University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
210 Grand Avenue
P. O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913G

General Syllabus

CRJU 30073 Criminal Law Lecture

Credit Hours: 3 Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite: ENGL 1213/ENGL 10203 Composition II or RHET 2863/ENGL 24103 Advanced Composition

Effective Catalog: 2025-2026

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of the fundamental principles of criminal law through an in-depth examination of criminal offenses and their classifications. Students will study the essential elements of various crimes, the range of potential punishments, intricacies of accomplice liability as well as a thorough analysis of key defenses to criminal charges,

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. **Synthesize Knowledge on Crime Classification and Punishments:** Construct a comprehensive framework that categorizes crimes and examines how the U.S. legal systems determine appropriate punishments.
2. **Critically Analyze and Evaluate the Elements of Commonly Prosecuted Crimes:** Investigate and compare the similarities and differences among frequently prosecuted criminal laws, utilizing case examples to illustrate how social norms and cultural contexts influence prosecutorial decisions and legal outcomes.
3. **Critically Examine and Distinguish Anticipatory Offenses:** Compare and contrast conspiracy, solicitation, and attempt, evaluating their legal implications and the ethical considerations surrounding each type of offense.
4. **Evaluate Various Defenses to Criminal Culpability:** Investigate and critique the effectiveness of different defenses against criminal charges, considering case law and the impact of these defenses on judicial outcomes.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills
Critical Thinking Skills
Students will identify problems/issues and develop solutions/analysis.

Communication Skills (written and oral)

Students will use the essay format to complete writing assignments and a research paper. Students will be able to discuss particular elements of various criminal offenses. Students will make oral presentations of their research projects.

Ethical Decision Making
Students will demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues inherent in enforcing criminal law.

III. Major Course Topics

A. Differences between criminal and civil law
B. Elements of crime
C. Anticipatory offenses and parties to crimes
D. Defenses to criminal culpability
E. Criminal Homicide
F. Assault, Rape, and other crimes against the person
G. Property and related crimes
H. Crimes against public order and public decency
I. Crimes against the government and terrorism
J. Substance abuse crimes
K. Sentencing