

Lassen Community College Course Outline

AJ-8 Criminal Court Process

3.0 Units

I. Catalog Description

This course focuses on the structural outlay and philosophy of the court system, with special emphasis on criminal law and procedure, court processes, and structures, constitutional guarantees, the trial process, and the roles of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and juries. Stages of the criminal process to include the Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments will be covered. This course has been approved for hybrid and online delivery.

Recommended Preparation: Successful completion of ENGL105 or equivalent multiple measures placement.

Transfers to CSU/UC

C-ID AJ 122

General Education Area B

51 Hours Lecture, 102 Expected Outside Class Hours, 153 Total Student Learning Hours

Scheduled: Spring (Even Years)

II. Coding Information

Repeatability: Not Repeatable, Take 1 Time

Grading Option: Graded or Pass/No Pass

Credit Type: Credit - Degree Applicable

TOP Code: 210500

III. Course Objectives

A. Course Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. Identify and describe the stages in the trial process.
2. Identify and critically analyze the concepts of due process as found in the 6th, 8th, and 14th amendments, including right to counsel, bail, jury trial, and due process.

B. Course Objectives

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

1. Describe the history and application of the exclusionary rule in shaping criminal procedure.
2. Describe application of the right to counsel in a criminal case.
3. Describe application of the right to a jury trial.
4. Describe what constitutes an unreasonable search and seizure.
5. Describe the Miranda decision and the privilege against self-incrimination

IV. Course Content

Part I – Law and the Judicial Function

- a. Why Study Courts
- b. What is Law
- c. Consensus and Conflict Theories
- d. The Rule of Law
- e. Judicial Functions

- f. Development of the Common-Law System
 - g. The Role of Courts in the Criminal Justice System
- Part II – Sources of Law
- a. Sources of Law
 - b. Sources of Individual Rights
 - c. Due Process and the 14th Amendment
 - d. Standard of Review
 - e. The Bill of Rights
- Part III – Types of Law
- a. Criminal Law
 - b. Civil Law
- Part IV – Court Organization and Structure
- a. The Structure and Jurisdiction of U.S. Courts
 - b. Historical Overview of Courts
 - c. Federal Courts
 - d. State Courts
 - e. Court Actors
 - f. Overview of the Criminal Process
- Part V – Prosecutors
- a. Historical Evolution of the American Prosecutor
 - b. The Federal Prosecutor
 - c. State Prosecutors
 - d. The Prosecutor’s Duties
 - e. The Prosecutor’s Discretionary Power
 - f. Prosecutorial Ethics and Misconduct
 - g. Community Prosecution
- Part VI – Defense Attorneys
- a. Defense Attorney’s Role in the Criminal Justice System
 - b. Historical Development of the Right to Counsel
 - c. Indigent Defense Systems
 - d. Private Versus Appointed Counsel
 - e. Effective Assistance of Counsel
 - f. Ethics and Lawyer-Client Relationships
 - g. Realities of Being a Defense Attorney
- Part VII – Judges
- a. Roles and Duties of Judges
 - b. Judicial Selection
 - c. Judicial Socialization and Development
 - d. Judicial Accountability and Judicial Independence
 - e. Judicial Performance Evaluations
 - f. Accountability for Judicial Misconduct
- Part VIII – Criminal Defendants and Crime Victims
- a. Criminal Defendants
 - b. Victims and the Criminal Courts
- Part IX – The Jury
- a. History of Jury Trials
 - b. The Role of the Jury
 - c. Limits on the Right to Trial by Jury
 - d. Jury Size and Unanimity Requirements

- e. The Selection of Jurors
 - f. Reforms to the Jury System
 - g. Jury Nullification
- Part X – Pretrial Procedures
- a. Arrest
 - b. Booking
 - c. The Charging Decision
 - d. Information
 - e. Indictment
 - f. Initial Appearance
 - g. Arraignment
 - h. Discovery
 - i. Pretrial Motions
 - j. Plea Bargaining
 - k. Jury Selection
- Part XI – The Criminal Trial
- a. Opening Statements
 - b. The Presentation of Evidence
 - c. Calling Witnesses
 - d. Evidence and Rules of Evidence
 - e. Closing Arguments
 - f. Instructing the Jury
 - g. Jury Deliberations and Verdict
- Part XII – Sentencing
- a. The Goals of Sentencing
 - b. The Judge’s Options at Sentencing
 - c. Judges and Decisions Making-Modeling the Sentencing Process
- Part XIII – The Appellate Process
- a. Appealing to a Higher Court
 - b. The Appellate Courts
 - c. The “Right” to Appeal
 - d. The Writ of Habeas Corpus
 - e. How Do Appellate Courts Decide
- Part XIV – Specialized Courts
- a. Problem-Solving Courts
 - b. Drug Treatment Courts
 - c. Domestic Violence Courts
 - d. Other Problem-Solving Courts
 - e. Juvenile Courts

V. Assignments

A. Appropriate Readings

Required reading assignments will be made from the textbook on a regular basis.

In addition, journal and articles from outside resources including video, newspapers, magazines, internet, etc. pertaining to course topics will be incorporated in the class lectures and assignments.

B. Writing Assignments

Students will be required to complete short answer written assignments, quizzes and/or submit a research paper on a court process related topic as assigned by the instructor.

C. Expected Outside Assignments

Outside assignments may include take home short answer written assignments, required reading of supplementary literature, term paper(s), and group research and reports.

D. Specific Assignments that Demonstrate Critical Thinking

Critical thinking, writing assignments as listed above. Individual and group activities and/or presentations of the course topics.

VI. Methods of Evaluation

Traditional Classroom Instruction

Objective and subjective examinations/quizzes, projects, homework assignments, exercises and/or presentations

Online Delivery

Same as face-to-face instruction including a variety of evaluation methods such as: research papers, asynchronous and synchronous discussions (chat/forum), exercises/assignments, online quizzes and exams, and postings to online website.

Hybrid Delivery

All quizzes and exams will be administered during the in person class time. Students will be expected to complete online assignments and activities equivalent to in class assignments and activities for the online portion of the course. Electronic communication, both synchronous and asynchronous will be evaluated for participation and to maintain effective communication between instructor and students.

VII. Methods of Delivery

Check those delivery methods for which, this course has been separately approved by the Curriculum/Academic Standards Committee.

Traditional Classroom Delivery Correspondence Delivery

Hybrid Delivery Online Delivery

Traditional Classroom Instruction

Lecture, PowerPoint, and other media presentations, discussions, scenarios, guest speakers, mock scenarios, and group presentations.

Online Delivery

Online instruction will be utilized. 51 hours will be instructed online through the technology platform adopted by the District. Online delivery will consist of participation in forum-based discussions and posts, web links, email communications, lecture posts, exams and online lectures. Adding extra resources and other media sources as appropriate.

Hybrid Delivery

A combination of traditional classroom and online instruction will be utilized. Each semester a minimum of 17 hours, or 1/3 of the lecture hours, will be taught face-to-face by the instructor and the remaining hours will be instructed online through the technology platform adopted by the District. Traditional class instruction will consist of exercises/assignments, lectures, visual aids, and practice exercises. Online delivery will consist of exercises/assignments, lecture posts, discussions, adding extra resources and other media sources as appropriate.

VIII. Representative Texts and Supplies

Hemmens, Craig; Brody, David C.; and, Spohn, Cassia, *Criminal Courts: A Contemporary Perspective, 4th Edition*, 2019, Sage Publishing, ISBN: 9781544338941

IX. Discipline/s Assignment

Administration of Justice

X. Course Status

Current Status: Active

Original Approval Date: 03/05/2019

Board Approval Date: 03/12/2019

Chancellor's Office Approval Date: 03/15/2019

Revised By: Thomas Downing

Curriculum/Academic Standards Committee Revision Date: 02/07/2023