

Court Systems and Practices (CRIJ 1306)



Credit: 3 semester credit hours (3 hours lecture)

Prerequisite/Co-requisite: None

Course Description

This course is a study of the court system as it applies to the structures, procedures, practices and sources of law in American courts, using federal and Texas statutes and case law.

Required Textbook and Materials

Criminal Courts: A Contemporary Perspective, by Hemmens, Brody, and Spohn
4th edition. Sage Publishing. ISBN 13: 978-1544338941

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe the American judicial systems (civil, criminal, and juvenile), their jurisdiction, development and structure.
2. Analyze the function and dynamics of the courtroom work group.
3. Identify judicial processes from pretrial to appeal.
4. Describe the significant Constitutional Amendments, doctrines, and other sources of law in the American judicial system.

Course Outline

- A. Welcome
 - a. Syllabus
 - b. Expectations
- B. Introduction: Law and the Judicial Function
 - a. Why Study Courts?
 - b. What Is Law?
- C. Sources of Law
 - a. Sources of Law
 - b. Sources of Individual Rights
- D. Types of Law
 - a. Types of Law: Criminal and Civil
- E. Court Organization and Structure
 - a. Jurisdiction
 - b. The Structure and Jurisdiction of U.S. Courts
- F. Prosecutors
 - a. Historical Evolution of the American Prosecutor
- G. Defense Attorneys
 - a. Defense Attorney's Role in the Criminal Justice System
 - b. Historical Development of the Right to Counsel
- H. Judges
 - a. Roles and Duties of Judges
 - b. Judicial Selection
- I. Criminal Defendants and Crime Victims
 - a. Criminal Defendants
 - b. Victims and the Criminal Courts
- J. The Jury
 - a. History of Jury Trials
 - b. The Role of the Jury

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Course Syllabus

- K. Pretrial Procedures
 - a. Arrest
 - b. Booking
- L. The Criminal Trial
 - a. Opening Statements
 - b. The Presentation of Evidence
- M. Sentencing
 - a. The Goals of Sentencing
- N. The Appellate Process
 - a. Appealing to a Higher Court
 - b. The Appellate Courts
- O. Specialized Courts
 - a. Problem-Solving Courts
 - b. Drug Treatment Courts
- b. The Judge's Options at Sentencing

Grade Scale

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	F

Course Evaluation

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

Quizzes	10%
Assignments	30%
Exams	20%
Course Project	40%

Course Policies

1. You must log onto Blackboard and access this course a minimum of three times per week.
2. Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated.
3. If you wish to drop a course, the student is responsible for initiating and dropping the course. If you stop logging-in to the course and do not complete the course drop process, then you will receive an “F” grade for the course
4. Internet Usage – Students are expected to use proper net etiquette while participating in course emails, assignment submissions, and online discussions.

Technical Requirements

The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, software, Java, etc. can be found online at:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support/Browser_Checker A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of the online technology and resources.

Disabilities Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. Among other things, these statutes require that all students with

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Course Syllabus

documented disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodations for their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409) 880-1737 or visit the office in Student Services, Cecil Beeson Building. You may also visit the online resource at <https://www.lit.edu/student-success/special-populations>

Student Code of Conduct Statement

It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu or obtained in print upon request at the Student Services Office. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document

Starfish

LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

