

**CJ 480 – SPECIAL TOPICS – DECISION MAKING
IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Section 201, T 4:00-6:20 pm
SPRING 2017, SH 418**

Professor Information

Dr. Wendy Perkins

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Office Hours

Monday 3:15 to 4:00

Tuesday 12:15 to 2:00, 3:15 to 4:00

Thursday 10:00 to 11:00, 12:15 to 2:00

Other days and times available by appointment

Course Description

A study of special interest criminal justice topics under the supervision of a qualified faculty member.

Additional Information

This course will examine decision making across the criminal justice system. Students will learn theories of decision making, the role of discretion in the criminal justice process, and common characteristics of decision making at each step in the criminal justice process.

Required Text

None. Links to library resources will be provided to students. Students will also be sharing resources with each other using annotated bibliographies.

Suggested Text (investing in this now will save you headaches later)

American Psychological Association [APA] (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC.

University Policies

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs and clicking on "Marshall University Policies." Or, you can access the policies directly by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/. Academic Dishonesty/Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/Computing Services Acceptable Use/Inclement Weather/Dead Week/Students with Disabilities/Academic Forgiveness/Academic

Probation and Suspension/Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/Affirmative Action/Sexual Harassment

Students with Special Needs

If you are in need of special accommodations for class, please contact the Office of Disability Services at <http://www.marshall.edu/disability/> Documentation of your needs is required for you to receive the appropriate assistance in this course.

Attendance and Make-up Policy

- 1) **While I do not take attendance as part of your grade**, I do track attendance for the purpose of reporting to the registrar.
- 2) **I understand** that 'life happens' and sometimes it is necessary for students to miss class and/or submit assignments later than the due date.
- 3) **Anyone** with an excused absence as defined by university policy will be permitted to submit course work according to the make-up policy outlined below. The university absence policy can be found at the following link:
<http://www.marshall.edu/student-affairs/files/Revised-Undergraduate-Class-Attendance-Policy-for-fall-2015.pdf>
- 4) It is always possible that you will have an absence that does not fall under university policy as being 'excused.' You may request to have the absence treated as excused by me for this course. Each absence not covered by university policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis. These absences will be subject to the make-up policy outlined below.
- 5) **Make-up policy**
 - a. If you have a university excused absence or an absence I consider to be excused, you must turn in all work within 2 days after the due date to receive up to 100% of the available points.
 - b. Any work turned in between 3 days and up to 5 days after the due date will receive a maximum of 50% of the available points.
 - c. Any work that is not turned in within 5 days of the due date will not be eligible to receive any of the available points.
- 6) **And finally.....**You are responsible for your own conduct inside and outside of the classroom. This includes making a decision about whether or not to come to class. Before you decide to miss/skip class on a regular basis without a good reason, think about the following:

Missed class = missed opportunities (e.g. review sessions, in-class discussions).

Missed opportunities = missed information for assignments, including exams

Missed information for assignments and exams = lower scores on assignments/exams

Lower scores on assignments/exams = lower course score

Lower course score = potential loss of financial aid, a bad grade on your transcript, spending money to retake the class, having to explain yourself to your parents

FURTHER, if you chronically miss class during this (or any other) course(s) in which you are my student, it will severely diminish the likelihood of me writing a letter of recommendation for you in the future.

Academic Dishonesty

- 1) The university policy for academic dishonesty can be found at the link below <http://www.marshall.edu/board/files/policies/MUBOG%20AA-12%20Academic%20Dishonesty.pdf>
- 2) If I suspect you have committed an act of academic dishonesty, I will request a meeting with you to discuss the assignment. If, after this meeting, I still suspect you committed an act of academic dishonesty, the following will occur:
 - a. If you commit academic dishonesty on an examination, you will fail the class.
 - b. If you commit academic dishonesty on any other type of assignment, you will receive a grade of “0” for that assignment.
 - c. A report will be filed with the Office of Academic Affairs.
- 3) Per university policy, you may appeal any charges of academic dishonesty.

Encouraged Classroom Behaviors

Criminal justice is a discipline with many controversial topics. You are going to have personal opinions about many of the topics we discuss. So will everyone else. Therefore, the **following behaviors are ENCOURAGED in my classroom.**

- 1) Be respectful of me, of your peers, of guests, and of yourself!
- 2) Talk, talk, talk! To understand any criminal justice issue, you must discuss it!
- 3) Challenge each other! Challenge me! I will challenge you! That is how we will all learn something.
- 4) Be open minded. Never be afraid to change your opinions after you learn new information or consider someone else’s point of view.
- 5) Think critically. Connect the dots. Consider the research. Think about what it means to practice in the field of criminal justice. A personal opinion is not the same thing as an educated opinion or a professional opinion. And none of those are the same as the knowledge someone possesses based upon the research they, and others, have conducted.
- 6) Be brave. My classroom is a space where we can respectfully discuss controversial issues. If you are ever uncomfortable in my classroom, please tell me and I will do my best to address the issue. BUT – do not confuse being uncomfortable with being CHALLENGED!

Prohibited Classroom Behaviors

Any behavior that is disrespectful, threatening, and/or disruptive to me or other students is prohibited. I reserve the right to remove you from the classroom should you engage in any of these behaviors.

Personal Technology in the Classroom

- 1) Do not spend our time together with your face buried in your phone, your computer, or any other electronic device.
- 2) I do not mind if you use an electronic device to take notes, look at an electronic copy of the book, look at assignments, etc. However, if you are spending too much time typing or staring at the screen and not enough time making eye contact with me and engaging in classroom discussions, I will require you to put your device away.
- 3) If I suspect that any student is using technology to engage in academic dishonesty I will prohibit the entire class from using technology in the classroom.
- 4) Be respectful of me and your peers regarding social media. It is not amusing to post a picture or a video of someone without their knowledge. Doing so says far more about your character than it does about the character of the person who is your target.
- 5) Yes, I have social media (see instructor contact information). I will never post pictures of you without permission, and I will never say anything disparaging about you. I will, however, occasionally brag about you as a class or make a post about your class activities 😊

Communication Is Important!

A lot of problems could be avoided if people simply communicated with each other. Make it a habit of checking your MU e-mail daily for news about the course and the occasional extra credit opportunity. I will make every effort to respond to your e-mails within 24 hours of receiving them, excluding weekends (Friday at 5pm to Monday at 8am). If you have not heard from me within 24 hours of sending me a message (again, weekends excluded), feel free to give me a nudge. I am human (surprise!) and sometimes I do forget things.

Course Learning Outcomes Matrix

Course Learning Outcomes	How Each Outcome is Practiced	How Each Outcome is Measured
Students will critique theories of criminal justice decision making	In-class discussions, lectures	Paper, case studies
Students will analyze common factors in criminal justice decision making	In-class discussions, lectures, readings	Paper, case studies, annotated bibliographies
Students will simulate the criminal justice workgroup	In-class discussions, case studies	Case studies
Students will develop academic research skills	Library research	Paper, annotated bibliographies

related to the criminal justice field		
Students will develop professional written communication skills using APA format	Paper draft for peer review	Paper, annotated bibliographies

Course Assessments

This section outlines the course assessments that will be used to determine your performance in this class. More specific information for each assessment will be provided at the appropriate times.

- 1) **You must turn in all assignments and earn at least 92% of the total course points to be considered for the grade of A in this course.** If you fail to turn in any assignments or take any exams or quizzes, the highest grade you are eligible to earn is a B, regardless of points earned on your completed work. Maximum effort, people! Maximum effort! 😊
- 2) Hard work is rewarded. If you pay attention to my feedback on your assignments and use this feedback in other assignments to improve your skills, your scores will reflect your effort.
- 3) This policy is not intended to discourage you – just the opposite – this policy is intended to encourage **EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING!** You are intelligent people and I have high expectations of you. I also have high expectations **FOR** you! You are on your way to becoming professionals in your chosen field – it is my job to make sure you are off to a great start by teaching you responsibility and professionalism!
- 4) All assignments except for group work will be submitted via Blackboard.

Case studies (4 x 25 points each, 100 points total)

Case studies are worth 25% of your grade. While you will be graded individually on your case studies, the class will be split into groups to facilitate progress.

In-class group work (5 x 25 points, 125 points total)

There will be five in-class group work sessions that will be graded. These sessions are worth 10% of your grade. Group work for this class requires meaningful discussions with your peers about a criminal justice management issue or a research article chosen by the professor. Your peers will be grading you for these group work sessions. Please note that if you miss class on a day we will be doing group work, you will be required to write a short paper on the topic of discussion if your absence is excused.

Annotated bibliographies (5 x 20 points, 100 points total)

Your annotated bibliographies are worth 20% of your grade. More information on these assignments will be provided in class.

Paper (100 points)

The paper is worth 40% of your grade. Information will be provided to you about the paper during the second week of class.

Final discussion board (10 points)

The final discussion board is worth 5% of your grade.

Grading Scale

A = 92% to 100%

B = 91% to 80%

C = 79% to 70%

D = 69% to 60%

F = 59% and lower

Tentative Schedule

This reading schedule serves as a guide to assist you in organizing your work inside and outside of class. You are responsible for reading and understanding all assigned materials. My lectures will not cover each and every point in the readings; often my lectures include information that you will not find in the readings. Please note that I reserve the right to amend this schedule based upon class needs.

	Topics	Items Due
Week 1 Jan 10	Criminal Justice Theory and Theories of Decision Making	
Week 2 Jan 17	Criminal Justice Theory and Theories of Decision Making	
Week 3 Jan 24	Victim Reporting to Police	Graded in-class group work
Week 4 Jan 31	Police Decision Making	Case Study #1
Week 5 Feb 7	Police Decision Making	Annotated bibliography Graded in-class group work
Week 6 Feb 14	Police Decision Making	Case Study #2
Week 7 Feb 21	Prosecutorial Decision Making	
Week 8 Feb 28	Prosecutorial Decision Making	Annotated bibliography Graded in-class group work
Week 9 Mar 7	Plea Bargains and Jury Trials	Case Study #3
Week 10 Mar 14	Plea Bargains and Jury Trials	Annotated bibliography Graded in-class group work
Week 11 SPRING BREAK		
Week 12 Mar 28	Sentencing	
Week 13 Apr 4	Sentencing	Annotated bibliography Graded in-class group work
Week 14 Apr 11	Probation and Parole	Case study #4
Week 15 Apr 18	Probation and Parole	Annotated bibliography
Week 16	Class wrap-up	Paper due

Apr 25		
Exam Week Final discussion board due Tuesday May 2 4:00 PM		