Course Description

Provides a study of the nature and foundations of U.S. criminal law. Students focus on evolution of statutory crimes in the United States, analysis of contemporary federal and statutory offenses, criminal conduct, criminal responsibility, criminal defenses, criminal liability, and elements of the crime.

Course Textbook


Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Define terms related to criminal law.
2. Examine the purpose and function of criminal law.
3. Assess legal issues as presented in court cases.
4. Analyze key concepts related to criminal law.
5. Examine various laws.

Credits

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

Course Structure

1. **Unit Learning Outcomes**: Each unit contains Learning Outcomes that specify the measurable skills and knowledge students should gain upon completion of the unit.
2. **Unit Lesson**: Each unit contains one or more interactive publisher presentations, which discuss unit material.
3. **Reading Assignments**: Each unit contains Reading Assignments from one or more chapters from the textbook. Units II, III, and VIII also contain handouts as Required Reading.
4. **Unit Assessments**: This course contains seven Unit Assessments, one to be completed at the end of each unit, except Unit V. Assessments are composed of multiple-choice questions and written response questions.
5. **Unit Assignments**: Students are required to submit for grading Unit Assignments in Units I, II, III, IV, V, and VII. Specific information and instructions regarding these assignments are provided below. Grading rubrics are included with the assignments. Specific information about accessing these rubrics is provided below.
6. **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 written response questions.
7. **Ask the Professor**: This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content related questions.
8. **Student Break Room**: This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates.
CSU Online Library

The CSU Online Library is available to support your courses and programs. The online library includes databases, journals, e-books, and research guides. These resources are always accessible and can be reached through the library webpage. To access the library, log into the myCSU Student Portal, and click on “CSU Online Library.” You can also access the CSU Online Library from the “My Library” button on the course menu for each course in Blackboard.

The CSU Online Library offers several reference services. E-mail (library@columbiasouthern.edu) and telephone (1.877.268.8046) assistance is available Monday – Thursday from 8 am to 5 pm and Friday from 8 am to 3 pm. The library’s chat reference service, Ask a Librarian, is available 24/7; look for the chat box on the online library page.

Librarians can help you develop your research plan or assist you in finding relevant, appropriate, and timely information. Reference requests can include customized keyword search strategies, links to articles, database help, and other services.

Unit Assignments

Unit I Case Study

This case study assignment explores the concept of *stare decisis* and whether it is an inexorable command. Access and read *Is Stare Decisis an Inexorable Command?* Please answer the following questions about the case study:

- What does the court mean when it says “*Stare decisis* is not an inexorable command; rather it is a principle of policy and not a mechanical formula of adherence to the latest decision”?
- What would it mean for the American system of criminal justice, if *stare decisis* actually was an “inexorable command” or a “mechanical formula of adherence to the latest decision”?

Your response should be at least 500 words (no less than 250 words for each question). Any sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations. All references and citations used must be in APA style.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit II Essay

In this assignment, you will refer back to the three handouts indicated below and answer the questions associated with them. You will find these handouts linked within the Unit II Study Guide. Both items listed below will be responded to within the same document which you will then submit. The response to each item will consist of at least 200 words each, and any sources used, including your textbook, should be cited and referenced properly at the end of your responses using APA formatting. It is not necessary to copy the items below into your document; however, please compose essays that include a clear introduction, body, and conclusion:

1. After reading “What Constitutes the Corpus Delecti of an Offense,” please answer the following questions. How can the *corpus delicti* of robbery be demonstrated? Of theft? Why did the court conclude that, “In this case, the evidence does not conclusively establish that Hoke's purse was taken forcibly from her. The evidence does, however, support an inference that she was robbed”?

2. After reading “For Purposes of Criminal Attempt…,” please answer the following questions. Do you agree that the girls had taken a substantial step toward the commission of a targeted offense? What test does the court establish for Tennessee to determine whether a substantial step has been taken? Would your answer be different if Tennessee used the last-offense test or the physical proximity test? If so, how? Do you think that the court, in using common law rules of construction, modifies the legislative enactment? Is the court using its judgment to replace that of the drafters of the statute? Explain your answer.

3. After reading, “Can a Private Corporation be held Liable…,” please answer the following questions. In this case, McIlwain School Bus Lines, Inc. argued that the offense of homicide by vehicle could not be committed by a corporation. On what grounds did the corporation base its arguments? Why did the court conclude that a corporation was a "person" for purposes of the law? How was such a conclusion reached? What are the potential legal ramifications of granting the status of "person" to a corporation?

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.
Unit III Essay

In this assignment, you will refer back to the two handouts indicated below and answer the questions associated with them. Both items listed below will be responded to within the same document, which you will then submit. The response to each item will consist of at least 200 words each, and any sources used, including your textbook, should be cited and referenced properly at the end of your responses using APA formatting. It is not necessary to copy the items below into your document; however, please compose essays that include an introduction, body, and conclusion:

1. Please refer back to the handout, “Can a Defendant Who Lies...,” to respond to the following questions. The Illinois appellate court, citing a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, says that “Perhaps we could never succeed in intelligibly defining the kinds of matter we understand to be embraced within the shorthand description of battered woman's syndrome.” Why not? Would you be able to formulate an effective legal description of battered woman's syndrome? If so, what would it be?

2. Please refer back to the handout, “Is there a Meaningful Difference...,” to respond to the following questions. Miller claimed to be sane before and after the killing, but insane during the time the crime was committed. His attorneys asked that, at the end of the trial, the jury be instructed on the issue of temporary insanity, and that they be told that "regardless of its duration, legal insanity that existed at the time of the commission of the crime is a defense to the crime." Why do you think that the trial court refused to give the jury instructions regarding the insanity defense, which the defendant wished to have communicated? In this case, the appellate court reversed the defendant's conviction and remanded the case for a new trial. On what basis was that decision reached? Do you agree that the appellate court should have reached such a decision? Why, or why not? What does this case have to tell us about the difference between insanity and temporary insanity? Are differences between the two terms significant in cases such as this one? Why, or why not?

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit IV Case Study

This case study assignment explores euthanasia. Research euthanasia in your state, and address the items below:

- What is euthanasia?
- Identify and describe laws regarding euthanasia in your state.
- Explain a recent case about euthanasia and its outcome.
- Based upon what you have read, give your opinion on euthanasia and support your argument.

Your response should be at least two (2) pages in length (not including the references page). While you may use your textbook to complete this assignment, you are required to use at least two (2) outside resources, which may be from the CSU Online Library or from other professional journals. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations. All references and citations used must be in APA style.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit V Case Study

Access and read What Constitutes the Crime of Stalking? After reading, please address the items below:

- Provide a brief overview of the handout.
- What are the elements of the crime of stalking under the statute discussed in this case?
- Do you agree with the court of appeals that the statute is not unconstitutionally vague?
- Is the evidence in this case sufficient to support a stalking conviction?

Your response should be at least three (3) pages in length (not including the references page). While you may use your textbook to complete this assignment, you are required to use at least two (2) outside resources, which may be from the CSU Online Library or from other professional journals. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations. All references and citations used must be in APA style.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.
Unit VII Essay

In this assignment, you will refer back to the two handouts indicated below and answer the questions associated with them. Both items listed below will be responded to within the same document which you will then submit. The response to each item will consist of at least 200 words each, and any sources used, including your textbook, should be cited and referenced properly at the end of your responses using APA formatting. It is not necessary to copy the items below into your document; however, please compose essays that include an introduction, body, and conclusion.

1. Please review the handout, “Should Cross Burning be Protected,” found in the required reading, and answer both of the following questions:
   a. Summarize the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in both of the cases that are excerpted in the handout. In a few words, explain why the Court, in *R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul* overturned the decision of the Minnesota Supreme Court. Explain why the Court upheld the Virginia statute in *Virginia v. Black*.
   b. What did the Court mean when it held, in *Virginia v. Black*, that “just as any State may regulate only that obscenity which is the most obscene due to its prurient content, so too may a State choose to prohibit only those forms of intimidation that are most likely to inspire fear of bodily harm”?

2. Please review the handout, “Does the Sending of Obscene Material,” found in the required reading, and answer all of the following questions:
   a. Do you agree that the statute in question applies to computer-generated and computer-transmitted information?
   b. Should the government be required to present expert witnesses to establish that the material in question is obscene? Is this a question that a jury can decide on its own? How are jury members aware of “community standards”?
   c. If the community standards are different in Milpitas, California, from those of Memphis, Tennessee, why should the defendants be held accountable for the standards in Memphis and not those in the location where the material was transmitted?
   d. Are you satisfied with the test for obscenity? In what manner, if any, would you change the standard?

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

**APA Guidelines**

The application of the APA writing style shall be practical, functional, and appropriate to each academic level, with the primary purpose being the documentation (citation) of sources. CSU requires that students use APA style for certain papers and projects. Students should always carefully read and follow assignment directions and review the associated grading rubric when available. Students can find CSU’s Citation Guide by clicking [here](#). This document includes examples and sample papers and provides information on how to contact the CSU Success Center.

**Grading Rubrics**

This course utilizes analytic grading rubrics as tools for your professor in assigning grades for all learning activities. Each rubric serves as a guide that communicates the expectations of the learning activity and describes the criteria for each level of achievement. In addition, a rubric is a reference tool that lists evaluation criteria and can help you organize your efforts to meet the requirements of that learning activity. It is imperative for you to familiarize yourself with these rubrics because these are the primary tools your professor uses for assessing learning activities.

Rubric categories include: (1) Assessment (Written Response) and (2) Assignment. However, it is possible that not all of the listed rubric types will be used in a single course (e.g., some courses may not have Assessments).

The Assessment (Written Response) rubric can be found embedded in a link within the directions for each Unit Assessment. However, these rubrics will only be used when written-response questions appear within the Assessment.

Each Assignment type (e.g., article critique, case study, research paper) will have its own rubric. The Assignment rubrics are built into Blackboard, allowing students to review them prior to beginning the Assignment and again once the
Assignment has been scored. This rubric can be accessed via the Assignment link located within the unit where it is to be submitted. Students may also access the rubric through the course menu by selecting “Tools” and then “My Grades.”

Again, it is vitally important for you to become familiar with these rubrics because their application to your Assessments and Assignments is the method by which your instructor assigns all grades.

Final Examination Guidelines

Final Exams are to be administered to students by an approved Proctor. CSU approves two, flexible proctoring options: a standard Proctor, who is chosen by the student and approved by the university, or Remote Proctor Now (RP Now), an on-demand, third-party testing service that proctors examinations for a small fee.

Students choosing RP Now must have an operational webcam/video with audio, a high-speed internet connection, and the appropriate system rights required to download and install software.

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, writing utensils, and a calculator, if necessary, are allowed when taking proctored exams. Other materials are not permitted unless specified in the examination instructions and only the sources identified in the instructions may be used as source material.

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.

Once you have completed Unit VIII, you MUST unsubscribe from the forum; otherwise, you will continue to receive e-mail updates from the forum. You will not be able to unsubscribe after your course end date.

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

Assessments (7 @ 3%) = 21%
Case Studies (3 @ 8%) = 24%
Essays (3 @ 8%) = 24%
Final Exam = 31%
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.
By following this schedule, you will be assured that you will complete the course within the time allotted. Please keep this schedule for reference as you progress through your course.

### Unit I  Purposes and Sources of Criminal Law

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review:</th>
<th>☐ Unit Study Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>☐ Chapter 1: The Nature and History of Criminal Law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Submit: | ☐ Assessment  
☐ Case Study |

### Notes/Goals:

### Unit II  Criminal Liability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review:</th>
<th>☐ Unit Study Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Read: | ☐ Chapter 2: Criminal Liability and the Essence of Crime  
☐ Chapter 3: Expanding the Concept of Crime  
☐ Chapter 4: Extending Criminal Liability: Inchoate Offenses and Parties to Crime |
| Submit: | ☐ Assessment  
☐ Essay  
☐ Proctor Approval Form |

### Notes/Goals:

### Unit III  Defenses and Insanity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review:</th>
<th>☐ Unit Study Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Read: | ☐ Chapter 5: Justifications as Defenses  
☐ Chapter 6: Defenses: Excuses and Insanity  
☐ Additional Reading Assignment(s) : See Study Guide |
| Submit: | ☐ Assessment  
☐ Essay |

### Notes/Goals:
### Unit IV: Personal Crimes: Homicide

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- Chapter 7: Legal and Social Dimensions of Personal Crime: Homicide

**Submit:**
- Assessment
- Case Study

### Unit V: Personal Crimes

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- Chapter 8: Legal and Social Dimensions of Personal Crime: Assault, Battery, and Other Personal Crimes

**Submit:**
- Case Study

### Unit VI: Property and Computer Crimes

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- Chapter 9: Legal and Social Dimensions of Property and Computer Crimes

**Submit:**
- Assessment

### Unit VII: Public Order, Public Decency, and Morality Crimes

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide

**Read:**
- Chapter 10: Offenses against Public Order and the Administration of Justice
- Chapter 11: Offenses against Public Morality
- Additional Reading Assignment(s): See Study Guide

**Submit:**
- Assessment
- Essay
- Request to take Final Exam

**Notes/Goals:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit VIII</th>
<th>Victims, Punishment, and Sentencing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review:</td>
<td>□ Unit Study Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>□ Chapter 13: Victims and the Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Chapter 14: Punishment and Sentencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit:</td>
<td>□ Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Final Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes/Goals: