Course Description

Examines the American judiciary in relationship to state and federal criminal justice systems, including court structure, jurisdiction, judge selection, and judicial discretion as well as contemporary issues confronting federal, state, and local courts.

Prerequisites


Course Textbook


Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Assess the criminal justice system, the laws and rules that govern it.
2. Define and explain terminology common to the judicial system.
3. Trace and explain the history and structure of the state court system.
4. Trace and analyze the development of the Federal Court system.
5. Explain the process of becoming an attorney and a member of a State or Federal Bar Association.
6. Summarize and analyze the litigation process that exists in the United States.
7. Explain the appeals process and court system that has evolved in the U.S.
8. Assess the forces that affect the U.S. Judicial System.
9. Analyze the roles of the various courts that exist within the U.S.
10. Explain the concept of “Judicial Policy Making”.
11. Evaluate the politics of Judicial Selection.
12. Explain the most recent developments in the court process and how the system has changed to one focusing on victims' rights as well as defendant's rights.
13. Analyze the relationship between the media and the courts.
14. Evaluate the litigation explosion and tort reform.

Credits

Upon completion of this course, the students will earn three (3) hours of college credit.

Course Structure

1. **Unit Learning Objectives**: Each unit contains Unit Learning Objectives that specify the measurable skills and knowledge students should gain upon completion of the unit.
2. **Written Lectures**: Each unit contains a Written Lecture, which discusses lesson material.
3. **Reading Assignments**: Each unit contains Reading Assignments from one or more chapters from the textbook. Supplemental Readings are provided in Units II, IV and VII study guides to aid students in their course of study.

4. **Key Terms**: Key Terms are intended to guide students in their course of study. Students should pay particular attention to Key Terms as they represent important concepts within the unit material and reading.

5. **Discussion Boards**: Discussion Boards are a part of all CSU term courses. Information and specifications regarding these assignments are provided in the Academic Policies listed in the Course Menu bar.

6. **Unit Assessments**: This course contains five Unit Assessments, one to be completed at the end of Units I, II, III, V, and VI. Assessments are composed of multiple-choice questions and written response questions. A grading rubric is included with the Unit III Assessment. Specific information about accessing these rubrics is provided below.

7. **Unit Assignments**: Students are required to submit for grading Assignments in Units IV, VII, and VIII. Specific information and instructions regarding these assignments are provided below. A grading rubric is included with the Unit VII Assignment. Specific information about accessing these rubrics is provided below.

8. **Final Exam (Proctored)**: Students are to complete a Final Exam in Unit VIII. All Final Exams are proctored—see below for additional information. You are permitted four (4) hours to complete this exam, in the presence of your approved proctor. This is an open book exam. Only course textbooks and a calculator, if necessary, are allowed when taking proctored exams. The Final Exam is composed of multiple-choice questions.

9. **Ask the Professor**: This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content related questions.

10. **Student Break Room**: This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates.

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**Unit Assignments**

**Unit IV Research Paper**

For this research paper select one of the following cases: (1) the O.J. Simpson case or (2) the Casey Anthony case. Research the case you have selected, and in this paper examine the jury selection process, jury sequestration, jury verdict and the controversies relevant to the jury verdict.

Three to five professional resources are to be referenced. APA format is required for this assignment. APA formatted in-text citations should be used within the text for all references listed. The paper is to include a minimum of four full pages of content, not including the title page, and reference page. The CSU Online Library is the recommended resource to conduct your research. General encyclopedias and similar sources are not appropriate for this written assignment. Please proof and edit your paper carefully.

**Unit VII Article Review**

Research and select one article from a professional journal on the topic of juvenile offenders transferred into adult criminal court jurisdiction. This paper requires APA style format, including citing key points and material from the source using APA formatted in-text citations and listing the reference in this style format.

The paper is to consist of a minimum two full pages in length, not including the title page and reference page. The article review should be written in paragraph format. The paper should include an introduction of the article, present several key points from the article, and summarize the article’s conclusion. The conclusion should include your perspective on this issue, and your opinion of the article.

The CSU Online Library is the recommended source to research a professional journal for this assignment. Grading of the Article Review is based on the CSU Grading Rubric for Projects. Papers are submitted for electronic evaluation to rule out any academic integrity violations. Links to access the Academic Policy and the Grading Rubric are accessible through the Student Portal and the course. The Student Success Center is a resource available to assist with academic writing and APA format application. The CSU librarians are able to help with your research using the CSU Online Library.

**Unit VIII Research Paper**

Specialty Courts "have increased rapidly around the country as jurisdictions attempt to find alternative methods of dealing with certain types of offenders" (Champion, Hartley, & Rabe, 2012, p. 299).

For this research paper select one of the special courts covered in the textbook, and include a minimum of three appropriate references on this topic. In a minimum of three full page paper (not including the title page and reference page), examine and explain the significance of this specialty court and its effectiveness to its participants and society. The
conclusion is to include your analysis of this special court's problem solving effectiveness as an alternative to traditional criminal justice processing practices.

APA format is required for this paper.

APA Guidelines

CSU requires that students use the APA style for papers and projects. Therefore, the APA rules for formatting, quoting, paraphrasing, citing, and listing of sources are to be followed. A document titled “APA Guidelines Summary” is available for you to download from the APA Guide Link, found in the Learning Resources area of the myCSU Student Portal. It may also be accessed from the Student Resources link on the Course Menu. This document provides links to several internet sites that provide comprehensive information on APA formatting, including examples and sample papers.

Blackboard Grading Rubrics

Unit Assessment Rubrics

One or more “written response” questions in this course utilize a Blackboard Grading Rubric. A rubric is a tool that lists evaluation criteria and can help you organize your efforts to meet the requirements of the written response question. Your professor will use the Blackboard Grading Rubric to assign points and provide feedback.

You are encouraged to view the rubric before submitting your response. This will allow you to review the evaluation criteria as you prepare your response. You may access the rubric by clicking on the “View Rubric” icon next to the written response question within the assessment. Upon receiving your assessment grade, you may view your grade breakdown and feedback in the rubric within the assessment.

Assignment Rubrics

One or more assignments in this course utilizes a Blackboard Grading Rubric. A rubric is a tool that lists evaluation criteria and can help you organize your efforts to meet the requirements of an assignment. Your professor will use the Blackboard Grading Rubric to assign points and provide feedback for the assignment.

You are encouraged to view the assignment rubric before submitting your work. This will allow you to review the evaluation criteria as you prepare your assignments. You may access the rubric in “My Grades” through the “Tools” button in your course menu. Click the “View Rubric” link to see the evaluation criteria for the assignment. Upon receiving your assignment grade, you may view your grade breakdown and feedback in the rubric.

CSU Grading Rubric for Papers/Projects

The course papers will be graded based on the CSU Grading Rubric for all types of papers, unless otherwise specified within assignment instructions. In addition, all papers will be submitted for electronic evaluation to rule out plagiarism. Course projects will contain project specific grading criteria defined in the project directions. To view the rubric, click the Academic Policies link on the Course Menu, or access it through the CSU Grading Rubric link found in the Learning Resources area of the myCSU Student Portal.

Final Examination Guidelines

Final Examinations are to be administered to students by an approved proctor on a date that is mutually convenient. The student is responsible for selecting a qualified proctor that must be approved by the university.

A list of acceptable proctors is provided in the Examination Proctor Policy. To review the complete Examination Proctor Policy including a list of acceptable proctors, proctor responsibilities, proctor approval procedures and the Proctor Agreement Form, go to the myCSU Student Portal from the link below.

http://mycsu.columbiasouthern.edu
You are permitted four (4) hours to complete this exam, in the presence of your approved proctor. This is an open book exam. Only course textbooks and a calculator, if necessary, are allowed when taking proctored exams.

**Communication Forums**

These are non-graded discussion forums that allow you to communicate with your professor and other students. Participation in these discussion forums is encouraged, but not required. You can access these forums with the buttons in the Course Menu. Instructions for subscribing/unsubscribing to these forums are provided below.

*Click here for instructions on how to subscribe/unsubscribe and post to the Communication Forums.*

**Ask the Professor**

This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content questions. Questions may focus on Blackboard locations of online course components, textbook or course content elaboration, additional guidance on assessment requirements, or general advice from other students.

Questions that are specific in nature, such as inquiries regarding assessment/assignment grades or personal accommodation requests, are NOT to be posted on this forum. If you have questions, comments, or concerns of a non-public nature, please feel free to email your professor. Responses to your post will be addressed or emailed by the professor within 48 hours.

Before posting, please ensure that you have read all relevant course documentation, including the syllabus, assessment/assignment instructions, faculty feedback, and other important information.

**Student Break Room**

This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates. Communication on this forum should always maintain a standard of appropriateness and respect for your fellow classmates. This forum should NOT be used to share assessment answers.

**Grading**

- Discussion Boards (8 @ 2%) = 16%
- Assessments (5 @ 5%) = 25%
- Research Papers (2 @ 15%) = 30%
- Article Review = 9%
- Final Exam = 20%
- **Total** = 100%

**Course Schedule/Checklist (PLEASE PRINT)**

The following pages contain a printable Course Schedule to assist you through this course. By following this schedule, you will be assured that you will complete the course within the time allotted.
### Unit I: About the Law and Structure of American Courts

**Review:**
- [ ] Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- [ ] Chapter 1: Law: The Legal Battlefield

**Discuss:**
- [ ] Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- [ ] Assessment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

Notes/Goals:

### Unit II: Structure of the Courts and the Prosecution

**Review:**
- [ ] Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- [ ] Chapter 2: The Structure of American Courts
- [ ] Chapter 3: The Prosecution
  - Supplemental Reading:
    - [ ] Refer to the Unit Study Guide

**Discuss:**
- [ ] Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- [ ] Discussion Board Comment: Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- [ ] Assessment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)
- [ ] Proctor Approval Form

Notes/Goals:

### Unit III: The Defense and Judges

**Review:**
- [ ] Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- [ ] Chapter 4: The Defense
- [ ] Chapter 5: Judges

**Discuss:**
- [ ] Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- [ ] Discussion Board Comment: Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- [ ] Assessment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

Notes/Goals:
### Unit IV  Juries

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- **Chapter 6:** Juries
- **Supplemental Reading:** Refer to the Unit Study Guide

**Discuss:**
- **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- **Research Paper** by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

### Notes/Goals:

### Unit V  Pretrial Procedures and the Trial Process

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- **Chapter 7:** Pretrial Procedures and the Trial Process
- **Chapter 8:** Pretrial Procedures: Plea Bargaining

**Discuss:**
- **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- **Assessment** by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

### Notes/Goals:

### Unit VI  Sentencing Goals, Judicial Sentencing, and Disparities and Appeals

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- **Chapter 9:** Sentencing Goals and Structures
- **Chapter 10:** Judicial Sentencing Options, Sentencing Disparities, and Appeals

**Discuss:**
- **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- **Assessment** by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

### Notes/Goals:
### Unit VII: The Juvenile Justice System

**Review:**  
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**  
- Chapter 11: The Juvenile Justice System: Juvenile Rights and Case Processing  
- Chapter 12: Juvenile Courts: Adjudication and Disposition  
- Supplemental Reading  
- Refer to the Unit Study Guide

**Discuss:**  
- Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- Discussion Board Comment: Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**  
- Article Review by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- Request to take Final Exam

**Notes/Goals:**

### Unit VIII: Capstone Assessment of the Structure, Process, and Issues of Criminal Courts and Specialty Courts

**Review:**  
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**  
- Chapter 13: Diversion, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and Specialty Courts  
- Chapter 14: Courts, Media, and the Litigation Explosion

**Discuss:**  
- Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- Discussion Board Comment: Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**  
- Research Paper by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- Final Exam by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Notes/Goals:**