

**I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Department Information:  
Division: Criminal Justice  
Department: Administration of Justice  
Course ID: ADJUS 103  
Course Title: Concepts of Criminal Law  
Units: 3  
Lecture: 3 Hours  
Prerequisite: None
- B. Catalog and Schedule Description:  
History, philosophy and the development of U.S. criminal law. Introduction to common law, legal concepts and codes.

**II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One**

**III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Contrast the historical development of law and the philosophy of law.  
B. Examine the United States Constitution and integrate the constitutional provisions with basic fundamentals of common law.  
C. Analyze basic legal definitions and concepts which provide a foundation for law.  
D. Differentiate and appreciate the value of case study and legal research as a means of interpreting court decisions in relation to the written statutes.  
E. Compare understanding of scientific, or cultural concepts and traditions that are generally based upon common law.  
F. Categorize understandings of occupational and professional fields usually requiring experience and higher education as a prerequisite to employment in such fields including attention to appropriate theories and concepts.  
G. Relate instruction in an occupational field, which does not usually require experience in higher education as a prerequisite to such field, placing primary emphasis upon understanding the theories and concepts that underlie practice rather than only the development of technical skills required for immediate employment.

**IV. CONTENT:**

- A. Legal Research and Methodology  
1. Ramifications  
2. Orientation  
3. Outline of the legal brief  
4. Use of the law library  
5. Attorney General opinions
- B. Philosophical and Historical Development  
1. General and specific sources of law  
2. Development of common law  
3. The concept of Stare Decisis  
4. Pre-emption  
5. Repeal  
6. Mala in Se vs. Mala Prohibita crimes  
7. Crimes without victims
- C. The Nature of Criminal Law  
1. The definition of crime  
2. The purpose of criminal law  
3. The language and construction of penal statutes  
4. Conflicts between statutes

5. Distinction between crimes and torts
6. Criminal and civil liability
7. Judicial review
- D. Classification of Crimes
  1. Distinction between felonies, misdemeanors, and infractions
  2. Punishments
  3. Prior convictions
  4. Lessor and included offences
  5. Double jeopardy
- E. Corpus Delecti-Elements of Crime
  1. Role of corpus delecti
  2. Act and intent-negligence
  3. Proximate cause
  4. General intent
  5. Transferred intent
- F. Capacity to Commit Crime
  1. Exemptions to criminal liability
  2. Diminished capacity
  3. Capital crimes
  4. Malice
  5. Motive
  6. Intoxication
  7. Parties to a crime
  8. Attempts
  9. Conspiracy
- G. Overview of Specific Crimes
  1. Crimes against the person and property
  2. Crimes against public decency, morality and the public peace
  3. Historical development
  4. Constitutionally related discussion
  5. Community standards
  6. Related enforceable laws
  7. Health and Safety
  8. Business and Professions
  9. Welfare and Institutions
  10. United States
  11. Fish and Game
  12. City and County Ordinances

**V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

- A. Lecture and discussion
- B. Case study of recent court decisions
- C. Field trip to county law library
- D. Handouts
- E. Text and supplemental resources
- F. Guest speakers
- G. Role playing
- H. Audiovisual presentations
- I. Group activities

**VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:**

- A. Write a term paper demonstrating knowledge of legal concepts in proving up specific intent crimes.
- B. Produce a written brief on Terry vs. Ohio and contrast this with Mendenhall vs. United States.
- C. Students to brief and discuss cases and their implications to the Administration of Justice

**VII. EVALUATION(S):**

- A. Methods of evaluation:
  - 1. Case studies and journals
  - 2. Library research
  - 3. Term paper
  - 4. Written brief
  - 5. Examinations
  - 6. Oral presentations
- B. Frequency of evaluation:
  - 1. Weekly student participation
  - 2. A minimum of three exams, objective and subjective or essay
  - 3. A midterm exam
  - 4. A final exam
  - 5. Six written assignments
- C. Typical exam questions:
  - 1. Explain the concept of mitigation in reducing a specific intent to a general intent crime.
  - 2. Why does a crime require a concurrence of act and intent and or criminal negligence?
  - 3. Assess reasons many states refuse to recognize the diminished mental capacity of the accused.

**VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):**

Derald Hunt & Devallis Ruthledge. California Criminal Law Concepts, 16<sup>th</sup> Edition, Pearson Custom Publishing, 2000.

Hunt, Derald, D. California Criminal Law Manual, Pearson Custom Publishing, 1997.

Gardner & Anderson. Criminal Law 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Wadsworth Publishing, 2003.

**IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None**