

## THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

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POLI:3120  
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As its title suggests, this course will focus on aspects of the criminal justice system in the United States. More specifically, in the first half of the semester we will examine the definitions of various crimes. In the second half we will examine various procedural aspects of criminal justice.

### TEXTS (ordered through Iowa Book and Supply, 8 S. Clinton)

- Scheb and Scheb, *Criminal Law and Procedure*, 8th ed. (7th or 6th eds. are okay)
- Gifis, *Law Dictionary*, 6th ed. (5th ed. is okay)
- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th ed.
- Bugliosi, *Helter Skelter* (recommended)
- Taylor and Johnson, *Until Proven Innocent* (recommended)

Scheb and Scheb will be the primary text for the course. The coursepack (see below) contains additional cases. Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter* is an excellent examination of the process from commission of the crime to final sentencing. Taylor and Johnson's *Until Proven Innocent* is an example of a failure of the system. The other required books (Gifis, Strunk and White) are intended for reference purposes. Those unfamiliar with legal writing and terminology will find many new terms and a legal dictionary will help you learn them. One of the requirements of this course will be a paper (the specific assignment will be given later). A clear, concise, and error-free writing style is essential. Strunk and White, or other style manuals, will provide you with a review or introduction to many of the basics of good writing.

### ON RESERVE (Reserved Reading Room, Main Library)

All the books listed above and some additional books have been placed on reserve at the Reserved Reading Room in the Main Library. I will discuss my recommendations regarding these books during the first class period.

### CASES COURSEPACK (available on ICON)

The coursepack contains several Supreme Court cases to be read along with the chapters in the second half of the course.

### OTHER "COURSEPACK" (available on ICON)

This "coursepack" consists of several handouts and other information including the value systems of the justices, general requirements for the paper assignment, tips on how to take my multiple choice tests, and an extensive list of study questions.

### GRADING

Grades will be based on the following:

- *Two multiple-choice exams (70%)*. The first test (30%) is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 5, and will cover material through Chapter 14. The second test (40%) will be during the regular final exam period announced later, but it will primarily cover material from the second half of the semester.
- *A paper (30%)*. General requirements for writing the paper are contained in the coursepack. Specific details of the assignment will be given to you on Thursday, March 7. Nevertheless, you should read Strunk and White and the *Style Manual for My Courses* on ICON as soon as possible. You should familiarize yourself with these requirements before the paper assignment is handed out. The paper will be due at the beginning of class on Thursday, April 4.

Based on your performance on the assignments (two tests and paper), you will be assigned a grade according to the following 100-point scale:

90 - 99 = A	80 - 83 = B	70 - 73 = C	60 - 63 = D
87 - 89 = A-	77 - 79 = B-	67 - 69 = C-	50 - 59 = D-
84 - 86 = B+	74 - 76 = C+	64 - 66 = D+	0 - 49 = F

### A FINAL COMMENT

I have found that students sometimes have a tendency to suffer in silence. By that I mean that they will not say anything to the instructor if they are having problems with a course. This does no one any good. If you have a problem with the course (readings, assignments, lectures, etc.) come and talk to me about it. I cannot explain procedures or try to correct problems if I do not know they exist. Waiting until course evaluations to voice your opinion will not help you, and probably not me either.

### READINGS and SCHEDULE (Scheb and Scheb = S&S, Cases Coursepack = CCP)

1/15 & 1/17 - van Geel, all; Strunk and White, all; S&S, Chs 1 and 2

1/22 & 1/24 - S&S, Ch 3

1/29 & 1/31 - S&S, Ch 4

2/5 & 2/7 - S&S, Ch 5

2/12 & 2/14 - S&S, Chs 6 and 7 (6th ed only Ch 6)

2/19 & 2/21 - S&S, Ch 13

2/26 & 2/28 - S&S, Ch 14

3/5 - **Test 1** (tentative)

3/7 - Paper assignment handed out

3/12 & 3/14 - S&S Ch 15; five cases in CCP

3/19 & 3/21 - No class, Spring break

3/26 & 3/28 - S&S Ch 16; four cases in CCP

4/2 & 4/4 - S&S, Ch 17; four cases in CCP; **Papers due 4/4**

4/9 & 4/11 - S&S, Ch18; two cases in CCP

4/16 & 4/18 - S&S, Ch 19; four cases in CCP

4/23 & 4/25 - S&S, Ch 20

4/30 & 5/2 - finish material, papers returned

5/? - **Test 2** (time and location to be announced later)

In addition to readings from the listed books, throughout the semester I will post course-related materials to my web page for the course and you will be responsible for that material as well.

### IMPORTANT DATES

3/5 - Test 1 (tentative, covering material through Chapter 14)

3/7 - Paper Assignment given out this date

3/19 & 3/21 - No class, Spring break

4/4 - Paper due at beginning of class

5/? - Test 2, time and location to be announced (primarily covering material since Test 1)

Any changes to the information contained in this syllabus will be announced in class.

Continue to Parts 2 (policy statements) and 3 (bureaucratic mumbo jumbo) of the syllabus.