

# **SOC 1111-090/CRIM 1010-290: Introduction to Criminal Justice Spring 2025**

## **Course Description**

The basic aim of the course is to present an overview of the criminal justice system in the USA: its principles and goals, its organization, its personnel, its policies, and its impacts. We will briefly touch on perspectives of justice and the various theories that attempt to explain crime. We will also address issues relating to race, ethnicity, class, and gender which have been historically neglected. Should you choose a degree in Criminology/Criminal Justice, the courses you can take later will explore each of the major sub-parts of the system (law, police, courts, corrections) in much greater depth and detail.

## **Course Goals and Objectives**

After completing this course, students should be able to recognize, understand, and think critically about issues relating to criminal justice. Additionally, students should be able to apply concepts covered in the course to their encounters with criminal justice (via the media, through personal experience, and so on). Specific learning objectives include:

- Understand the conceptual and theoretical foundation of the American criminal justice system
- Understand the criminal justice process, function, and organization (including the relationship and interactions among) of the three major criminal justice components— police, courts, and corrections
- Differentiate between what is fact and what is fiction concerning the criminal justice system
- Be aware of some of the relevant issues (e.g., racial, ethnic, and gender disparities) being faced by US criminal justice institutions today.

## **Required Text**

Rennison, C.M. & Dodge, M (2022). *Introduction to Criminal Justice: Systems, Diversity, & Change*, 4th edition, Sage Publications. The digital textbook is available on Canvas through Inclusive Access.

## **Course Work**

*Midterm & Final Exam:* The exams will cover materials from the textbook and lectures. Each exam will consist of (but not limited to) multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and short answers. The exams are cumulative and are open-book and open-note exams. However, students must complete the exams independently and are not allowed to share or discuss the exam questions with others. For the midterm exam, students will have 90 minutes to take the exam. For the final exam, students will have 100 minutes to take the

exam. Exam dates are displayed below the exam name on the related Canvas modules, but the instructor may move the test dates according to the progress made in class.

*Writing Assignments:* 2 writing assignments will be assigned throughout the semester. These assignments will require you to answer specific questions and for the most part will not require outside research or resources. It should be submitted online through course space, using the Assignments tool. It should be between 350 and 500 words (no longer than two pages, 12 fonts, double-spaced).

*Quizzes:* There will be 5 quizzes assigned over the semester. These quizzes are to test your understanding of the topics covered and will be simple and no-sweat. The questions in these quizzes are derived from both the slides (lectures) and the book chapters and will be multiple-choice and true or false questions.

*Discussions:* For each substantive week of the course, there will be an online discussion regarding the course material. The object of these discussions is not to test you on your reading of each section's material. Rather, these discussions are intended to allow you to discuss your thoughts and opinions relating to the material and learn from each other.

To receive full credit for each week's discussion:

- Post at least three (3) comments. Each of these comments should be at least 60 words. Of these three comments:
  - One must be a new topic/thread
  - Two should be responses to other people's comments.
- Your initial comment must be posted by Wednesday each week so your classmates have a chance to respond.
- You are more than welcome to make more than three comments each week and have over 60 words per comment if you find that you have more that you want to say.
- Although you do have specific requirements that you must meet for each discussion, I will be looking more for the quality of your comments than for the sheer quantity of them.

Regarding Discussion Activity Posts: The discussion forum is an important part of this course and a vital component of our online community—therefore I expect discussion posts to reflect thoughtful and critical thinking regarding the notes and readings. Challenge each other, but do so respectfully. It is of utmost importance that each student respects the thoughts of their peers.

*Extra Credit:* There will be one opportunity for extra credit during the semester. Extra credit assignment will be worth 5 points.

### **Submitting Assignments:**

Assignment due dates are displayed below the assignment name on both the Module and Assignment Index page on Canvas, but the instructor reserves the right to move due dates

according to the progress made in class. Each assignment should be submitted to Canvas before 11:59 pm of the due date.

Please note that assignments such as writing assignments and short answers in the exams will be subjected to plagiarism checking via Turnitin.

All assignments, unless otherwise announced, must be submitted to the designated area of Canvas. Do not submit assignments via email.

**Late Assignments:**

Late submissions will result in a 10% deduction for each assignment that is submitted late. Unless otherwise approved, I do not accept more than 48 hours of late work. For the weekly Discussion assignments, 2 points will be taken off for late submission of the initial/first comment (the initial comment is due on the Wednesday of that week).

**Grading:**

The final grade in the class will be based on the total points accumulated, as follows:

Midterm Exam:	110 points	
Final Exam:	120 points	
Quizzes (5):	100 points	20 points each
Writing Assignments (2):	50 points	25 points each
Discussions (12):	120 points	10 points each
<b>Total possible points:</b>	<b>500</b>	

*Grading Scale:*

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Points Needed</b>
A	93-100	462.5-500 points
A-	90-92	447.5-462 points
B+	87-99	432.5-447 points
B	83-86	412.5-432 points
B-	80-82	397.5-412 points
C+	77-79	382.5-397 points
C	73-76	362.5-382 points
C-	70-72	347.5-362 points
D+	67-69	332.5-347 points
D	63-66	312.5-332 points
D-	60-62	297.5-312 points
E	0-59	Anything below 297.5 points

## **Support and Resources for Student Success**

***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).*** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities.

All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA). CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. Prior notice is appreciated. To read the full accommodations policy for the University of Utah, please see Section Q of the Instruction & Evaluation regulations.

In compliance with ADA requirements, some students may need to record course content. Any recordings of course content are for personal use only, should not be shared, and should never be made publicly available. In addition, recordings must be destroyed at the conclusion of the course.

If you will need accommodations in this class, or for more information about what support they provide, contact:

Center for Disability & Access

801-581-5020

[disability.utah.edu](http://disability.utah.edu)

65 Student Services Building

201 S 1460 E

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

***Safety at the U.*** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more safety information and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit [safeu.utah.edu](http://safeu.utah.edu).

To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, contact:

Campus Police & Department of Public Safety

801-585-COPS (801-585-2677)

[dps.utah.edu](http://dps.utah.edu)

1735 E. S. Campus Dr.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

***Addressing Sexual Misconduct.*** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status, or genetic information.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to university officials:

Title IX Coordinator & Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

801-581-8365

[oeo.utah.edu](http://oeo.utah.edu)

135 Park Building

201 Presidents' Cir.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Office of the Dean of Students

801-581-7066  
[deanofstudents.utah.edu](http://deanofstudents.utah.edu)  
270 Union Building  
200 S. Central Campus Dr.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

To file a police report, contact:

Campus Police & Department of Public Safety

801-585-COPS (801-585-2677)  
[dps.utah.edu](http://dps.utah.edu)  
1735 E. S. Campus Dr.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

If you do not feel comfortable reporting to authorities, the U's Victim-Survivor Advocates provide free, confidential, and trauma-informed support services to students, faculty, and staff who have experienced interpersonal violence.

To privately explore options and resources available to you with an advocate, contact:

Center for Campus Wellness

801-581-7776  
[wellness.utah.edu](http://wellness.utah.edu)  
350 Student Services Building  
201 S. 1460 E.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

***Academic Misconduct.*** It is expected that students comply with University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: Policy 6-410: Student Academic Performance, Academic Conduct, and Professional and Ethical Conduct.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, and/or failure in the course. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code:

*"...Includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes*

*facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.”*

For details on plagiarism and other important course conduct issues, see the U's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.