

47: 201: 103
CJ-103: Introduction to Criminal Justice
3 Credits | Fall 2025
Asynchronous

COURSE INFORMATION

Professor: Dr. Colleen Berryessa (colleen.berryessa@rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: I am available to meet by appointment on Zoom, and we can work together to find a time that works!

Teaching Assistants: TBA

Course Overview

This asynchronous course introduces the study of societal responses to crime and explains why criminal justice should be considered a system. It covers the workings of law enforcement, the courts, the correctional system, and juvenile justice. It reviews what constitutes a crime and how crime is measured. Additionally, this course looks to the future and outlines some pressing issues that continue to challenge crime control in a democratic society.

Prerequisite: None

B.S., Criminal Justice at Rutgers University-Newark Program Learning Goals

Upon completion of the B.S. in Criminal Justice, students should be able to:

1. Describe the development and functions of major criminal justice institutions (e.g., police, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice), the activities of actors within these institutions, and how they relate to one another and the broader social, political, and economic world.
2. Describe the mechanisms, correlates, theoretical underpinnings, and situational contexts of crime, criminal behavior and opportunity, and techniques for prevention and treatment.
3. Apply and analyze theories related to the policies and practices of the criminal justice system and its major institutions.
4. Demonstrate the ability to gather, explain, and apply empirical research in the field of

- criminal justice.
5. Obtain comprehensive knowledge about conducting criminal justice research, and develop the skills to conduct criminal justice research with appropriate methodologies.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Explain the structure and functioning of the basic components of the criminal justice system, including the police, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice system.
2. Articulate how the criminal justice system is a dynamic and interdisciplinary system comprising many different people and agencies.
3. Describe the relationships among all parts and players of the criminal justice system and their relationships to other social systems and relevant stakeholders.
4. Critically analyze how policies and practices of criminal justice agencies may directly or indirectly affect other criminal justice agencies, social systems, and critical stakeholders.

Required Text

Introduction to Criminal Justice - 2nd Edition (Oxford University Press)
ISBN: 9780197504062 | SKU: 9780197504062R180
eBook (Integrated directly into the Canvas LMS)

There are a few editions of this book, and any version is fine! I know the online/electronic version of the 2018/2019 book is usually the cheapest. If you are having trouble finding or getting hold of the book for whatever reason, please email me and I can try to help.

Course Requirements

Students are required to read assigned readings and watch assigned videos. Students are required to access the course website on Canvas regularly to stay informed about any changes in lecture topics, assigned readings, and other course announcements.

Course Structure

The course will be asynchronous, with lecture slides and videos posted each Monday at 8am for the week. Students will take all exams online.

Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used for this course:

A	90–100%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
C+	75-79%
C	70-74%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

Course Schedule

<u>Week</u>	<u>Release Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Reading</u>
Week 1	September 2 nd	Introduction/Class Overview	
	September 2 nd	Crime and Criminal Justice	Chapter 1
Week 2	September 8 th	How Crime is Measured and Who It Affects	Chapter 2
Week 3	September 15 th	Criminal Law	Chapter 3
Week 4	September 22 nd	The History and Organization of Law Enforcement	Chapter 4
Week 5	September 29 th	Police Organization, Operation and the Law	Chapter 5
Week 6	October 6 th	Policing: Innovations and Controversies	Chapter 6
Week 7	October 13 th	The Courts	Chapter 7
Week 8	October 20 th	The Courtroom Work Group	Chapter 8
	October 21st – 26th	<u>ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM</u>	
Week 9	October 27 th	The Disposition: Plea Bargaining, Trial, and Sentencing	Chapter 9
Week 10	November 3 rd	The History of Control and Punishment	Chapter 10
Week 11	November 10 th	Prisons and Jails	Chapter 11
	November 16 th	MEDIA ESSAY DUE	
Week 12	November 17 th	Community Corrections	Chapter 12
Week 13	November 24 th	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING WEEK	Chapter 12
Week 14	December 1 st	Juvenile Justice	Chapter 13
Week 15	December 8 th	Criminal Justice in the Future	Chapter 14
	December 9th – 14th	<u>ONLINE FINAL EXAM</u>	

COURSE ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The final grade will be assessed based on your performance on the following:

Midterm Examination (30%): About halfway through the course, a midterm exam will be given comprising 100 multiple-choice and true/false questions. The test will cover the material in the first eight chapters and will be administered online via Canvas. You will be given 1 hour and 30 minutes to take the test and you will be able to use your book and notes. **You may take the midterm exam online on Canvas (under Quizzes) during any 1 hour and 30-minute period from October 21st (at 12:00 am) to October 26th (at 11:59 pm). You must take the test in one sitting during a continuous 1 hour and 30 minute period.**

Final Examination (40%): A comprehensive final exam will be given that covers all the material covered in the course but is weighted more heavily toward the second eight chapters of the book. The test will comprise 180 multiple-choice and true/false questions. You will be given 2 hours and 30 minutes to take the test and you will be able to use your book and notes. **You may take the final exam online on Canvas (under Quizzes) during any 2-hour and 30-minute period from December 9th (at 12:00 am) to December 14th (at 11:59 pm). You must take the test in one sitting during a continuous 2 hour and 30 minute period.**

Weekly Assignments (10%): Students are expected to complete weekly assignments (crosswords) on the class material and turn them in online via Canvas. You may skip two crosswords without penalty, which means you must complete 12 crosswords. However, if you do all 14, you will get extra credit! I encourage you to turn these in throughout the semester each week. **All crosswords must be uploaded and completed by December 12th at 11:59 pm for credit.**

Media Essay (20%): You will watch a movie or an episode of a television show related to the criminal justice system (your choice!) and write a 5-page response paper on how aspects of that movie/TV episode align and misalign with the “real” aspects of the criminal justice system you have learned about so far in the course. Please email me, and I’m happy to chat about potential recommendations or approve your movie/TV show if it makes you feel more comfortable! **The response paper should be submitted to Canvas by 11:59pm on November 16th.**

Extra Credit: You can write a maximum of two response papers that respond to any aspect of a documentary or guest lecture video that we watch throughout the semester. These response papers should be two pages double-spaced and uploaded to Canvas. Each response paper is worth 5 points of extra credit. I will add 5 points to your midterm exam grade and/or 5 points to your final exam score if you complete these response papers. **Extra credit essays must be uploaded and completed by December 14th at 11:59 pm for credit.**

Assignment Description	Linked to SLO	% of Course Grade
Midterm Exam	SLO 1, 2, 3 and 4	30%
Final Exam	SLO 1, 2, 3 and 4	40%
Home Assignment	SLO 3 and 4	20%
Weekly Assignments	SLO 1, 2, and 3	10%

Late or Missing Assignment/Exam Policy

Exams and reading assignments are due on their due date. If you miss an exam, you **MUST** contact the professor **BEFORE** the exam and document the reason. I do not give makeup exams except under extreme circumstances, but if you think you may have to miss an exam for any reason, please let me know as quickly as possible and we will work together to find a time for you to take it before the date of the exam. You need not alert me to your absence unless you wish to receive accommodation, but if you miss class, you will miss valuable material that is likely to compromise your grade. I will accept late work for partial credit up to December 14th at 11:59pm.

Language Statement

The Rutgers University School of Criminal Justice (SCJ) encourages students, faculty, and staff to use *person-first* and *humanizing* language in their verbal and written communications. Being mindful of how we describe people impacted by our criminal legal systems is an important step in restoring their dignity and humanity. This evolution of language is an important piece of broader systemic shifts that are needed to make our justice systems more equitable. We encourage *replacing* labels that refer to people as “offender,” “inmate,” “parolee” or related terms with more neutral descriptors such as “person convicted of a crime,” “incarcerated person,” and “person under parole supervision.” Additional details about why this is important can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Rules

Students who wish to dispute grades on any portion of the exam or paper will be offered an anonymous re-grading opportunity at the instructor's discretion. If you have a grade dispute, please communicate it to your assigned teaching assistant. The assistant will convey the argument to me, and if I agree, I will regrade your paper (anonymously and without knowing your original grade). After the re-grade, you will be given the average of the two grades. You should recognize that this may result in your grade increasing, decreasing, or staying the same.

Academic Integrity

As a member of the Rutgers University community, you are not to engage in any academic dishonesty. You are responsible for adhering to basic academic standards of honesty and integrity as outlined in the Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity>.

Your academic work should be the result of your own individual effort, you should not allow other students to use your work, and you are required to recognize and reference any material that is

not your own. Violations of the university's policy will result in appropriate action.

Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University-Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further its mission of access and support:

For Individuals Experiencing Disability: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) works with students with medical, physical, and/or mental conditions who encounter disabling barriers to determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations for access. Students who have completed the process with ODS and have approved accommodations are provided a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) specific to each course. To initiate accommodations for their course students must both provide the LOA and have a conversation with the course instructor about the accommodations. This should occur as early in the semester as possible. More information can be found at the RU-N ODS website (ods.newark.rutgers.edu). Contact ODS at (973) 353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-5063 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Short-term Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can help with absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to University Policy 10.2.7 for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries: The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (broken or sprained limbs, concussions, recovery from surgery, etc.). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University's Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures located at <https://uec.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/60-1-33-current-1.pdf>

For support related to Interpersonal Violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) can provide any student with confidential support. VPVA is a confidential resource and does **not** have a reporting obligation to Title IX. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. VPVA also maintains a

confidential text-based helpline available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support. Students do not need to be a victim/survivor of violence to receive assistance; any student can receive services, information, and support.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a plan of support plan and address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Connect with the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Psychological Support (Stress, Mood, Family Issues, Substance Use concerns and other personal challenges): The Rutgers University-Newark Counseling Center provides individual therapy and support groups for students dealing with psychological issues. To schedule an appointment, email counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or call (973) 353-5805.

Additional support is available to any RU-N student through Uwill services:

- Umatch: Teletherapy with flexible scheduling, starting with a free account.
- Uhelp: Crisis support at 833-646-1526 (available 24/7/365).
- Urise: Wellness-based video collection with a free account.

Access Uwill@RUN at <https://my.rutgers.edu> using your netid. Services are confidential and free. **For emergencies**, call 911 or Rutgers University Police Department at (973) 353-5111.