



# CRIJ 1310 - Fundamentals of Criminal Law Course Syllabus

## Description

This course is the study of criminal law including application of definitions, statutory elements, defenses and penalties using Texas statutes, the Model Penal Code, and case law. The course also analyzes the philosophical and historical development of criminal law and criminal culpability.

**Credits** 3

**Lecture Hours** 3

**Lab Hours** 0

**Extended Hours** 0

**Contact Hours** 48

**State Approval Code** 43.0104.54 24

**Instructor Name** Reanna Hart

**Semester/Year** Spring 2025

## Alternate Operations During Campus Closure

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Panola College to move to altered operations. During this time, Panola College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online learning management system (CANVAS), online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Panola College's website ([www.panola.edu](http://www.panola.edu)) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, CANVAS for each class for course-specific communication, and Panola College email for important general information.

## Student Basic Needs

Unexpected circumstances may arise, but Panola College offers various resources to support students. If you need mental health services or are facing challenges with transportation, affording class materials and supplies, or accessing food regularly—issues that may impact your class performance—please visit [panola.edu/resources](http://panola.edu/resources).

## Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance of classes and laboratories is required of all students. When a student has been ill or absent from class for approved extracurricular activities, he or she should be allowed, as far as possible, to make up for the missed work. If a student has not actively participated by the census date, they will be dropped by the instructor for non-attendance. This policy applies to courses that are in-person, online, hybrid, and hyflex.

Attendance in online courses is determined by submission of an assignment or participation in an activity. According to federal guidelines, simply logging into a distance learning course without participating in an academic assignment does not constitute attendance. Distance learning is defined as when a majority (more than 50%) of instruction occurs when the instructor and students are in separate physical locations. Students must engage in an academic activity prior to the course census date.

When an instructor feels that a student has been absent to such a degree as to invalidate the learning experience, the instructor may recommend to the Vice President of Instruction that the student be withdrawn from the course. Instructors may seek to withdraw students for non-attendance after they have accumulated the following number of absences:

Fall or spring semesters:

3 or more class meeting times per week - 5 absences

2 class meeting times per week - 3 absences

1 class meeting per week - 2 absences

The student is responsible for seeing that he or she has been officially withdrawn from a class. A student who stops attendance in a class without officially withdrawing from that class will be given a failing grade; consequently, the student must follow official withdrawal procedures in the Admissions/Records Office.

Please note: Health Science and Cosmetology courses may require more stringent attendance policies based on their accreditation agencies. Please see the addendum and/or program handbook for further information concerning attendance.

### **Pregnant/Parenting Policy**

Panola College welcomes pregnant and parenting students as a part of the student body. This institution is committed to providing support and adaptations for a successful educational experience for pregnant and parenting students. Students experiencing a need for accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting will find a Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations Request form in the Student Handbook or may request the form from the course instructor.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Course Policy**

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for students that wish to use it for Discussions ONLY. However, you may not complete more than 20% of an assignment using AI. Students must also cite AI-generated material that informs the reader which part of their assignment was AI generated work. The use of AI is not permissible on the final semester writing assignment or any subsequent assignment associated with it. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty.

### **Instructional Goals and Purposes**

The purpose of this course is to:

1. Present an overview of criminal law and examine Texas criminal statutes.
2. Explain the historical and philosophical development of the nature of criminal law.
3. List the elements of crimes using the Texas statutes as an illustration.
4. Discuss criminal responsibilities as they apply to the criminal statutes.

### **Learning Outcomes**

After studying all materials and resources presented in the course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the elements of crimes and defenses under Texas statutes, Model Penal Code, and case law.
2. Classify offenses and articulate penalties for various crimes.
3. Compare culpable mental states when assigning criminal responsibility.
4. Assess the impact of history and philosophy on current criminal laws.
5. Evaluate the application of criminal law to other areas of criminal justice such as law enforcement and corrections.
6. Examine the impact of the U.S. and Texas Constitutions on criminal law, particularly in terms of due process and criminal rights.
7. Apply Texas criminal law to hypothetical case scenarios through critical thinking and legal reasoning.
8. Discuss key Texas court decisions and their role in the evolution of criminal law.
9. Understand the role of criminal procedure in the Texas criminal justice system.

### **Course Content**

A general description of lecture/discussion topics included in this course are listed in the Learning Objectives/Specific Course Objectives sections of this syllabus.

Students in all sections of this course will learn the following content:

1. Introduction to Criminal Law

2. Legal System in the United States
3. Constitutional protections
4. Elements of a Crime
5. Criminal Defenses
6. Parties to Crime
7. Inchoate Offenses
8. Criminal Homicide
9. Sex Offenses and Crimes involving Force, Fear, and Physical Restraint
10. Crimes against Property
11. Crimes against the Public
12. Crimes against the Government
13. Criminal Case Studies
14. Current Issues in Texas Criminal Law

### **Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery**

This course is offered in a Hy-Flex format (online with the option to attend a face-to-face class once per week). Teaching approaches are expected to vary with individual instructors who should employ those techniques that work best for them and their students.

Hy-Flex classes are very different from traditional face-to-face classes in terms of how the material is presented, the nature of the interaction among class members, and the overall learning experience. This class will be wholly available online; however, students have the option to attend face-to-face once per week for the lecture portion of the class.

Canvas is used as the Learning Management System (LMS) for this online course. This course is organized by Modules to assist in facilitating your learning. Although lecture and reading assignments are the primary forms of delivery, other instructional methods may involve discussion, student presentations and lectures, audio-video instruction, invited speakers, critical thinking activities, writing exercises designed to simulate critical thinking and group activities.

### **Major Assignments/Assessments**

The following items are assigned and assessed during the semester and used to calculate the student's final grade.

#### **Assignments**

Faculty may assign both in and out of class assignments (for face-to-face courses), essay projects, and exams to assess the student's knowledge and abilities. Faculty may choose from the following assessment criteria:

1. Attendance
2. Perceived Class Preparedness
3. Class Participation/Discussion
4. Exams
5. Tests
6. Quizzes
7. Internet Assignments
8. Journal Assignments
9. Library Assignments
10. Readings
11. Research Papers
12. Written Assignments

#### **Assessments**

1. Unit Exams
2. Research Assignment
3. Midterm Exam
4. Final Exam

## Course Grade

- Comprehensive Final Exam – 25%
  - Final Exam will cover material from the entire semester, and will be administered according to the Schedule of Examinations for the semester. This exam will include: items covered in quizzes, 3 discussions, videos, and lectures. This is a remotely proctored exam. Exams will be administered by the instructor, via the testing center or through the online proctoring system (requires a webcam/microphone).
- Midterm Exam – 25%
  - Midterm Exam will cover material from the first half of the semester, and will be administered in week 8. This exam will include: items covered in quizzes, discussions, videos, and lectures. This is a remotely proctored exam. Exams will be administered by the instructor, via the testing center or through the online proctoring system (requires a webcam/microphone).
- Class Participation/Assignments – 25%
  - Weekly Quizzes
  - Unit Exams
  - Discussions
  - Participation
  - Other, as assigned by instructor
- Research Assignment – 25%

Letter Grades for the Course will be assigned as follows:

- A: 90 < Average < 100
- B: 80 < Average < 90
- C: 70 < Average < 80
- D: 60 < Average < 70
- F: 00 < Average < 60

**Exams and Quizzes:** Any student caught cheating on an online exam or academic testing will lose their privilege to test online for the rest of the semester in all online courses. The student will then be required to go to the Carthage Academic Testing Center for any future exams that semester.

Students will be required to follow all rules and procedures as defined by the instructor for testing online. Students will be required to take a practice exam and pass it correctly with instructor approval before testing online. When students test online using the proctoring system, the exam will be graded, video of testing will be reviewed and if any rules or procedures of testing or any act of suspicious activity is found by the instructor, the student will be required to attend the testing center for the remainder of their exams, and credit for the exam will not be given, resulting in a zero with no retake allowed. The student will be reported as an academic irregularity and submitted to the Digital Learning Department as well as the dean.

When taking a remotely proctored exam, you must be dressed appropriately, sitting at a desk/table, alone and free of any and all distractions. If you do not have an area of your residence or location to test in a suitable environment, please contact your instructor prior to the exam. During your proctored testing you will be required to conduct a complete room/desk scan, an incomplete room scan can result in instructor not reviewing the test, a grade of zero with no retake allowed, and student being required to take future exams in the Academic Testing Center on the Carthage campus.

### Texts Materials, and Supplies

Open Education Resources (OER) – course content is provided by the instructor or materials are included within the Canvas course shell.

### Required Readings

- Open Education Resources (OER) – course content is provided by the instructor or materials are included within the Canvas course shell.
- Links and/or Materials provided within the Canvas course.

### Recommended Readings

Local and National newspaper and/or magazine/journal articles relevant to the subject matter issues discussed. Materials available in the M.P. Baker Library, or their electronic resources.

#### **Other**

- Courses conducted via video conferencing may be recorded and shared for instructional purposes by the instructor.
- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <https://www.panolacollegestore.com>.
- For testing services, use the following link: <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/student-support/academic-testing-center>.
- If any student in this class has special classroom or testing needs because of a physical learning or emotional condition, please contact the ADA Student Coordinator in Support Services located in the Charles C. Matthews Student Center or go to <https://www.panola.edu/studentservices/student-support/disability-support-services> for more information.
- Withdrawing from a course is the student's responsibility. Students who do not attend class and who do not withdraw will receive the grade earned for the course.
- Student Handbook: <https://www.panola.edu/> (located on at the bottom under student)