Introduction to Criminal Justice

CJC 101-1, Fall 2026, CRN 10159

Asynchronous course

2. Instructor Information

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3. Course Information

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the history, nature and function of the criminal justice system in the United States. Special attention is given to the philosophical basis underlying this system and to the problems associated with crime control and the administration of justice in a democratic society.

Prerequisites: None

Course Objectives

You will be able to accomplish the following course objectives by the end of the semester:

1. Identify the three major components of the criminal justice system.

2. Understand the true nature of the criminal justice system, the process and operations.

3. Comprehend the theoretical perspectives that seek to describe criminal justice phenomena.

4. Identify areas of discretion and how discretionary decision-making affects each component of the criminal justice system.

5. Understand the relationship between the criminal justice system and the United States Constitution.

6. Demonstrate an understanding of the law, law types, and the evolution of law.

7. Understand the varying law enforcement agencies and types and recognize the issue(s) surrounding jurisdiction.

8. Discuss criminal court processing as it relates to the criminal justice funnel.

9. Demonstrate a command of community-based corrections that include probation, parole and intermediate sanctions.

10. Understand the American penal system and how sentences are imposed.

11. Recognize reentry issues encountered by formerly incarcerated persons that include lack of transitional programming and civil disadvantages/disabilities.

12. Identify similarities and differences between the adult and juvenile justice systems.

Course Modality/Structure

This is an in-person course. It meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 12:00 p.m.

4. Course Materials

Required textbook: Edwards, B.D., & Travis III, L.F. (2024). Introduction to Criminal Justice (10th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003342403

All required course materials can be obtained through the Ball State First Day program. All students are automatically enrolled each semester. Please check your bsu.edu email for information about delivery of physical and digital materials. Students who wish to opt out during the **Fall 2026** semester must do so by **August 30, 2026**. Students who opt out are responsible for obtaining all required course materials on their own through the Ball State Bookstore or another retailer. If you opt out, your digital access will expire shortly after, and you will lose access to publisher-provided course content, online assignments, quizzes, and exams.

5. Assignments and Assessments

Course Assignments

- Discussion boards – there are 8 required discussion board posts throughout the semester
- Exams – there are 4 exams in this course.
- Attendance

Assignment details, including instructions, relevant readings, due dates, and grading criteria/rubrics will be posted and updated on Canvas. Please check Canvas regularly to stay informed and on track.

Course Grading Scale

This course will use the default Canvas grading scale.

Letter Grade	Range
A	100% - 94%
A-	<94% - 90%
B+	<90% - 87%
B	<87% - 84%
B-	<84% - 80%

C+	<80% - 77%
C	<77% - 74%
C-	<74% - 70%
D+	<70% - 67%
D	<67% - 64%
D-	<64% - 61%
F	<61% - 0%

6. Required Statements and Policy

University Statement

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Disability Statement

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Attendance Policy

Worth 50 points total toward your final grade, attendance and participation are tracked daily via Canvas, with each student granted two free unexcused absences per semester. In alignment with University policy, absences for bereavement, jury duty, late additions, military duty, religious holidays, pregnancy, approved athletic participation, and university advisories are fully excused without penalty; discretionary circumstances (such as job interviews or car trouble) are evaluated case-by-case with documentation. To receive an excused absence or make up missed work, students must notify the instructor before class for planned absences or as soon as possible for emergencies, providing redacted documentation upon request.

7. Recommended Statements, Policies, and Information

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Title IX / Sex Discrimination

Ball State University is committed to maintaining an educational environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, and stalking. Students who experience or witness conduct that may violate University policy are encouraged to seek support and assistance. The Title IX Office can provide information about reporting options, supportive measures, and available resources. Contact the Title IX Office at 765-285-1545 or titleix@bsu.edu.

Please Note: As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter. If you disclose information to me about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, I am required to notify the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Office will reach out to discuss available resources, supportive measures, and reporting options. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, you may contact the Counseling Center or the Center for Survivor Support.

Pregnancy and Related Conditions

Ball State University provides reasonable modifications for students affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Students seeking academic, housing, or other modifications are encouraged to contact the Title IX Office as early as possible to discuss available options and support. For assistance, contact the Title IX Office at 765-285-1545 or titleix@bsu.edu.

University Grade Appeal Policy

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the University Grade Appeal Policy and Process.]

Student Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's academic integrity website (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the instructor (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books).
- Using a generative AI system or a person to complete academic assignments such as response papers, discussion posts, essays, or any other assignment when such use is not explicitly permitted by the assignment instructions or the instructor.
- Utilizing another person or a generative AI system to take a quiz, examination, or similar evaluation in place of oneself.
- Using a generative AI system for research, creative work, theses/dissertations, grant proposals, IRB-regulated work, or publication-bound work in violation of university AI policies, funder/publisher rules, IRB requirements, or discipline-specific standards.
- Presenting as one's own work the ideas, representations or words of another person or of a GenAI system without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources or of the AI tool(s) used.
- Using generative AI systems to analyze data, conduct research, or generate content that is included in an assignment (images, graphs, charts, tables, etc.) without proper documentation, citation, and attribution of this AI use.
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

Generative AI (GenAI) Statement

No Generative AI Use

All work produced and/or submitted in this course should reflect your own ideas and demonstrate your current knowledge, abilities, and skills. Therefore, GenAI should not be used to complete any portion of the assignment(s). Doing so constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.

The Learning Center

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to bsu.navigate.eab.com.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: BallStateLC.

The Basic Needs Hub

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the Basic Needs Hub. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a Basic Needs Assistance Form.

The Counseling Center

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found at BSU Counseling Center.

The Speaking Center

The Speaking Center is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message.

The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this direct link to sign up for a time**.** Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

Canvas Accessibility

Canvas provides a user experience that is easy, simple, and intuitive. Special attention has been paid to making Canvas screen-readable. The Rich Content Editor encourages users to create accessible content pages (i.e. text formatting is accomplished using styles). Canvas is designed to allow limited customization of colors and schemes to be accessible for all users. The National Federation of the Blind granted Canvas the Gold Level Web Certification in 2010. **Find more information by visiting the Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).**

FERPA and Privacy

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading **Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection.**

Plagiarism Detection

The campus subscribes to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You may need to submit written assignments to Turnitin. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose. The student may indicate in writing to the instructor that he/she refuses to participate in the plagiarism detection process, in which case the instructor can use other electronic means to verify the originality of their work.

Proctoring

This course will require the use of the Respondus LockDown Browser for online exams. Watch this short video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser. Instructions for obtaining the software can be found in our course.

8. Course Expectations and Policies

Course Participation Expectations

- This course is designed with weekly activities, discussion, and other forms of regular collaboration and communication.
- It is recommended that you log into your Canvas course 3 to 4 times a week and check your official Ball State email account daily to view announcements and prepare for class.
- Complete all assignments, quizzes, tests, and any other activities by the stated due dates.

Feedback Policy

- I will respond to email from your official Ball State email address within 24 hours during week days (Monday-Friday) and within 48 hours on the weekend.
- I will read every discussion post but I will not always personally comment on posts.
- I will grade your quizzes, assignments, and discussions no later than within 5 school days of submission.

- Contact me directly if you have questions or concerns about your performance in class.

Late Assignment Policy

- All assignments are due by 11:59 pm EST/EDT time on the due dates indicated.
- Assignments posted after the indicated due dates will be subject to deduction of 10% from assignment grade for each calendar day that the work is late. For example: An assignment earning 90/100 submitted one calendar day late would receive 80/100 points.
- Internet connectivity and technical issues may occur and impede you from turning in work on time. Begin assignments early, save and submit your work frequently, and submit before the deadline when possible. You should also have a back-up plan, such as using a campus or local library computer, borrowing a device, or identifying another reliable internet connection.
- Canvas will not accept assignments for grading after 11:59 pm EST/EDT on the final day of class.

Assignment Submission Policy

- All assignments should be submitted as Word documents with extensions of .doc or .docx unless otherwise indicated in the assignment description.
- Assignments, unless otherwise indicated, should be submitted using the assignment link in the module**.**

Grading Policy

- It is my policy that appropriate evaluation of your academic performance is an integral part of your learning experience.
- In the absence of mistakes, fraud, bad faith or incompetence, I will be the key decision-maker on the assignment of grades.

Engagement Expectations

To support a respectful and engaging academic community that encourages the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse, we will follow these ground rules:

- **Respect different perspectives.** Share your ideas and let others share theirs.
- **Challenge ideas, not people.** Disagree respectfully. No personal attacks or put-downs. Focus on exploring ideas critically and constructively.
- **Listen to understand.** Stay curious, ask questions to understand, and give others space to speak.
- **Assume good intentions.** Approach discussions with curiosity and compassion.
- **Keep it private.** What is shared in class stays in class. Do not share others' words or work without permission.
- **Be respectful.** Avoid hurtful language, stereotypes, or content that may demean others. Keep feedback constructive.

9. Course Schedule

Week	Course Information
Week 0	• Review course syllabus

	• Complete Module 0 discussion board
Week 1	Topic: Criminal Justice Perspectives • Complete Module 1 discussion board
Week 2	Topic: The Justice Process
Week 3	Topic: Crime and Crime Control • Complete Module 3 discussion board
Week 4	Topics: Counting Crimes and Criminals
Exam 1	Complete Exam 1 – covering first 4 weeks
Week 5	Topics: Police and Policing
Week 6	Topic: Law Enforcement in the Criminal Justice System • Complete Module 6 discussion board
Week 7	Topic: The Criminal Courts
Week 8	Topic: Problems in the Courts • Complete Module 8 discussion board
Exam 2	Complete Exam 2 – covering topics in weeks 5 - 8
Week 9	Topic: Sentencing: The Goals and Process of Punishment
Week 10	Topic: Incarceration • Complete Module 10 discussion board
Week 11	Topic: Problems and Issues in Incarceration
Week 12	Topic: Probation, Parole, and Community Corrections • Complete Module 12 discussion board
Exam 3	Complete Exam 3 – covering topics in weeks 9 - 12
Week 13	Topic: Issues in Community Supervision
Week 14	Topic: The Juvenile Justice System
Week 15	Topic: Discharge and Developments • Complete Module 7 discussion board
Exam 4	Complete Exam 4 – covering topics in weeks 13 - 15

Suggested statement: To support a learning experience that is responsive to the needs, interests, and pace of our class community, the course schedule may shift over the semester. The most current version of the schedule will always be available on Canvas. I encourage you to check Canvas regularly for updates and contact me if you have any questions.

10. Subject to Change Statement

This syllabus is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.