIALS

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK: America's Courts and the Criminal Justice System, 13th Edition

ISBN 13: 978-1-337-55789-4

Authors: David W. Neubauer and Henry F. Fradella

Publisher: Cengage Learning

You can obtain a hard copy or digital e-book version of the textbook, whichever works best for you.

Make sure you get the 13th Edition.

POWER POINT

I use Power Point slides in each class. The Power Point slides are based on the textbook, Supreme Court case law, and additional material I have added. I will make the Power Point available to you for review and study outside of class. You may access the Power Point for your personal use only in connection with this course and you may not duplicate or share the Power Point with other individuals. Should you wish to do so, you may print out a copy of the Power Point for your personal use in connection with this course. You may not post or otherwise disseminate the Power Point slides.

GRADING

The possible grades and associated points are as follows:

A+	97-100
A	94-96
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	65-69
F	64 or Below

Please note that in calculating your final grade, any grade that is .50 or above will be rounded up and any grade that is below .50 will be rounded down. For example, if your final grade calculation is 83.60, your final grade will be an 84 (or a B). If your final grade is 83.45, your final grade will be an 83 (or a B-).

COMPONENTS OF YOUR FINAL GRADE

Your grade will have four components:

1. Weekly Homework Assignments: 20%
2. Class Attendance and Participation: 20%
3. Mid-Term: 30%
4. Final Exam: 30%

WEEKLY HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS (20% of Final Grade)

Each week, students are required to answer ten questions concerning the assigned reading material, which consists of the Power Point slides and the textbook. No assignment is due for Weeks 1, 8 and 12. Here is additional information about the weekly assignments:

- The questions are posted on Blackboard.
- The answers are to be submitted to me by email.
- The answers must be sent to me by email by the deadline set out in the Syllabus.
- The answers may be submitted as a PDF attachment, or a Word document attachment, or in the email itself.
- The homework assignments are not graded but students will receive credit for each homework assignment submitted on time so long as the student's work reflects a good faith effort to answer all ten questions based on a review of the reading material.
- I will accept late submissions of homework assignments up to one week late, with a 25% reduction in credit for the specific assignment turned in late. Homework assignments received after one week late will not be given any credit.
- I will go over the answers to the questions during class.
- **ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 6 PM ON THE DATE DUE. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS EMAILED AFTER 6 PM, EVEN ON THE DATE DUE, ARE LATE.**

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (20% of Final Grade)

As is stated in George Mason University's Attendance Policy, "*Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation.*" Here are some specifics:

- I take attendance by using a sign-in sheet. In order to receive credit for attending a class, you need to put your initials next to your name. If you do not do so, you will likely not receive credit for having attended the class because I review the sign-in sheets to determine who was (and who was not) in class.

- You may only sign in for yourself, not for any other student.
- Arriving late or leaving early is very disruptive. I realize that there may be times when this is unavoidable but chronic tardiness or repeatedly leaving early will affect your participation grade.
- I expect students to actively participate in class discussion. What determines excellence in class participation: (1) regular on-time class attendance; (2) volunteering answers to questions posed; (3) asking questions pertinent to the readings, lectures and discussions; and (4) demonstrating that you have read the assigned readings if called upon.

MID-TERM EXAMINATION **(30% of Final Grade)**

The mid-term examination will cover the reading material and lectures for the first seven classes (Class 1-7). Here are additional details regarding the mid-term examination:

- The mid-term exam will be posted on Blackboard, on the date and time specified in the Syllabus.
- The exam will be open book, meaning you can use your textbook, the Power Point slides, the weekly homework questions, and your own notes in answering the questions. You may not use Google or other search engines or the internet to search for answers to exam questions. The mid-term exam consists of 100 multiple choice questions.
- Your answers must be solely the product of your own work and you cannot have the assistance of anyone else in answering the questions on the exam. You may not share your answers with anyone else.
- ***How do you submit your answers?*** You should create a Word or PDF document, with your answers numbered 1-100, and attach that to an email sent to me by the deadline set out in the Syllabus. **Exam answers must be submitted by email.**
- Your answers should only list the letter that corresponds with the answer. For example, if – hypothetically – the answer to Question 12 is “B”, your answer should appear as follows: “12. B”. You should not reprint either the question or the full answer. Just give me the A,B,C, or D that corresponds with the correct answer.
- Please include your name on each page of your answer sheets.
- Once you submit your answers by email to me, you cannot revise or change your answers.

MID-TERM EXAM POSTED: MARCH 22, 2022, AT 6 PM

MID-TERM EXAM DUE: APRIL 5, 2022, AT 6 PM

FINAL EXAMINATION
(30% of Final Grade)

The final examination will cover the reading material and lectures for the last seven classes (Class 8-14). Here are additional details regarding the final examination:

- The final exam will be posted on Blackboard, on the date and time specified in the Syllabus.
- The exam will be open book, meaning you can use your textbook, the Power Point slides, the weekly homework questions, and your own notes in answering the questions. You may not use Google or other search engines or the internet to search for answers to exam questions. The final exam consists of 100 multiple choice questions.
- Your answers must be solely the product of your own work and you cannot have the assistance of anyone else in answering the questions on the exam. You may not share your answers with anyone else.
- ***How do you submit your answers?*** You should create a Word or PDF document, with your answers numbered 1-100, and attach that to an email sent to me by the deadline set out in the Syllabus. **Exam answers must be submitted by email.**
- Your answers should only list the letter that corresponds with the answer. For example, if – hypothetically – the answer to Question 12 is “B”, your answer should appear as follows: “12. B”. You should not reprint either the question or the full answer. Just give me the A,B,C, or D that corresponds with the correct answer.
- Please include your name on each page of your answer sheets.
- Once you submit your answers by email to me, you cannot revise or change your answers.

FINAL EXAM POSTED: MAY 2, 2022, AT 6 PM

FINAL EXAM DUE: MAY 16, 2022, AT 6 PM

APPOINTMENTS

I am available to speak with you by appointment. The best way to schedule an appointment is by emailing me. Appointments can take place either by telephone or in person on campus.

NOTE ABOUT THE USE OF POSTED CLASS MATERIALS

The materials I have posted on Blackboard are for your exclusive use in this course. These materials – including the Power Point Slides, the homework assignments, and the examinations – may not be shared with others or posted or circulated in any manner.

TECHNOLOGY

Students may use computers, tablets, etc., in the classroom, but only for the purpose of taking notes or accessing the Power Point slides or course material. **No audio or video recording in class.** Please ensure that your cell phones do not ring during class.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

I recognize that during the course you may experience an extraordinary circumstance – such as an illness, personal or family emergency or other extenuating circumstance – that prevents you from meeting a course deadline. Please let me know immediately if such circumstances require you to request an extension of a deadline. Your circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

CLASS AGENDA

CLASS 1 (JANUARY 24, 2022)

Syllabus Review

Overview of Criminal Courts

Readings: Chapter 1, Power Point Slides for Class 1

NO HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT DUE

CLASS 2 (JANUARY 31, 2022)

Federal Courts

Crisis in Policing

Readings: Chapter 2, Power Point Slides for Class 2

Homework Assignment Due: January 28, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 3 (FEBRUARY 7, 2022)

State Courts

Juvenile Courts

The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Criminal Courts

Readings: Chapter 3 and 4, Power Point Slides for Class 3

Homework Assignment Due: February 4, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 4 (FEBRUARY 14, 2022)

The Courtroom and Related Issues

Readings: Chapter 5, Power Point Slides for Class 4

Homework Assignment Due: February 11, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 5 (FEBRUARY 21, 2022)

Prosecutors

Readings: Chapter 6, Power Point Slides for Class 5

Homework Assignment Due: February 18, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 6 (FEBRUARY 28, 2022)

Defense Attorneys

Readings: Chapter 7, Power Point Slides for Class 6

Homework Assignment Due: February 25, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 7 (MARCH 7, 2022)

Judges

Readings: Chapter 8, Power Point Slides for Class 7

Homework Assignment Due: March 4, 2022, at 6 PM

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 14-20, 2022 (NO CLASS)

CLASS 8 (MARCH 21, 2022)

Defendants, Victims and Witnesses

Readings: Chapter 9, Power Point Slides for Class 8

NO HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT DUE

MID-TERM EXAM POSTED: MARCH 22, 2022, AT 6 PM

CLASS 9 (MARCH 28, 2022)

Arrest, Bail and Arraignment

Readings: Chapter 10, Power Point Slides for Class 9

Homework Assignment Due: March 25, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 10 (APRIL 4, 2022)

Disclosing Evidence (“Discovery”)

Motions to Suppress Evidence on Constitutional Grounds

Readings: Chapter 11, Power Point Slides for Class 10

Homework Assignment Due: April 1, 2022, at 6 PM

MID-TERM EXAM DUE: APRIL 5, 2022, AT 6 PM

CLASS 11 (APRIL 11, 2022)

Plea Bargaining and Guilty Pleas

Readings: Chapter 12, Power Point Slides for Class 11

Homework Assignment Due: April 8, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 12 (APRIL 18, 2022)

Trials and Juries

Readings: Chapter 13, Power Point Slides for Class 12

NO HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT DUE

CLASS 13 (APRIL 25, 2022)

Sentencing

Readings: Chapter 14, Power Point Slides for Class 13

Homework Assignment Due: April 22, 2022, at 6 PM

CLASS 14 (MAY 2, 2022)

Appeals and Habeas Corpus

Readings: Chapter 15, Power Point Slides for Class 14

Homework Assignment Due: April 29, 2022, at 6 PM

FINAL EXAM POSTED: MAY 2, 2022, AT 6 PM

FINAL EXAM DUE: MAY 16, 2022, AT 6 PM

CRIM 408 – SECTION 001 (SPRING 2022) SUMMARY OF DEADLINES

Class **1** Assignment: **NO ASSIGNMENT DUE**

Class **2** Assignment Due: January 28, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **3** Assignment Due: February 4, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **4** Assignment Due: February 11, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **5** Assignment Due: February 18, 2022, at 6 pm.

CLASS **6** Assignment Due: February 25, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **7** Assignment Due: March 4, 2022, at 6 p.m.

MID-TERM EXAM POSTED: March 22, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **8** Class Assignment Due: **NO ASSIGNMENT DUE**

CLASS **9** Class Assignment Due: March 25, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **10** Class Assignment Due: April 1, 2022, at 6 p.m.

MID-TERM EXAM ANSWERS DUE: April 5, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **11** Class Assignment Due: April 8, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **12** Class Assignment Due: **NO ASSIGNMENT DUE**

CLASS **13** Class Assignment Due: April 22, 2022, at 6 p.m.

CLASS **14** Class Assignment Due: April 29, 2022, at 6 p.m.

FINAL EXAM POSTED: May 2, 2022, at 6 p.m.

FINAL EXAM ANSWERS DUE: May 16, 2022, at 6 p.m.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Student Support: <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus/>

General University Information/Weather: www.gmu.edu

Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://caps.gmu.edu>

University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu>

University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>

Safe Return to Campus: <https://www.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>

Disability Services: <http://dsgmu.wpengine.com/>

Mason Diversity Statement

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://dsgmu.wpengine.com/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474.

Covid Protocols

Please refer to GMU’s *Safe Return to Campus* web site for information regarding GMU’s safety protocols. The site can be accessed at: www.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus. See also <https://www.gmu.edu/news/2021-12/mason-announces-booster-shot-requirement-spring-semester-classes-start-planned> for information regarding COVID protocols for Spring Semester.

Honor Code Policy

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity (oai.gmu.edu). See this excerpt from oai.gmu.edu:

“The Honor Code at George Mason University shall be specifically concerned with cheating or attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing in the academic setting. Examples of these infractions include but are not limited to the following:

1. Use of unauthorized material.

2. Use of unauthorized assistance.
3. Duplicate use of student's prior work.
4. Violation of syllabus requirements regarding integrity.
5. Self-plagiarism.
6. Inadequate citation.
7. False citation.
8. Failure to adhere to citation forms set by the professor.
9. Failure to quote sources/material.
10. Submission of another individual's work.
11. Removing an exam from a classroom.
12. Posting or enabling of posting of homework assignments and/or exams or solutions on websites.
13. Taking photos of exams/academic work without authorization.
14. Taking someone else's work without knowledge.
15. Falsifying sources, data, or information.
16. Providing a false excuse for missing a test or class.
17. Providing false information, including identifying information.
18. Falsifying official correspondence.”

More detailed information is available at oai.gmu.edu.

Enrollment Statement

- Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.
- Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. (Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Website at registrar.gmu.edu.)
- Last Day to Add Classes: **January 31, 2022**
- Last Day to Drop Classes (with 100% tuition refund): **February 7, 2022**
- Last Day to Drop Classes (with 50% tuition refund): **February 14, 2022**
- Unrestricted Withdrawal Period (100% tuition liability): **February 15, 2022 to March 1, 2022**
- Selective Withdrawal Period (100% tuition liability): **March 2, 2022 to April 11, 2022**