Instructor: Dr. Milton C. Hill
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Class: CJS 475: Independent Study in Criminal Justice
Section 001
Time: N/A for this course
Location: N/A

Virtual Office Hours:

Virtual Office Hours:
Tuesday/Thursday
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Course Description:
From the Undergraduate Student Bulletin: This course is a “directed independent study, including in-depth research, reading and writing in the field of criminal justice. Prerequisites: criminal justice major or minor with junior standing; overall GPA of 3.0 or higher; completion of 18 semester hours of criminal justice coursework; and consent of the instructor and department chair. May be repeated only once.”

My interpretation: This course is an advanced study of a particular theme or topic in Criminal Justice through readings, research, and analysis. It is designed for students who have completed basic courses and who want to study specific topics that are not offered in the curriculum.

Disclaimer: I reserve the right to make verbal or written changes to the syllabus at any time. All changes and exceptions are at my discretion.

Course Project (per student’s interest):
The student will complete a comprehensive study of the literature on a CJ-related topic of the student’s choosing. The result of this study will be an annotated bibliography of a minimum of 25 academic, peer-reviewed articles that examine the background and current research state of the student’s topic, with a specific focus on criminological literature. A final defense of the work will be required.

Program Objectives:
This course meets the following CJS Program objectives:
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of the purposes and operation of the major components of the criminal justice system, and the student will be able to critically analyze the criminal justice system and its aims and outcomes.
Course Objectives:
This course meets the following CJS Course objectives:
1. The student will develop and pursue a unique study question through substantial, legitimate research that fosters focus and flexibility.
2. The student will demonstrate their ability to gather, assimilate, and report accurate information in a concise and consistent manner.
3. The student will maintain a research journal or activity log documenting work and sources.
4. The student will gain a thorough understanding of the selected topic through investigation of articles in various literatures via various academic databases.
5. The student will contribute a demonstrated scholarship of the topic by developing an annotated bibliography and summary of previous work on the topic.

Instructional Methods and Learning:
This is an independent study utilizing extensive readings, research, and experiential learning. Questions, observations, and discussion are strongly encouraged. A final defense of the work will be required.

Course participation and attendance:
Expect to meet weekly with me for discussion, advising, and constructive criticism; however, you are personally responsible for the development and progress of the project. Meetings can be held bi-weekly if necessary or desired (at my discretion). Contact via email and phone is encouraged.

Attendance and Grades:
Regular attendance and participation in meetings is required and essential for success. If special circumstances arise, you must contact me as soon as possible. If at any time you feel you are having trouble, please contact me immediately.

Your final grade is determined by your adherence to the model provided and to the development of an annotated bibliography, which includes an introductory and conclusive summary. The paper should include a minimum of 25 salient sources. Attendance and participation, including regular progress updates of your project, are critically important. Grades are ultimately at my discretion.

Paper = 70%
Attendance and participation = 30%

Deadlines:
August 31 First Meeting to discuss project requirements
October 19  Paper submitted for initial review  
November 23  Paper submitted for final review  
December 4  Defense of project  

**Academic Integrity:**
Using information from another source (book, article, website, another student, etc.) without properly crediting the author is plagiarism. Direct quotation, paraphrased information, and the general use of another person’s idea must be referenced in your work. The penalty for violations such as plagiarism, cheating, or other misconduct with result in a failing grade in the course and may result in further disciplinary action. If you are ever unsure of what constitutes academic integrity in your writing, please contact me. “If in doubt, leave it out!”

**Helpful Hint**
You should forward your D2L email and alerts and your MySFA email to the email account that you use the most. DO NOT USE D2L EMAIL TO CONTACT ME because I may not realize that it was sent through D2L, and you would not receive my reply. It is your very important responsibility to regularly check your email—and your D2L course homepage!

(Please see next page for very important, required information)
Acceptable Student Behavior

Classroom behavior should not interfere with my ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. I shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/ inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Rules of the Classroom

1. No cell phone usage… this includes texting. You will be asked to leave – so don’t do it.
2. The wearing of hats, caps, or other head wear is not acceptable in the classroom.
3. Maturity – Certain topics within this course may stir emotional reactions in some. So as not to distract others or derail the lecture, mature behavior is required. Please treat others with respect and courtesy. If you distract my class—or if you disrespect others’ opinions, feelings, or beliefs—you will be asked to leave.
4. When others are speaking, you are expected to listen and to be respectful of the person’s right to have an opinion that may differ from your own.
5. I do not “give” grades, I merely report them. You are in complete control of your final grade. Everyone starts with an A; where you go from there depends entirely upon you. Do NOT come to me at the end of the semester asking me to “give” you anything.
6. The tentative class schedule is a general guide. Coverage of the material may be accelerated, decelerated, rearranged, augmented, diminished, or otherwise modified when the professor believes such change would be to the benefit of the class.
7. This syllabus will act as the final word in the event of a discrepancy, error, or misunderstanding. Make sure you read and understand it completely—and make sure you keep a copy for reference during the semester.
Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

Any occurrences of cheating or plagiarism will be dealt with according to University policy, provided to you in your student handbook. (A-9.1) Specifically, we will first meet together to discuss same in my office where you will be given the opportunity to explain your position. If it is determined that academic dishonesty has occurred, I will then make a decision as to the penalty therefore. Penalties may include reprimand or no credit for the assignment or exam, or re-submission of the paper, or make-up exam, or failure of the course. I will then refer the incident to the Chair of the Department and the Dean of the College. This Report of Academic Dishonesty form, along with supporting documentation shall be made a part of the student’s record and remains on file with the Dean’s office for at least four (4) years. A second or subsequent offense shall be referred to the Committee on Academic Integrity pursuant to policy.

Students with Disabilities

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

Withheld grades Semester Grades Policy (A---54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.
Required information from SFA (does not apply to online classes):

**COVID-19 MASK POLICY** Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.
