

Course Syllabus

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce you to many ways in which information and technology are used in the field of criminal justice. In the first half of the course, you will learn about the practical aspects of Microsoft Office, including introductions to Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint. In the second half of the course, you will learn how information and technology are utilized in the criminal justice system, and how advances in information technology have impacted its functioning. Substantive topics will include crime mapping, the impact of technology on policing, courts, and corrections, and the use of technology in the investigation of crimes. By the end of this course, you should have a solid understanding of how computers and technology are used within the criminal justice system.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Professor: Dr. Brian Stults Email: bstults@fsu.edu Phone: (850) 645-7376 Office hours: Wed. 10am-12pm (via Zoom)	Graduate teaching assistant: Anneliese Kress Email: akress@fsu.edu (mailto:%20akress@fsu.edu) Office hours: by appointment
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REQUIRED MATERIALS

- textbook:

Beskeen, David, W. et al. *Illustrated Microsoft Office 365 & Office 2019 Introductory*. ISBN: 9780357025673. No access codes are required, so used and digital versions are fine. You can typically find used, digital, and rental options that are more economical than the FSU bookstore .

- many articles and supplemental readings posted on Canvas
- Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus (see important note below in **Additional Course Policies**)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for this course will be based entirely on discussion postings, assignments, and exams. Each of these is described in greater detail below.

- Discussion postings

In the weeks when a discussion posting is due, I will post a discussion question on Canvas by noon ET on Monday. Dates for these postings are identified in the course schedule below as “Discussion posting week.” Each student must post an initial response to this discussion question **by 11:59 PM ET on Friday** of that same week. These initial postings are expected to be approximately 3-4 paragraphs,

but the most important issue will be content—your posting should answer the question that was posed, directly cite the reading materials, and be clear, organized, professional, and well-written. Be sure to answer all parts of the question or you will lose points.

In addition to your initial posting, you must also reply to at least one posting made by another student. The requirements for this response posting will be the same as for your initial posting (i.e., cite relevant materials, and be clear, organized, professional, and well-written), although it is understood that your response posting will likely be shorter in length. However, it is not sufficient to simply say “Good post” or “I agree.” Your response posting must be made **by 11:59 PM ET on Sunday** of the discussion week.

Each initial posting will be worth 7 points, and each response posting will be worth 3 points, for a total of 10 points in each discussion week. There will be 8 discussion questions throughout the semester, so discussion postings will be worth a total of 80 points for the semester, which is a little more than 25% of your grade.

These discussion postings are meant to simulate the discussion that would occur in a classroom. Their potential to be informative really depends on each student providing thoughtful, well-articulated responses, and then taking the time to read and consider the postings offered by other students. When this is done, these discussions can truly be an interesting part of the course. To assist with this, the teaching assistant and I will occasionally offer replies to your postings to highlight important issues that have emerged in the discussion.

- **Assignments**

You will be responsible for completing four graded homework assignments throughout the semester. These are designed to help you comprehend the material, and to help you prepare for the exams. The nature of each assignment will vary depending on the subject material being covered in that unit. Assignments will always be posted by Monday at noon ET of the week they are assigned, and due **by 11:59 PM ET on the Sunday** of that week. This gives you a full week, including the weekend, to work on the assignment. While this gives you flexibility to decide when you want to work on the assignment, be sure not to procrastinate, as it will be very difficult to complete all parts of the assignment at the last minute. Due dates and times are included in the course schedule below. Each of the four assignments will be worth 25 points, for a total of 100 possible points, which is 1/3 of your grade.

- **Exams**

The third component of your grade will come from three exams. They will include exercises, short answers, and essay questions. Each exam will consist of three questions, and you will be responsible for answering two. Exam questions will be posted on Canvas by noon ET on Monday of the week that they are due. The first two exams must be completed and submitted on Canvas **by 11:59 PM ET on the Sunday of that week**. You will have more time for the third exam since it will be due during exam week. See exact dates and times in the course schedule below. Each exam will be worth 40 points, for a total of 120 points, which is 40% of your grade.

GRADING

As described above, your grade will be based on your discussion postings (80 points), assignments (100 points), and exams (120 points), for a total of 300 possible points. The following cutoffs will be used in determining your final letter grade:

A	282-300	B	252-260	C	222-230	D	192-200
A-	270-281	B-	240-251	C-	210-221	D-	180-191
B+	261-269	C+	231-239	D+	201-209	F	0-179

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

- *****VERY IMPORTANT***** FSU has a first week “attendance” check (even for distance learning classes) to ensure that students who do not attend are dropped from the course. In this course, your attendance check will come in the form of a biographical statement that is posted in a Discussion Board forum that will be created on the first day of classes. Please go to that forum and make a post that includes a few sentences that introduce yourself to me and to the other students, and feel free to post any replies to other students’ entries. ***Any student who does not make their posting by 11:59pm ET on Wednesday of the first week of class will be dropped from the course.***
- This course will make extensive use of Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus (and specifically, Word, Excel, and Powerpoint). Use of versions other than Office 365 ProPlus may involve some difficulties, so I list Office 365 ProPlus as a course requirement. Fortunately, all FSU students are provided **free access** to Office 365 ProPlus for both PC and Mac. Visit <https://its.fsu.edu/service-catalog/communication-collaboration/office-365/microsoft-office-365-proplus> [_\(https://its.fsu.edu/service-catalog/communication-collaboration/office-365/microsoft-office-365-proplus\)](https://its.fsu.edu/service-catalog/communication-collaboration/office-365/microsoft-office-365-proplus) for installation instructions. Contact the TA if you have any questions or problems about obtaining and installing Office.
- The textbook assumes that you are using Microsoft Windows 10. I recognize that there are other important operating systems in use (e.g. Mac OSX and linux). You may encounter minor confusion at some points in the course if you use these operating systems. However, not much in this course is reliant on the specific operating system you use, so you should be able to use other OS's without difficulty. The most important computing requirement is that you have Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus (as discussed in the previous point).
- Changes in the readings and schedule may occasionally be made. Notice of changes will be made through the Canvas website (with e-mails and course announcements) and students are responsible for getting this information.
- Students are responsible for learning how to use the various Canvas features. If you have any questions about this, click on the “Help” button on the course home page.
- You are responsible for setting up an FSU e-mail account and routinely checking it so that you receive messages that I send to the class.

- This course also requires a fairly large amount of writing. Since this is a master's course, you are expected to meet the standards of graduate-level writing, including proper grammar, formatting, sentence construction, and spelling. Writing quality will be part of your grade. If you need assistance with your writing, I strongly encourage you to make an appointment to speak with someone at the FSU Reading/Writing Center at <https://wr.english.fsu.edu/reading-writing-center> (<https://wr.english.fsu.edu/reading-writing-center>). At the very least, be sure to carefully review all writing assignments before submitting them. This includes discussion postings and exams.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- 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 excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

- Pandemic Protocols

The CDC recommends that all individuals, even vaccinated individuals, wear proper and well-fitting masks in public indoor spaces, like classrooms, especially where social distancing is not possible and virus rates are high. The CDC assesses the infection rate in Leon County as High.

Florida is experiencing a surge of the Omicron BA.5 variant, the most easily transmissible Covid variant to date, which is able to evade previous immunity from infection and vaccination. It is a much more transmissible variant than the original virus, the Delta variant, or even the earlier Omicron variants. It can infect even vaccinated individuals and can be spread by them to others. It poses a special threat to members of the community with underlying health conditions and family members vulnerable to the virus. The best way to protect against serious illness is to be fully vaccinated, but not everyone among us can be.

For these reasons, FSU expects each of us to continue cooperating with common-sense public health protocols, including (1) getting vaccinated and boosted, (2) testing for the virus if you have symptoms, (3) staying home and away from others if you are sick, and (4) masking in public indoor spaces to protect yourself and others whenever there is reason for concern.

- Academic honor policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' 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." (For more details see the [FSU Academic Honor Policy and procedures for addressing alleged violations \(http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy\)](http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy))

- Americans with Disabilities Act

Florida State University (FSU) values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet integral requirements of the course.

To receive academic accommodations, a student:

- (1) must register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS);
- (2) must provide a letter from OAS to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and,
- (3) should communicate with the instructor, as needed, to discuss recommended accommodations. A request for a meeting may be initiated by the student or the instructor.

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 alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the

[Office of Accessibility Services \(Tallahassee Campus\)](https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas) [_ \(https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas\)](https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas)

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 \(mailto:oas@fsu.edu\)](mailto:oas@fsu.edu)

<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>

[Student Accessibility Services \(Panama City Campus\)](https://pc.fsu.edu/students/student-affairs/sas) [_ \(https://pc.fsu.edu/students/student-affairs/sas\)](https://pc.fsu.edu/students/student-affairs/sas)

Office of Student Affairs

4750 Collegiate Drive

2nd Floor Barron Building (Room 215)

Florida State University Panama City

Panama City, FL 32405

(850) 770-2172 (office)

(866) 693-7872 (toll free)

Email: sds@pc.fsu.edu (<mailto:sds@pc.fsu.edu>)

<https://pc.fsu.edu/students/student-affairs/sas> (<https://pc.fsu.edu/students/student-affairs/sas>)

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Week 1: Introduction (August 22)

Carefully review syllabus

Week 2: Microsoft Word, part 1 (August 29)

Beskeen, et al., Word Module 1: Creating Documents with Word

Beskeen, et al., Word Module 2: Editing and Formatting Documents

** Discussion posting week **

Week 3: Microsoft Word, part 2 (September 5)

Beskeen, et al., Word Module 3: Formatting Text and Graphics

** Assignment #1 Due Sunday, September 11, 11:59 PM ET **

Week 4: Microsoft Excel (September 12)

Beskeen, et al., Excel Module 1: Getting Started with Excel

Beskeen, et al., Excel Module 2: Formatting a Worksheet

Beskeen, et al., Excel Module 3: Analyzing Data Using Formulas

Beskeen, et al., Excel Module 4: Working with Charts

** Discussion posting week **

Week 5: Microsoft Powerpoint (September 19)

Beskeen, et al., Powerpoint Module 1: Creating a Presentation

Beskeen, et al., Powerpoint Module 2: Modifying a Presentation

Beskeen, et al., Powerpoint Module 3: Inserting Objects into a Presentation

**** Discussion posting week ****

**** Assignment #2 Due Sunday, September 25, 11:59 PM ET ****

Week 6: Exam 1 (September 26)

No readings.

**** Exam 1 due Sunday, October 2, 11:59 PM ET ****

Week 7: General Issues in Criminal Justice Information Technology (October 3)

readings for this unit will be available on Canvas

**** Discussion posting week ****

Week 8: Information Technology and Policing (October 10)

readings for this unit will be available on Canvas

**** Discussion posting week ****

Week 9: Crime Mapping (October 17)

readings for this unit available on Canvas

**** Discussion posting week ****

**** Assignment #3 Due Sunday, October 23, 11:59 PM ET ****

Week 10: Exam 2 (October 24)

No readings.

**** Exam 2 due Sunday, October 30, 11:59 PM ET ****

Week 11: Information Technology and Courts (October 31)

readings for this unit available on Canvas

**** Discussion posting week ****

Week 12: Information Technology and Corrections (November 7)

readings for this unit available on Canvas

** Discussion posting week **

Week 13: Additional Uses of IT in the Criminal Justice System (November 14)

readings for this unit available on Canvas

** Assignment #4 Due Sunday, November 20, 11:59 PM ET **

Week 14: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving week (November 21)

No readings or assignments




Week 15: The Future of IT in the Criminal Justice System (November 28)







readings for this unit available on Canvas










Week 16: Exam 3

** Exam 3 available Monday, November 28, and due Wednesday, December 7, 11:59 PM ET **

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Wed Aug 24, 2022	 Attendance check (https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703403)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 2, 2022	 Discussion 1 (https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703402)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 4, 2022	 Discussion 1 response due (https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311182&include_contexts=course_217329)	11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Sun Sep 11, 2022	 Assignment 1 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703404	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 16, 2022	 Discussion 2 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703401	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 18, 2022	 Discussion 2 response due https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311183&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Fri Sep 23, 2022	 Discussion 3 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703396	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 25, 2022	 Assignment 2 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703405	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 25, 2022	 Discussion 3 response due https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311184&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Sun Oct 2, 2022	 Exam 1 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703408	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 7, 2022	 Discussion 4 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703400	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 9, 2022	 Discussion 4 response due https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311185&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Fri Oct 14, 2022	 Discussion 5 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703399	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 16, 2022	 Discussion 5 response due https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311186&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Fri Oct 21, 2022	 Discussion 6 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703395	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 23, 2022	 Assignment 3 https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703406	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
	 <u>Discussion 6 response due</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311188&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Sun Oct 30, 2022	 <u>Exam 2</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703409	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 4, 2022	 <u>Discussion 7</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703398	due by 11:59pm
Sun Nov 6, 2022	 <u>Discussion 7 response due</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311187&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Fri Nov 11, 2022	 <u>Discussion 8</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703397	due by 11:59pm
Sun Nov 13, 2022	 <u>Discussion 8 response due</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=311189&include_contexts=course_217329	11:59pm
Sun Nov 20, 2022	 <u>Assignment 4</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703407	due by 11:59pm
Wed Dec 7, 2022	 <u>Exam 3</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703410	due by 11:59pm
	 <u>Post-Emergency Check-in Survey</u> https://fsu.instructure.com/courses/217329/assignments/1703394	