Course Description/Overview

This course takes the student through the ethics of criminal justice.

Course Description:

From the course catalog: “The study of criminal justice without the concurrent study of justice is simply criminal. This course exposes students to the ethics (and lack thereof) of criminal justice agencies. Scenario evaluation, active discussion and theory-based argumentation and decision-making are all key components of this seminar. (Credit may not be earned for this course and Criminal Justice 6387)”

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites required for this course, aside from Graduate standing.

Technical Skills required for this course

As with all online courses, students must be able to operate a computer and have the necessary technical skills to navigate around a web page. Additional technical skills are not a prerequisite for this course; however, your computer must meet certain minimum requirements to operate Blackboard.

Time spent on this course

Students can expect to spend a minimum of 6 hours per week to complete all the readings and assignments. The lessons themselves can take as long as it requires the student to read the required materials and watch or listen to the media presentations.
Course Bibliography and Required Readings:


Other readings are assigned each week and are provided to you in PDF or WORD format, or will link you directly to the web site of interest.

Additionally, where possible, videos are utilized to enhance student learning.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

1. Objective One: To identify the basic concepts of ethics and justice.
2. Objective Two: To identify the danger to criminal justice personnel and citizens of unethical behavior.
3. Objective Three: To induce students to think through the processes by which ethical decisions are made.
4. Objective Four: To enhance critical thinking and critical writing about ethical situations within criminal justice agencies.

Students have a right to know what instructors are going to expect that they learn from a course of instruction and how their learning will be measured. This course establishes several learning outcomes that are measured subjectively. When you finish this course you should be able to:

1. Describe the classical theories of ethics.
2. Identify likely situations which require ethical decision-making.
3. Discuss at length ethical theories which relate to real-life situations.
4. Apply critical reasoning to real situations which require ethical decisions.
This course assumes students have more than a passing familiarity with open source intelligence gathering and analysis technology such as Google Earth, internet search engines, etc. and assignments expect students to utilize these technologies.

A major need identified by Homeland Security professionals is the ability to produce technical reports and briefings, to communicate coherently a wide variety of thoughts to a diverse audience that may not be as knowledgeable of a subject as the person conducting the brief or writing the report. To address this concern, throughout the Border Security and Criminal Justice programs students are assigned writing projects of various lengths and complexity.

This course utilizes three major writing assignments and weekly discussions to measure the student’s comprehension of the presented materials. The student should be prepared to devote at least six (6) hours each week on this course, not including the time spent on the research papers. The assigned readings will require at least three hours per week, and the Discussion Questions will require a similar investment of time.

**Grading Policies**

This course employs three writing assignments, and weekly discussions to measure student learning.

Writing assignment one accounts for 25% of the course grade. **Due on Sunday night at the end of the Seventh week of class. For Spring 2016 this is March 6, 2016.** Each day the paper is late, ten percent will be deducted from the total points available for the assignment. The paper length should be at least four pages, double-spaced, with at least two sources and corresponding citations, any format.

Writing assignment two accounts for 25% of the course grade. **Due on Sunday night at the end of the Twelfth week of class. For Spring 2016 this is April 10.** Each day the paper is late, ten percent will be deducted from the total points available for the assignment. The paper length should be at least six pages, double-spaced, with at least four citations and corresponding citations.

Writing assignment three accounts for 25% of the course grade. **Due on Monday, the Sixteenth week of class. For Spring 2016 this is May 9th.** Each day the paper is late, ten percent will be deducted from the total points available for the assignment. The paper should be at least six pages, double-spaced, normal formats, with at least four sources and corresponding citations.
**Participation in the discussion board** each week accounts for the final 25% of the course grade for the semester. Non-participation in a given week will result in a deduction of six percent of the total participation points for the semester.

Students are asked to introduce themselves to the Instructor and to other students using the Student Discussion folder within the Discussion Board. There is no set format for the introductions, and they will not be graded.

Angelo State University employs a letter grade system. Grades in this course are determined on a percentage scale:

- A = 90 – 100 
- B = 80 – 89 
- C = 70 – 79 
- F = 60 % and below.

**Writing Guidelines**

Each writing assignment deals with the topic under discussion. These writing assignments cumulatively account for 75% of the student’s grade.

Formal academic writing uses standardized styles and citation formats. The preferred format for Criminal Justice programs is the APA style. To access the APA writing guidelines go to this link [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/]. Papers should have 1-inch margins all around. You are expected to use a standardized font - preferably Times New Roman, 12 point. Cite your references in EVERY instance and include a properly formatted reference list and cover page with every assignment.

Every writing assignment should be submitted as a WORD or PDF document. If you do not have Microsoft Office or Adobe Acrobat, then copy the text you have written directly into the assignment section of Blackboard during the appropriate week. **Do NOT** submit writing assignments in Word Perfect, Microsoft Works, or some e-mail format. They will not be accepted.

An abstract is NOT required.

**Participation & Communication**

In this class **everyone**, brings something to the table. Your ideas and thoughts do count, not only to me, but the entire class. Feel free to ask questions either via e-mail or the discussion board. **Check the discussion board regularly.** Many student
questions are applicable to the class as a whole, as are the responses. You may be surprised how many of your classmates have the same questions and concerns as you. I may simply post your particular question on the discussion board and allow your classmates to provide the answer through their own posts. Non-participation in the Discussion Question for a given week will result in a deduction of points awarded for your semester grade.

To some, this may be their first online class and naturally, it could seem somewhat intimidating. As a class, we are together to help each other with this learning process and share our collective knowledge on how best to communicate; how to resolve technical issues that may arise (if we have the expertise), and to assist each other to find answers to our questions.

We will learn and work as a team.

**Courtesy and Respect**

Courtey and Respect are essential ingredients to this course. We respect each other’s opinions and respect their point of view at all times while in our class sessions. The use of profanity & harassment of any form is strictly prohibited (Zero Tolerance), as are those remarks concerning one’s ethnicity, lifestyle, race (ethnicity), religion, etc., violations of these rules will result in immediate dismissal from the course.

**Date and Time of Final Exam**

This is an online graduate course and does not utilize a final exam as part of evaluating student learning. In lieu of a final exam, students are expected to complete their final written assignment by the last day of class.

**Office Hours and/or hours of outside-of class contact**

See the Instructor Information section for contact information.

**Incompletes**

The University discourages Incompletes for semester grades, but situations sometimes occur in which an incomplete grade is the best option. If a student is unable to complete the course requirements during the semester, consideration will be given to assigning an Incomplete grade. If this occurs, all course requirements must be
completed prior to the end of the following semester. If course requirements are not completed, a grade of “F” will be assigned.

Course Organization:
This is a sixteen (16) week course. As such, there is limited time to finish the assigned readings and associated projects. Please keep this in mind as you schedule your work. The assignments are completed in sixteen (16) modules. Unless otherwise directed, you should complete one module each week. Each student should expect to spend approximately three hours on completion of the required Discussion Questions, and approximately three to four hours on completion of the reading assignments. Each of the required research papers will require a minimum of fifteen to twenty hours per paper.

Lesson One: The course begins with an introduction to ethics, as well as an explanation of why situational ethics is very different from absolute ethics. The lesson looks at the differences and also explains the relevance to criminal justice agencies.

Lesson Two: This lesson introduces the students to Classical Ethics and why it is still significant in the modern world. Each of the Greek philosophers (Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle) had their own ideas, and all have contributed to today’s thinking about Ethics.

Lesson Three: For over two hundred years our criminal justice system has been based on the idea of deterrence. This lesson examines the relationship between utilitarianism and deterrence, and the importance of both to the current justice system.

Lesson Four: This lesson explores the sources of criminal justice ethics. Included are constitutional sources, religious sources, natural law, and codes of ethics from the agencies themselves.
Lesson Five: There exists a wide variation between Bentham’s Utilitarianism and Kant’s theories of Reason. This lesson looks at the differences, and provides situations in which both could be applied to criminal justice agencies.

Lesson Six: This week’s lesson will introduce the students to the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol. In addition, the relationship between the operations of the Border Patrol and the War on Terror are examined. Certain operations of the Border Patrol and other government agencies are critiqued in terms of ethical decisions.

Lesson Seven: The first paper is due on Sunday of this week.
The concept of justice is fundamental to our system of criminal justice. What is also fundamental is the implied contract between each member of our society and the government. Looking at this implied contract and John Rawls’ concept of justice is the focus of this week’s lesson.

Lesson Eight: Ethical behavior in any organization is highly dependent upon the ethical behavior of the managers within that organization. This lesson examines the differences between ethical and unethical management techniques, and the result of both on subordinate productivity and morale.

Lesson 9: Lying is bad, in general. This lesson examines the sources of deception, and looks at the relative “badness” of lying.

Lesson 10: This lesson examines the differences between racial prejudice and racial discrimination. It also looks at the historical roots of discrimination, and the sociological and legal influences, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of affirmative action policies.

Lesson 11: It is important to remember that each person coming into contact with a member of the criminal justice system has Constitutional rights. According to the courts, this includes illegal aliens, smugglers and suspected terrorists. This lesson describes the possible liability of criminal justice supervisors via vicarious liability, which means being legally responsible for any job-related actions performed by one’s subordinates.

Lesson 12: The second paper is due on Sunday of this week.
Loyalty to one’s peers and to one’s supervisors is a necessity, particularly in the field of criminal justice. This lesson examines the concept of loyalty in the field of criminal
justice. Students will examine the differences between personal loyalty, institutional loyalty, and integrated loyalty, and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

**Lesson 13:** This lesson examines the history and role of the police in present-day society. The difficulty of maintaining the proper balance between individual liberty and community safety is also examined.

**Lesson 14:** This lesson examines the principles and history behind our current system of punishment and corrections. We also look at the relationship between our current system and the concepts of retribution and lex talionis.

**Lesson 15:** A lot of things have changed since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. This week’s lesson describes some of the ethical issues surrounding the changes put in place within the criminal justice system following the terrorist activity on that day.

**Lesson 16:** The third paper is due on Monday of this week.

This final lesson of the course describes several controversial topics, including Arizona State Bill 1070 and the operations of the military along the Texas-Mexico border.

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the university **Academic Honor Code** and the **ASU Student Handbook**.

**Accommodations for Disability**

The Student Life Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Student Life Office at (325) 942-2191 or (325) 942-2126 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at **Student.Life@angelo.edu** to begin the process. The Student Life
Office will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

**Student absence for religious holidays**

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.