Administrative Unit: Criminal Justice Administration & Human Services Department

Course Prefix and Number: CJAD 420

Course Title: Legal Issues in Criminal Justice

Number of Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Analysis of current and controversial legal issues in the criminal justice system. Topics may include current Supreme Court issues, hate crime, domestic violence, gun control, the death penalty, police civil liability, privacy rights, wrongful conviction and public policy, plea bargaining, specialty courts, reforms to the justice system, and law enforcement counter-terrorism activities.

Prerequisites: CJAD 101 and Junior standing. Occasional offering.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): CJAD 101 and Junior standing.

Text(s):

Many suitable textbooks are available from various publishers and the following list is not comprehensive. Other textbooks may be judged by individual instructors to be more suitable in meeting Course Objectives. Many current textbooks have companion websites, and the instructor is encouraged to enhance the course experience for the student by utilizing available technology.


The instructor may also want to consider directing the student to websites containing Criminal Codes and Criminal Cases, such as http://www.findlaw.com or other legal sites maintained by governmental or not for profit entities.

Course Objectives:
- To understand and appreciate current legal issues in the Criminal Justice System.
- To focus on legal issues in the Criminal Justice system that are not considered or analyzed in other courses.
- To gain experience with common legal terminology and competing legal and policy arguments.
- To apply legal and policy principles to real and hypothetical fact situations.
- To demonstrate critical thinking, research and writing skills on legal and policy issues in the Criminal Justice System.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:
- Identify current legal and policy problems and issues in the Criminal Justice system.
- Assess and evaluate past and present legal and policy solutions to problems and issues in the Criminal Justice system.
- Analyze legal issues connected with existing and proposed crime policies, programs and projects.
- Apply competing legal principles and theories to real and hypothetical problems in the Criminal Justice System.
- Construct and evaluate arguments on legal and policy issues in the Criminal Justice system.
- Appraise current literature, materials and developments regarding legal and policy issues in the Criminal Justice system.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):
- The Death Penalty
- Wrongful Conviction and Public Policy
- Hate Crime
- Gun Control
- The Right of Privacy
- The War on Terrorism and domestic counter terrorism activities
- Police Civil Liability
- Domestic Violence
- Specialty courts/Plea Bargaining/Issues in the Court System
- Reforms to the Justice System

In an effort to better prepare students for future educational pursuits and professionalism in their chosen fields, it is highly recommended that all courses bearing the CJAD prefix contain both a writing and speech communication component. Formal writing projects should be prepared in APA format.
Recommended maximum class size for this course: 25

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Barry R. Langford

Date: May 15, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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