BOR/CRIJ 6387: Seminar in Criminal Justice Agency Ethics

Course Description/Overview

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

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:

Sandel, Michael J., *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York. ISBN: 978-0374-18065-2.

Solomon & Murphy., *What is Justice? Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 2nd Ed., Oxford University Press, New York. ISBN: 978-0-19-512810-9.

Souryal, Sam S., *Ethics in Criminal Justice: In Search of the Truth*, Anderson Publishing, Boston, ISBN: 978-1-4377-5590-9.

Wilson, James Q., *The Moral Sense*, Free Press, New York. ISBN: 0-02-935405-6.

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

There are no prerequisites for this course. However - this course is intended for students to take in their final semester of the graduate program. If you are not in your final semester, or within one semester of graduating, you should not take this class.

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 9 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 discussions to asses student learning.

Assignment	Percent of Grade	Due Date:

Writing assignment one	25%	Sunday end of week 3
Writing assignment two	25%	Sunday end of week 6
Writing assignment three	25%	Thursday of week 8
Participation in the discussion board	25%	Weekly: Initial post **Midnight, Friday**. Reply to AT LEAST two of your classmate's initial posts. Due: **Midnight Sunday**.

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

Rubrics

Discussion forums and writing assignments will be graded using a standardized rubric. It is recommended that you be familiar with these grading criteria and keep them in mind as you complete the writing assignments. There are two rubrics. Click the link to download the PDF document:

Discussion Rubric
Writing Assignment Rubric

A point about discussion threads.

An initial post and replies to two classmates is the minimum standard and insufficient to receive full credit on the assignment.

- An initial post is expected to be "robust," meaning that it will be at least 200 - 250 words in length and will use appropriate references and citations.
- You are expected to use materials that you find outside of the required readings as additional reference material.
- The purpose of the discussion board is for students to develop an interaction with each other on the topics being raised. You CANNOT accomplish this effectively if you do not interact in a give-and-take exchange of ideas with each other.
- You should drive a conversation to the next level of interaction, with multiple posts, back and forth, between students. If a classmate refuses to reply to your posts or questions then find somebody else to interact with.

- If somebody posts on your discussion thread, you should reply to them.
- USE the other person's name when replying to them - it is the courteous and professional way to hold a conversation.

One other point: As the professor, if I reply to your post and raise a question, **the courtesy of a response is expected**. Your interaction with the professor is a means of critical thinking and is considered part of the minimum requirements necessary for a passing grade.

Discussion Post Grading

Click link to view. Your posts will be graded using the [Discussion Rubric](#).

While we do not expect that your post will be in perfect English and abide by all the rules of syntax, grammar, and spelling, we do expect that you will never use "text messaging" as a format for a post. If you use "text messaging" to submit a post you will receive a zero for the assignment - even if all other requirements are met.

If you use a quote in your post, we expect that the source of that quote will be cited and at least the basic reference information will submitted along with your post.

CAUTION: Microsoft WORD and Blackboard are not compatible when you use any specialized fonts or formating. While these may look good in WORD, they don't translate well when copied into Blackboard. It is better to use a plain text editor, such as Notepad if you are going to prepare your post outside of Blackboard and copy it into the discussion thread editor.

Additional CAUTION: The uniqueness of the different browsers makes it necessary that you be ready to use a different browser when oddities occur that prevents you from using Blackboard to complete you lessons. Currently, IT recommends that you use the [Firefox](#) browser to interact with Blackboard. There have been numerous problems over the past semesters when students are using a browsers other then Firefox is why the default browser on most computers (Internet Explorer) may not work.

Writing Guidelines

Your writing assignment will be graded using the [Writing Assignment Rubric](#)

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 a 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.

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. This lesson also 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. This lesson also 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. This week's lesson will also 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. **The first paper is due on Monday of this week**.

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

Lesson 5: Lying is bad, in general. This lesson examines the sources of deception, and looks at the relative "badness" of lying. This lesson also 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. Loyalty to one's peers and to one's supervisors is a necessity, particularly in the field of criminal justice. This lesson also 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. This lesson also 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. 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 Thursday of this week.

Communication

Participation

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.

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

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.

University Policies

Attendance

This is an online course and attendance is not taken.

Late Work

As a general rule, late work will not be accepted. If your assignments are not submitted by the posted deadline, you will receive a zero for that assignment. Assignments and examinations are typically provided well in advance of their due dates in order to allow sufficient time for completion.

Incompletes

The University policy on grades of "Incomplete" is that the deficiency in performance must be addressed satisfactorily by the end of the next long (16 week) semester or the grade automatically becomes a "F". Grades of "Incomplete" will only be awarded to students who have demonstrated sufficient progress to earn the opportunity to complete the course outside of the normal course duration. The award of an "Incomplete" will only be made in rare circumstances, with the concurrence of the student and the professor on what specific tasks remain and when they are due for the grade to be changed to a higher grade. The determination of the need to award an "Incomplete" is entirely up to the professor's personal judgment.

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

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

Student Affairs 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 emailing studentservices@angelo.edu, or by contacting:

Office of Student Affairs
University Center, Suite 112
325-942-2047 Office
325-942-2211 FAX

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.

Add/Drop

See Academic Calendar for specific information