

CCJ 2020: Introduction to Criminal Justice
College of Criminology & Criminal Justice
Florida State University

MWF 9:20am – 10:10am

DIF 201

Fall 2026

Professor: Dr. Kim Davidson

Email: kdavidson@fsu.edu

Office: 201C Criminology & CJ Bldg

Office Hours:

Mondays: 12:15pm – 1:45pm

Wednesdays: 12:15pm – 1:45pm

or by appointment via Zoom

Teaching Assistant: J.J. Snoke

Email: jjs12b@fsu.edu

Office: 201 Criminology & CJ Bldg

Office Hours:

TBD

or by appointment via Zoom

Course Description

Students will gain an understanding of basic social and behavioral concepts and principles through the study of the criminal justice system. Against this backdrop, a range of topics will be covered. For example, police organization and behavior, the courts, the juvenile justice system, corrections, philosophies of punishment, and offender reintegration, are all included in the curriculum for the semester. Emphasis will be placed on how the criminal justice system operates, the different problems with the criminal justice system, and ways in which these problems can be overcome. By the end of this course, you will be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the main issues that are directly relevant to criminal justice theory and research.

The main objectives of this course are:

1. Discuss the prominent theories of crime causation, as related to criminal justice policies.
2. Describe the historical development of the United States criminal justice system.
3. Describe the current structures and operations of the United States criminal justice system.
4. Identify the primary challenges facing criminal justice professionals.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the United States criminal justice system.
6. Examine, interpret, and explain how personal, political, cultural, and social experiences and/or structures have shaped and continue to shape the past and present.
7. Discuss the role of social factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.
8. Analyze claims about social phenomena.

Texts & Materials

There will be required readings, videos, etc. for this course. These required readings/materials will be posted in Canvas. Please come to class prepared to take notes. Those who do not attend class will miss material that will be needed to successfully complete exams.

The textbook designated for this course is:

Peak, Kenneth J. and Tamara D. Herold. 2023. *Introduction to Criminal Justice: Practice and Process*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Attendance Policy

Attendance will not be taken at every class, but it will be taken sporadically and without announcement through quizzes, written reactions, and group tasks. These in-class quizzes, reactions, and tasks will be graded pass/fail (i.e., if you turn in a quiz, reaction, or group work, you will get the attendance point for that day). Fourteen in class assignments will be given throughout the semester for 10 points, meaning FOUR are dropped. If you have extenuating circumstances (e.g., chronic illness, family emergency, frequent university-sanctioned travel), that will result in multiple absences, please let me know as soon as possible so we can work together on a fair attendance solution based on your circumstances. **One-time absences for illness, appointments, interviews, etc. are built into the attendance policy through four dropped assignments.**

Use of Electronic Devices

Cell phones are distracting to your learning, my teaching, and your fellow students. Please turn off or silence your cell phone before class begins, and phones should be away during class. Laptops are allowed in the classroom, but should be used for note taking and other class-related assignments *only*. This policy does not prohibit students with documented disabilities from using assistive technologies.

Grading

Exams:

There will be three exams during this course. A final exam will be given during Finals Week during the time assigned for this class. Exams will count for 60% of your final grade. Exams will be cumulative. If you know in advance that you will miss an exam for a university sanctioned reason, please notify me ASAP. If you are ill or other circumstances cause you to miss an exam, notify me as soon as possible and prior to the exam. Requests for taking a make-up exam require documentation of events such as illness, family emergency, or a university sanctioned activity. Make-up exams will consist of essay questions and must be scheduled with the Professor or the Teaching Assistant within one week of the originally scheduled exam date.

Final Project – Infographic:

Early in the semester, you will pick a topic for your infographic project. You will have wide discretion in picking a topic – any subject area directly related to the criminal justice system is acceptable. I am available to discuss topic options with you, help you narrow your focus, etc. as you make your choice. The goal of this project is to create an infographic that communicates critical information someone would need to understand a pressing issue in the criminal justice system. Further information about this assignment will be given to you throughout the semester, including requirements and grading rubrics. As part of this project, you will be required to turn in an annotated bibliography and essay outline that includes a minimum of 6 relevant, peer-reviewed sources. We will discuss this requirement during the semester, including how to find peer-reviewed sources to use in your annotated bibliography and your infographic. You will also complete a peer review assignment, providing feedback to two of your peers on their infographic project. In total, this assignment will count for 30% of your grade (10% annotated bibliography/outline, 5% peer review, 15% final infographic project). Additional guidelines for these assignments will be given prior to the due dates.

Attendance:

Attendance, which will be taken through sporadic and unannounced in-class activities or assignments, will count for 10% of your final grade. Fourteen in-class activities will be collected throughout the semester to grade attendance. Four in-class activities will be dropped (i.e., you can miss four in-class activities and still get the full 10% for attendance). Each activity will be 1% of your final grade. Students who are present for more than 10 attendance checks will get 0.25pts (0.25%) of extra credit

per additional attendance check (i.e., if present for all 14 attendance checks the student will earn 1pt or 1% extra credit).

Late Assignments:

All students will be given 3pts (3%) of extra credit at the start of the semester. You can trade in those 3pts for the ability to turn in an assignment late one time during the semester. If you use your single use “late pass,” you can turn in the chosen assignment up to 3 days late (i.e., if it was due on Wednesday at 11:59pm, you have until Saturday at 11:59pm; if it was due Friday at 11:59pm, you have until Monday at 11:59pm). This can only be done once per semester and you will lose the 3pts of automatic extra credit if you choose to use this single use assignment extension. No other late assignments will be accepted beyond this single use option. This is not available for exams or extra credit opportunities.

Extra Credit:

There will be at least one opportunity for extra credit provided. Extra credit opportunities will not be given to students on an individual basis.

Grade Breakdown & Grading Scale

EXAMS	60%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Final Exam (Exam 3)	20%
FINAL PROJECT	30%
Annotated Bibliography/Outline	10%
Peer Review	5%
Infographic	15%
IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS	10%

Grading Scale

A 94-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%	F 59% & below
A- 90-93%	B 84-86%	C 74-76%	D 64-66%	
	B- 80-83%	C- 70-73%	D- 60-63%	

Policy on Student Responsibilities and Classroom Conduct

1. Students are responsible for attending all classes, taking notes, taking tests, and completing assignments as scheduled by the professor.
2. Any changes to the course schedule and/or syllabus will be announced in class and via Canvas. Students are responsible for keeping track of changes in the course syllabus made by the professor.
3. Students must contact the professor as soon as possible if they anticipate missing multiple classes due to events such as chronic illnesses, travel related to sports, or other university activities. The professor will determine minimal attendance and participation required to meet requirements.
4. Behaviors that disrupt either the professor or other students are not acceptable (e.g., arriving consistently late for class, cell phone use, or social conversation during class), and will be addressed by the professor.

Important Note on Assignments Submitted via Canvas

Assignments submitted via Canvas must be submitted as either a .pdf, .doc, or .docx. Links provided to a OneDrive folder, Google Drive folder, Google Docs page, etc. will not be accepted for credit. An actual file must be submitted for all assignments. Please double check all submissions to Canvas

assignment folders. Failure to notice that you submitted an incomplete assignment, blank pages, an assignment for another class, etc. will not be an accepted reason for an extension on the due date.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

AI Tools Not Permitted

Use of AI tools is strictly prohibited in this course. All work must be your own and completed without the assistance of generative AI tools. Unauthorized use of AI tools in this course is considered a violation of the Academic Honor Policy and subject to an academic misconduct investigation. If you are uncertain if an application of AI is appropriate, be sure to ask.

Syllabus Change Policy

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid written excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of student's academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at

<https://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-andgrievances/academic-honor-policy>)

Americans With Disabilities Act

FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with the academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet the integral requirements of the course. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services; (2) request a letter from the Office of Accessibility Services to be sent to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and (3) meet (in person, via phone, email, zoom, etc.) with each instructor to whom a letter of accommodation was sent to review approved accommodations. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in an alternative format upon request. For the latest version of this statement and more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Office of Accessibility Services
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167

(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
oas@fsu.edu
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>

Academic Success

Your academic success is a top priority for Florida State University. University resources to help you succeed include tutoring centers, computer labs, counseling and health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. The following information is not exhaustive, so please check with your advisor or the Department of Student Support and Transitions to learn more.

Free Tutoring from FSU

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. A comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options is available at tutoring.fsu.edu (<https://tutoring.fsu.edu>). High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Department of Student Support & Transitions

Supports, connects, and empowers all students as they navigate their academic and personal journeys. We welcome students and family members to connect with the Department of Student Support and Transitions if you are experiencing a crisis or just need someone to talk through a problem or experience you are having at Florida State University. <https://dsst.fsu.edu> or contact dsst@fsu.edu

Confidential Campus Resources

Various centers and programs are available to assist students with navigating stressors that might impact academic success. These include the following:

Victim Advocate Program

University Center A,
Room 4100
(850) 644-7161
Available 24/7/365
Office Hours: M-F 8-5
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap>

Counseling & Psychological Services

Askew Student Life
Center, 2nd Floor
942 Learning Way
(850) 644-8255
Walk-In Hours: M-F 8-4
<https://counseling.fsu.edu/>

University Health Services

Health and Wellness
Center
(850) 644-6230
<https://uhs.fsu.edu>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Florida State University's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) primary mission is to address psychological needs and personal concerns, which may interfere with students' academic progress, social development, and emotional well-being. The following in-person and virtual (tele-mental health) services are available to all enrolled students residing in the state of Florida:

1. Individual therapy
2. Group therapy
3. Crisis intervention
4. Psychoeducational and outreach programming
5. After hours crisis-hotline
6. Access to community providers for specialized treatment

Call 850-644-TALK (8255) for more information on how to initiate services.

University Health Services

The mission of University Health Services (UHS) is to promote and improve the overall health and wellbeing of FSU students. UHS provides a coordinated continuum of care through prevention,

intervention, and treatment. Services include general medical care, priority care, gynecological services, physicals, allergy injection clinic, immunizations, diagnostic imaging, physical therapy, and a medical response unit. The Center for Health Advocacy and Wellness (CHAW) assists students in their academic success through individual, group, and population-based health and wellness initiatives. Topics include wellness, alcohol and other drugs, hazing prevention, nutrition and body image, sexual health, and power based personal violence prevention. Services at UHS are available to all enrolled students residing in Florida.

Recording Class Lectures

In this class, consistent with state law and university policy, students are permitted to make recordings of class lectures for personal use only. As noted, sharing, posting, or publishing classroom recordings may subject you to honor code violations and legal penalties associated with theft of intellectual property and violations of other state laws. Moreover, students and educators have expressed concern that recording classroom activities may negatively impact the learning experience for others, especially in classes that involve questions, discussion, or participation. To protect a learning environment in which everyone feels free to experiment with ideas, we ask you to refrain from recording in ways that could make others feel reluctant to ask questions, explore new ideas, or otherwise participate in class. Students must monitor their recordings so that they do not include participation by other students without permission. Students with disabilities will continue to have appropriate accommodations for recordings as established by the Office of Accessibility Services.