

CCJS 301
FUNDAMENTALS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Fall 2026

Instructor:	Cortney Fisher, JD, PhD	Course Time:	Online/Asynchronous
Office:	2217 Lefrak Hall (CP) Bldg. III – 5101 (SG)	Course Location:	Online/Asynchronous
Zoom:	357 163 5269	Office hours:	SG: Wed 9:30 am – 10:30 am CP: Tue 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Email:	cfisher3@umd.edu		

Course Objective

This course is designed to provide an advanced overview of the three major components of the American criminal justice system: police, courts, and corrections. Each component will be discussed in terms of its evolution over time, current issues facing each component, and an exploration of how race, gender, age, sexual orientation, and ethnicity impact the way each component has evolved and how they operate for different identities. The course will address issues of race, reentry, technology, juvenile justice, and future directions for criminal justice.

Content Alert

This course is, by its definition, a course about crime and the people who commit crime. By the nature of this course, we are discussing trauma and traumatic events. It is impossible for me to identify when any particular topic is going to bring up difficult feelings and emotions for any one person in the class. However, I do expect that many people in the class have experienced trauma caused by criminal victimization and I anticipate that some of the material may be difficult.

Always take care of yourself first. If you need to stop reading a book or an article, put it aside until you feel that you are better able to focus on it and talk to me about it. If you need to talk more at length, I am always available during office hours but University policy requires that I report certain information if certain crimes have happened on campus. There are confidential resources for you to access:

Center for Counseling and Consultation @ USG
301.738.6273

If you feel like you are going to hurt yourself or someone else, or if you feel like you are having a mental health emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Notice of Mandatory Reporting

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible University Employee,” and I must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to UMD’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy on Sexual Harassment and Other Sexual Misconduct.

To view further information on the above, please visit the [Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct's](https://ocrsm.umd.edu) website at ocrsm.umd.edu.

Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit [UMD's Division of Student Affairs website](#) for information about resources the campus offers.

Veteran Resources

UMD provides some additional supports to our student veterans. You can access those resources at the office of [Veteran Student life](#) and the [Counseling Center](#). Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.

Required Texts

1. *Criminal Justice*
Scott H. Belshaw and Lee H. DeBoer
ISBN: 978-1-5249-4540-4 (text) OR 978-1-5249-4538-1 (e-book)
2. *A Rip in Heaven*
Jeanine Cummins, 2004
ISBN: 0451210530

Additional materials for the course are uploaded into the ELMS course.

Course Requirements

Students in CCJS 301 will receive 3 grades in this course.

- 30% - Quiz grade
- 30% - Reflection Assignments
- 40% - Final Exam

This is the formula that you need to use to calculate your grade. Do NOT use ELMS to calculate your grade. Plug your grades into the formula below.

Quizzes: **100 points x 3 = 300 points**
 ~10 points per quiz x ~10 quizzes = ~100 points

(To calculate your quiz grade, add all your quizzes together. Once you've added all your quizzes together, multiply that number by 3. If you have more than 10 quizzes and/or more than 10 questions per quiz, it is possible that the number you are multiplying by 3 is more than 100. That is ok! You can earn over 100 points on your quizzes if you are offered and take all quizzes available to you and/or you earn more than 10 points per quiz.)

There will be at least 10 quizzes throughout the session. Each quiz is worth 10 points. Each quiz will be taken on ELMS. The quizzes are announced on ELMS and there is about one quiz per module. Students will have until 11:59 pm on the date that the quiz is due to complete the quiz. Quizzes are open note and open book.

There are no excuses for missed quizzes. Students who miss a quiz can take the quiz for 50% credit for 48 hours after the quiz closes.

Non-Collaborative Policy: Quizzes are individual efforts. **Discussing or sharing quiz questions before the quiz closes is academic dishonesty.** Answers are available immediately after completion but will close two days post-quiz closure, with no reopening.

Students are responsible for all material posted on ELMS – Canvas, including Announcements and emails. Taking the 1st quiz certifies that you have read the full syllabus and are certifying that you will be responsible for all material posted on ELMS – Canvas and on Slack.

The first quiz is due to be completed on ELMS on September 20 at 11:59 pm. Students who miss this quiz can take the quiz for 50% credit for 48 hours after the quiz closes.

Reflection Assignments: 100 points x 3 = 300 points

25 points per assignment x 4 assignments = 100 points

(To calculate your reflection assignment grade, add both grades of your Reflection Assignments. Once you have a total number of points out of 100, multiply that number by 3. That number is the total number of points you've earned for your Reflection Assignments.)

Students are required to complete four reflection assignments during the course of the semester. Each reflection assignment is worth a total of 25 points. ***Each reflection assignment will be completed on ELMS by typing the text directly into the Assignment tool. Assignments that are not submitted in this manner will receive a 0 on the assignment.***

Each module during the course will have at least one reflection assignment. A reflection assignment is a response to a prompt from the Professor. Sometimes the prompt will be a media clip. Sometimes the prompt will be an article from the news, or a required article from your book. I may use Panopto to create a recording outlining the prompt and the question. Regardless of the method by which the assignment is delivered, all materials for the reflection assignment will be located in the module of the course to which the material pertains. **Students are asked to write a 2-3 page essay on their reflection of the prompt by typing their response directly into the Assignment tool on ELMS – Canvas. Students may not upload a .doc or .pdf into the tool so that it circumvents the Turnitin tool.**

Reflections must demonstrate that the student has read the article, is using classroom material, and has considered the prompt in light of the classroom material. What do you, as the student, believe about the prompt given your understanding of the material and your life experiences? While this is your reflection of the prompt, the prompt must be based on facts. It is not your opinion, necessarily, but your reasoned reflection and conclusion based on the facts and material that we learned in class.

Grading Rubric for Reflection Assignments:

Reflection Assignments will be graded according to the following rubric:

- 20% (5 pts) - Answer demonstrates an understanding of the material
- 20% (5 pts) - Answer is based on facts, research, and class material
- 15% (3.75 pts) - Answer demonstrates adequate development of each point used in the answer
- 15% (3.75 pts) - Answer demonstrates responsiveness to the question(s)
- 15% (3.75 pts) - Answer demonstrates advanced writing skills: grammar, spelling, and organization
- 10% (2.5 pts) - Assignment is appropriately cited
 - **(NOTE:** All sources used for the assignments, including lecture and your text book must be cited. I don't care whether you use APA or MLA citation format, but all sources used for the assignment must be cited.)
- 5% (1.25 points) – Assignment contains the University Honor Pledge at the top of the assignment.

Students are entitled to choose any four reflection assignments that they want to do during the course of the semester. The first four reflection assignments will be the four reflection assignments graded. Any additional assignments will be given a 0.

All Reflection Assignments require full citations. The use of Artificial Intelligence is not permitted on any Reflection Assignment UNLESS EXPLICITLY AUTHORIZED BY THE ASSIGNMENT. Failure to fully cite all sources of information on the Reflection Assignment or the use of Artificial Intelligence without authorization will result in a 0 on the assignment and may result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct for academic dishonesty.

Assignments for any one module are due before the start of the next module, as written on the Course Schedule. Students who miss a deadline for a Reflection Assignment may complete the assignment for 50% credit up to 24 hours after the Reflection Assignment is due. However, this is not recommended unless the student has no other option. It is better to just complete another reflection assignment later in the semester.

Final Exam 100 points x 4 = 400 points

(To calculate your Final Exam grade, take raw score out of 100 and multiply that number by 4. That number is the total number of points you've earned for your Final Exam.)

Every student is required to take the final exam. **The final exam is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 15. It will be open from 8:00 am to 11:59 pm.** I do not allow any final exam to be rescheduled except for medical necessity (documentation is required), religious observances, university-sanctioned events, or court appearance. **No exams may be rescheduled for any reason unless there is a reason described above. The Final Exam will be scheduled by the University at a date to be determined. Students are responsible for taking the exam when the University directs you to take the exam. Students who fail to take the exam by the time that the exam closes will receive a 0 on the exam.**

Total points 1000 points

A+ = 985-1000	B+ = 875-894	C+ = 775-794	D+ = 675-694	F = below 595
A = 935-984	B = 825-874	C = 725-774	D = 625-674	
A- = 895-934	B- = 795-824	C- = 695-724	D- = 595-624	

Office Hours

Sometimes the material is understood better by talking it through. Students who wish to discuss the material can attend my office hours to ask questions and talk through the material. Coming to my office hours are first-come, first-served. I will speak to each student individually and privately as they enter my physical office in College Park, my physical office in Shady Grove, or my Zoom meeting room. All of my office spaces are listed at the top of this syllabus.

University Policies

Unless otherwise explicitly stated in this Syllabus, this course confirms with University policy related to Undergraduate Studies. <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging. This course explores identity interactions within the criminal justice system, addressing biases, hate speech, and bias-driven incidents. At the University of Maryland and the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, we prioritize inclusivity and belonging. **Disrespectful comments and unverified facts from unreliable sources are prohibited.** Participation requires respectful, evidence-based discussions.

- **Acknowledgments:**

- **Implicit Biases:** Recognize biases shaped by personal backgrounds.
- **Impact of Biases:** Understand how biases affect interactions and professional conduct.
- **Cultural Influences:** Identify racism, sexism, and other biases in societal and systemic structures.

- **Daily Impact:** Acknowledge how societal biases affect peers and colleagues.
- **Critical Analysis:** Learn to identify and critically evaluate personal biases.
- **Conduct:** Maintain respect, kindness, openness, and compassion.

Non-compliance may lead to referral to the Office of Student Conduct.

Students with Disabilities

I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the ADS and who provide me with a University of Maryland ADS Accommodation form. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with ADS or who do not provide me with documentation that has not been reviewed by ADS.

Disability accommodation is the student's responsibility. **If the student has a disability or an accommodation that the student wants me to acknowledge, the student is required to have at least one 1:1 meeting with me in which the student discusses the accommodation and makes a plan for the accommodation. I cannot accommodate an issue that I don't know exists or that is unclear. If a student has a request for an accommodation that requires an extension of deadlines, students are required to notify me of the request for an extension at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline.**

Lecture Material

The lecture I deliver in this class and the course materials I create and distribute are protected by federal copyright law as my original works. My lectures are recorded or delivered from written lectures in order to insure copyright protection. You are permitted to take notes of my lectures and to use course materials for your use in this course. You may not record, reproduce or distribute my lectures/notes for any commercial purpose without my written consent. Persons who sell or distribute copies or modified copies of my course materials, possess commercial copies of my notes (i.e., Terpnotes), or assist another person or entity in selling or distributing those materials may be considered in violation of the University Code of Student Conduct, Part 9 (k).

You play stupid games, You win stupid prizes¹, aka Academic Integrity

For this course, some of your assignments will be collected via Turnitin on our course ELMS page. I have chosen to use this tool because it can help you improve your scholarly writing and help me verify the integrity of student work. For information about Turnitin, how it works, and the feedback reports you may have access to, visit [Turnitin Originality Checker for Students](#)

The University's Code of Academic Integrity is designed to ensure that the principles of academic honesty and integrity are upheld. In accordance with this code, the University of Maryland does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Please ensure that you fully understand this code and its implications because all acts of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this code. All students are expected to adhere to this Code. It is your responsibility to read it and know what it says, so you can start your professional life on the right path. **As future professionals, your commitment to high ethical standards and honesty begins with your time at the University of Maryland.**

It is important to note that course assistance websites, such as CourseHero, or AI generated content are not permitted sources unless explicitly authorized by the assignment instructions. Material taken or copied from these sites can be deemed unauthorized material and a violation of academic integrity. These sites offer information that might be inaccurate or biased and most importantly, relying on restricted sources will hamper your learning process, particularly the critical thinking steps necessary for college-level assignments.

Additionally, students may naturally choose to use online forums for course-wide discussions (e.g., Group lists or chats) to discuss concepts in the course. **However, collaboration on graded assignments is strictly prohibited. And, the information that is circulated through these informal chats is often erroneous.** Examples of

¹ Swift, T. (2019). Miss Americana & the Heartbreak Prince. On *Lover*. Republic Records.

prohibited collaboration include asking classmates for answers on quizzes or exams, asking for access codes to clicker polls, etc. Please visit the [Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies](#) and reach out if you have questions.

Finally, on each exam or assignment you must write out and sign the following pledge: ***"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."*** If you ever feel pressured to comply with someone else's academic integrity violation, please reach out to me straight away. Also, ***if you are ever unclear*** about acceptable levels of collaboration, ***please ask!*** To help you avoid unintentional violations, ***the following table*** lists levels of collaboration that are acceptable for each graded exercise. Each assignment will contain more specific information regarding acceptable levels of collaboration.

	 OPEN NOTES	 USE BOOK	 LEARN ONLINE	 GATHER CONTENT With AI	 ASK FRIENDS	 WORK IN GROUPS
Quizzes	✓	✓	---	---	---	---
Reflection Assignments	✓	✓	✓	✓*	---	---
Final Exam	✓	✓	---	---	---	---

***Only if explicitly authorized by the assignment.**

To reiterate, the prohibition on academic dishonesty extends to the use of any and all tools that use artificial intelligence to generate material UNLESS AI is authorized by the assignment itself. It also extends to using another's work without proper citation or "collaborating" on assignments that aren't intended for collaboration. We will use the Turnitin score on your written assignments, as well as other methods of detecting whether your material has been significantly "borrowed" from another source. Students who are found to be in violation of this classroom policy **OR** any other UMD campus policy regarding academic integrity will:

- Receive a 0 for the assignment; and
- Be referred to the Student Honor Council and the Office of Judicial Programs