

Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice (CJUS 416)

Spring Semester 2006

Stubbs 218

Hybrid Course

Held online and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.

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Office Hours: 1) Mondays & Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. 2) Tuesdays & Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. & 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 3) Friday: By appointment only.

Course Description: This course will consist of an examination of various types of gangs that exist in the United States. Criminal justice responses to gang activity, both street and prison based, will be examined. The interrelationship between street gangs and organized crime will be presented. In addition, the cyclical nature of this criminal activity from prison to the community will also be explored. CJ 101 is a prerequisite for this course.

Course Objectives: The student will become familiar with the larger gangs around the United States. Current issues in gang related crime are specifically germane to this course. Students will specifically learn the reasons and rationales for gang development, and criminal justice responses in the prevention and suppression of gang activity.

Course Text: Valdez, E. (2005). *Gangs: A guide to understanding street gangs* (4th ed.). Law Tech Publishing.

Instructional Methods: This course will be delivered in both an online and traditional classroom instructional format. It is expected that roughly half of the course will be provided through online instruction. Classroom activities will consist of instructor lectures as well as video and/or class guest presentations. In addition, students will maintain an ongoing "discussion" each week in response to questions that are presented by the instructor during the class meetings. The "discussion board" section of the course Blackboard website will be used extensively for this purpose.

Student Introductions & Syllabus Quiz: During the first week of the semester students must post a personal introduction to the Discussion Board and they must also complete a short quiz (located on the blackboard site under Assignments) over the syllabus for this course. These two assignments are intended to familiarize the student with the blackboard

component of the course while also allowing everyone to become acquainted with one another.

Class Discussion Assignments: These assignments are designed to encourage interaction between the class participants. The first student to post an answer to the given weekly discussion will simply provide their answer. All subsequent students must not only post their answer, but must also provide some form of response to at least two other postings made by other students. Feedback on at least two previous postings is required, and of course students should avoid ridicule or sarcasm when giving their opinion. Student submissions will be graded on quality and quantity of postings that are submitted during the week that they are assigned. All students should post their answers on the Discussion Page (On Blackboard course menu click on COMMUNICATION, then click on DISCUSSION to post your answer). **Note that there are ten Group Discussion Assignments throughout the semester.**

Also note that the instructor will monitor the discussion throughout the week, the instructor will reserve comments until the end of the week and will often simply provide an overview or re-cap of this discussion.

The instructor will post each question(s) the night prior to the beginning of the week. Students will only have 7 days to respond to the questions or issues presented. **Students will not be allowed to progress ahead of the class schedule with weekly assignments. Also, there will be no exceptions to the timely completion of the weekly Class Debate assignments.**

Exams: There will be two (2) tests, a midterm and final exam, consisting of any combination of multiple choice, true-false, fill in the blank, short answer, and or essay style questions at the instructor's discretion. **Both tests will be given online.** Please note that each test will count equally toward your overall final grade. The final exam will not be comprehensive in nature.

A student's overall course grade will be determined and weighted according to the following composition:

Online Introduction & Syllabus Quiz	4%
Test One (Midterm)	33%
Test Two (Final Exam)	33%
Discussion Board Activity	30%

	100%

Course Grading System: The final course grade, as well as all tests, papers and projects assigned throughout the semester, will be based on the typical letter grade system as follows:

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79

D = 60 - 69

F = 59 & Below

Midterm Grades: Please note that midterm grades will be reported based on your scores that are current during that time. They will remain on the Arrow System for roughly 2 weeks for all students to view. They will be reported through the Arrow System similar to your final grade. Please note that unlike your final grade, the midterm grade is simply used for your benefit to provide you with a preliminary indicator of your class progress. It is not a final grade, simply an informative tool to check your progress.

Attendance and Participation: One of the many benefits of a hybrid course is the flexibility in the delivery of the instruction, providing more flexible schedules for students. While there is obviously less in-class attendance than with a traditional course, participation is required. Likewise, participation in the on-line weekly discussion board is mandatory for this course. Students with excessive absences will be reported to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Makeup policy for exams: Typically, there will be no make-up exams for this course. All exams will be given online and students will have a week to finish each one. Regardless of personal emergencies, students should have sufficient time and flexibility to arrange their social responsibilities around their academic obligations. If a situation should arise where a student believes that a make-up exam is justified, such a determination will be based solely upon the discretion of the professor.

Course Schedule:

Week One (Begins Jan. 16)

January 17 Introduction to course

January 19 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)

Students complete their **online personal introduction** and the **syllabus quiz**

Week Two (Begins Jan. 23)

January 24 Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in Valdez

January 26 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 1

Week Three (Begins Jan. 30)

- January 31 Chapters 4, 5, and 6 in Valdez
- February 2 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 2

Week Four (Begins Feb. 6)

- February 7 Chapters, 7, 8, and 9 in Valdez
- February 9 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 3

Week Five (Begins Feb. 13)

- February 14 Chapter 10 in Valdez
- February 16 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 4

Week Six (Begins Feb. 20)

- February 21 Chapter 11, 12, and 13 in Valdez
- February 23 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 5

Week Seven (Begins Feb. 27)

February 28 **Mardis Gras Holiday**

March 2 Chapters 14, 15, 16, and 17 in Valdez

Week Eight (Begins Mar. 06)

March 7 Chapters 18, 19, and 31 in Valdez

March 9 **Midterm Exam**
(Test Given on March 7th and Due by
11:59 p.m of March 15th)

Week Nine (Begins Mar. 13)

March 14 Chapters 20, 21, and 22 in Valdez

March 16 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 6

Week Ten (Begins Mar. 20)

March 21 Chapter 34 in Valdez

March 23 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 7

Week Eleven (Begins Mar. 27)

March 28 Chapter 35 in Valdez

March 30 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment # 8

Week Twelve (Begins Apr. 03)

- April 04 Chapter 35 in Valdez (Added Information)
- April 06 Chapters 38 & 39 in Valdez

Week Thirteen (Begins Apr. 10)

- April 11 Chapter 43 Gangs in Valdez & Community Corrections Added Information
- April 13 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment #9

Week Fourteen (Begins Apr. 17)

April 18 & 20

Spring Break

Week Fifteen (Begins Apr. 24)

- April 25 Female Gangs (readings from Sikes text; *8 Ball Chicks: A Year in The Violent World of Girl Gangsters*)
- April 27 Online Assignments (NO CLASSROOM MEETING)
Complete Discussion Board Assignment #10

Week Sixteen (Begins May 01)

- May 2 Female Gangs (readings from Sikes text; *8 Ball Chicks: A Year in The Violent World of Girl Gangsters*)
- May 12 **Final Exam Due by Friday, May 12th, no later than 5:00 p.m. Today (Test to be made available on May 2nd and is to be completed by midnight of May 9th)**