CRIJ 6391: Independent Research
Graduate Ethics in Eight Weeks

Course Description/Overview

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.

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.

Prerequisites

This course is open ONLY to students receiving permission from the professor of record and the Graduate Dean.

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 20 hours per week to complete all the readings and assignments. The lessons themselves take as long as the student will require to read the materials and watch or listen to media presentations.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

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

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.

Grading Policies

This course employs three writing assignments, and weekly discussion ESSAYS to assess student learning.

Writing assignment one accounts for 25% of the course grade. Due on Monday the fourth week of class.

Writing assignment two accounts for 25% of the course grade. Due on Monday, the sixth week of class.

Writing assignment three accounts for 25% of the course grade. Due on Monday, the eighth week of class.
Participation in the discussion ESSAYS each week accounts for the final 25% of the course grade. Student will be expected to complete two short discussion essays each week.

Participation in the discussion ESSAYS each week accounts for 20% of the course grade. Discussion board assignments are expected to be 250 -1000 words exclusive of references and citations.

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 = 69 % and below
- I = Incomplete

Writing Guidelines

Each writing assignment deals with the topic under discussion. These writing assignments cumulatively account for 75% of the student's grade. Writing assignments are expected to be 1800 - 2000 words, double-spaced, with a bibliography (source page) and corresponding citations in the body of the paper. The minimum requirement for sources is six. Formal academic writing uses standardized styles and citation formats. The preferred format is the APA style. To access the APA writing guidelines go to this link: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

Should you wish to use CHICAGO style that will be acceptable. The Chicago Style guide can be found at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.

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.

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 Monday of class.

**Course Organization:**
This is an eight (8) 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 eight (8) modules. Unless otherwise directed, you should complete one module each week.

**Lesson 1:** 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.

Additionally, 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 2:** 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.

Additionally, 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 3:** 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.

Additionally, 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 4:** 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.

Additionally, 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.

**The first paper is due on Monday of this week.**
Lesson 5: Lying is bad, in general. This lesson examines the sources of deception, and looks at the relative "badness" of lying.

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 6: 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.

Additionally, 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.

The second paper is due on Monday of this week.

Lesson 7: 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.

Additionally, 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 8: 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.

Additionally, 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.

The third paper is due on Monday of this week.

Communication

Participation
In this class everyone, brings something to the table. Your ideas and thoughts do count. Feel free to ask questions either via e-mail or the discussion board.

Courtesy and Respect
Courtesy 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, life style, race (ethnicity), religion, etc., violations of these rules will result in immediate dismissal from the course.

Office Hours/Contacting the Instructor
See the Instructor Information section for contact information.

Late Work

Late work is not accepted unless there is a documented emergency such as in-patient hospitalization, death in the immediate family, etc. Late work will only be accepted on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the instructor.

Incompletes

This is a specially created course for a specific student. It will be extremely labor intensive for both the student and the professor. Because this course was created and offered at the request of the student, and the professor teaching it is already carrying a 1.5 course overload with additionally research students to supervise, there will be NO incomplete for this course.

Add/Drop dates

The last day to add this course is: **Friday, January 23, 2015.**
The last day to drop this course is: **Friday, February 20, 2015.**

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.