

Instructor

Leo Carroll

Office: 504 Chafee

Hours: Tu, Th: 11-12, 3:30 - 4:30
and by appointment

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Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the structure and the functioning of the American criminal justice system. We will explore three main issues. The first is the conflict between our desires for safety, on the one hand, and freedom, on the other. The second issue is the systemic nature of American criminal justice, that is the degree to which the various agencies are interrelated and operate together to achieve common goals. As will be seen, the conflict between safety and liberty has significant implications for the degree to which criminal justice agencies form a system. Finally, the third issue is the extent to which the system operates to provide equal protection for all or to privilege some while disadvantaging others.

Text

The required text for the course is listed below and is available in the Campus Bookstore and at the RI Book Co or you may purchase a copy on-line.

Joel Samaha, *Criminal Justice* (7th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 2006

Requirements

On-line Discussions. Every scheduled class will have one or more on-line discussions. These questions be posted on WebCT the day before the class for which they are scheduled. You will have about 24 hours to respond to the question before it is locked. These discussions will then be continued in the scheduled class.

Responses should take into consideration those posted earlier. For example, a student who is the tenth person responding should respond not only to the original question but also reference some of the other responses that have been posted previously. Students who have posted responses should also check later in the day and respond to some of those who have referenced their earlier posting

This is a writing intensive course. Each student is required to participate in at least 5 discussions. Additional participation in discussions beyond the 5 required may be done for extra credit.

Participation will be graded on the basis coherence and logic, strength of the evidence employed, and proper grammar and spelling according to the following scale:

3 points: a coherent and well-written posting that makes use of credible evidence and makes a substantive contribution to the discussion such as by presenting an original point of view and/or challenging the ideas expressed by another;

2 points: a well-written posting that merely expresses an opinion with little or no use of evidence or which does not make a substantive contribution to the discussion;

1 point: a poorly written posting that merely expresses an opinion that does not make a substantive contribution to the discussion and which presents no evidence to support the opinion.

One extra point will be awarded to students who make three or more postings to a single discussion. The maximum number of points that can be earned in any one discussion is 10.

Feedback will be provided to postings that are poorly written, and students who write poorly may be required to participate in additional discussions.

Class Attendance and Participation. Class attendance and participation is expected, and will be counted in determining the final grade. Absences are excused only for valid reasons such as illness or mandatory participation in a university sponsored event. For an absence to be excused, I must be notified by phone or e-mail prior to the class(es) and provided with documentation upon your return to the class. Note, however, that showing up for class is the minimal requirement.

To do well in this course, you must take good class notes. An outline of each lecture will be posted on WebCT a day or two before the class. This is not a substitute for being present and attentive in class. I strongly advise that you print each outline, bring it to class and use it as a guide to following lectures and as an aid in taking notes.

A good portion of each class will be devoted to discussions. You are expected to be an active participant in these discussions by raising questions and offering your opinions and viewpoints. At all times you must be respectful of the opinions and viewpoints of all other students.

Exams. There will be two in-class tests and a comprehensive final examination. The exact dates are given in the course outline below. Each test will consist of multiple choice and essay questions that require you not only to recall important facts and concepts, but also to be able to integrate material and apply principles to new situations. Sample questions will be posted on WebCT a day or two prior to each exam.

Grades

Grades will be based on a total of 300 points with each requirement weighted as indicated below.

Two in-class tests (50 pts. each)	100 pts.	33.3%
Five Discussions (10 pts. each)	50 pts	16.7%
Class Participation	50 pts	16.7%
Final Exam	100 pts	33.3%

Extra Credit

Up to 50 points of extra credit may be earned by participating in more than the required 5 on-line discussions. Any extra credit earned will be added to the total points earned in the required grading exercises.

Cheating

All work submitted for a grade is to be your own work, and yours alone. Providing another student with information about an exam and/or allowing someone to copy from your work is considered as serious as securing the information or copying the work. Cheating of any kind will be severely penalized.

Accommodation

Any student with a certified disability that is likely to affect their performance on any or all of these assignments should contact me to arrange for accommodations, as should students whose primary language is not English.

COURSE OUTLINE

Dates	Topics/Assignments
Sept. 4	<i>Introduction and Overview of the Course</i>
Sept. 9	Topic: <i>The Criminal Justice System</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 1- 27 Discussion: <i>Is There a Wartime Exception to the Bill of Rights?</i> (Samaha, pp.28-32)
Sept. 11	No Class– Professional Meeting
Sept. 16	Topic: <i>Principles of Criminal Law: Actus Reus</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 108 - 112 Discussions: <i>Powell v. Texas</i> (WebCT)
Sept. 18	Topic: <i>Principles of Criminal Law: Mens Rea</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 112-114 Discussion: <i>RI v. Perry</i> (WebCT)
Sept. 23	Topic: <i>Principles of Criminal Law: Justification</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 114-116 Discussion: <i>Are Battered Women Justified in Killing Their Abusers?</i> (Samaha, pp. 130-32.
Sept. 25	Topic: <i>Principles of Criminal Law: Excuse</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 116– 130 Discussion: <i>Is Mrs. Robinson Responsible for Plotting to Kill Her Husband?</i> (Web CT)
Oct. 2	First Test Reading: All Above
Oct. 7	Topic: <i>History and Missions of Police</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 137-162 Discussions: <i>Which Laws Should the Police Enforce?</i> (Samaha, p. 159 and WebCT) <i>Is Private Policing Good Public Policy?</i> (Samaha, pp. 180-183)
Oct. 9	Topic: <i>Police Strategy and Tactics</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 184-199 Discussion: <i>Under the Covers Policing</i> (WebCT)

Oct. 14	Topic: <i>New Strategies and Tactics</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 199 - 216 Discussion: <i>Is Problem Oriented Policing Good Policy?</i> (WebCT)
Oct. 16	Topic: <i>The Legal Environment of Policing: Search and Seizure</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 220 – 236 Discussion: <i>Florida v. Royer</i> (WebCT)
Oct. 21	Topic: <i>The Legal Environment of Policing: Interrogation and Identification</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 236 – 244 Discussion: <i>Brewer v. Williams</i> (WebCT)
Oct. 23	Topic: <i>Police Misconduct</i> Reading: Samaha, p. 168-175; 244 - 261 Discussion: <i>The Dirty Harry Problem</i> (WebCT)
Oct. 28	Second Test Reading: All From First Test
Oct. 30	Topic: <i>The Structure of American Criminal Courts</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 268 – 290 Discussion: <i>How Can you Defend These People?</i> (Samaha, pp. 290-292)
Nov. 4	No Class–Election Day
Nov. 6	Topic: <i>The Decision to Charge</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 294 – 303 Discussion: <i>Should the Prosecutor Charge the Suspect With Rape?</i> (WebCT)
Nov. 11	No Class–Veterans’ Day
Nov. 12	Topic: <i>Pretrial Proceedings</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 303-320 Discussion: <i>U.S. v. Salerno</i> (WebCT)
Nov. 13	Topic: <i>Guilty Pleas</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 338 – 356 Discussion: <i>Should a Person Be Able to Plead Guilty While Claiming Innocence?</i> (WebCT)
Nov. 18	Topic: <i>The Criminal Trial</i> Reading: Samaha, pp. 326 – 338 Discussion: <i>Do Military Tribunals Provide Sufficient Due Process Protection to Those Charged with Being Enemy Combatants?</i> (WebCT)

Nov. 20	<p>Topic: <i>The Purposes and Types of Sentencing</i></p> <p>Reading: Samaha, pp. 365 – 384</p> <p>Discussions: “<i>Was the Mandatory Minimum Sentence Fair?</i>” (WebCT) “<i>Should He Get Life for Stealing a Piece of Pizza?</i>” (WebCT)</p>
Nov. 25	<p>Topic: <i>Disparity and Discrimination in Sentencing</i></p> <p>Reading: Samaha, pp. 384 - 400</p> <p>Discussion: Is It time to Lift the Moratorium on the Death Penalty in Illinois? (Samaha, pp. 400-402)</p>
Nov. 27	No Class– Thanksgiving Day
Dec. 2	<p>Topic: <i>The Prison Population Boom</i></p> <p>Reading: pp. 443-449; 469-472</p> <p>Discussion: <i>Does Sending More People to Prison Reduce Crime Rates?</i> (Samaha, pp. 472-475)</p>
Dec. 9	<p>Topic: <i>Needed: A Continuum of Punishment</i></p> <p>Reading: Samaha, pp. 404-434</p> <p>Discussions: Should We Spend More Money on Probation and Parole? (WebCT) Satellite Monitoring: Does It Work? Is It Constitutional? (Samaha, pp. 430-433.)</p>