

ETHICAL ISSUES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

CRJU 3713-201
Fall Semester 2025

SYLLABUS

TEXTBOOK: *Ethical Dilemmas & Decisions in Criminal Justice*, Pollock, Joycelyn
(11th Edition), ISBN 978-0-357-51291-3

INSTRUCTOR: Ted Paddack, Martin Bldg. #112, 397-4090, ted.paddack@msutexas.edu

LOCATION/TIME Martin 106 classroom; Tues./Thurs. 9:30-11:20

INSTRUCTOR PERSPECTIVE:

There is, perhaps, no other discipline more than criminal justice, where unethical practice has a greater injurious effect on society. Ethical practitioners uphold the very fabric upon which our society is built, and unethical practitioners tend to destroy the basic confidence that people have in those in authority. This course will deal with not only the “theoretical” ethics which must exist in the criminal justice field, but will address the “applied” ethics needed to carry out the mandates of society. In each session, the student will deal with moral dilemmas. Specific attention is given to ethics and law, philosophy, social relationships, law enforcement, the courts, and the correctional system.

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Week 1	8/26-28/25	1) Housekeeping/Survey	
		2) CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHIES AFFECTING CRIM. JUST.	
		ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read chapter 1 in Text	
Week 2	9/2-4/25	CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHIES AFFECTING CRIMINAL JUSTICE	
		ASSIGNMENT:1) Re-Read Chapter 1 in Text)	
		2) Write a short response to <u>Ethical Dil.</u> 1- pg 18	
		3) Write a short response to <u>Ethical Dil.</u> 3 – pg 19	
Week 3	9/9-11/25	TOPIC: MAJOR ETHICAL ISSUES AND CONCEPTS	
		ASSIGNMENT:1) Read Chapter 2 in Text	
		2) Answer <u>Discussion Exer.</u> #3 –page 41	
Week 4	9/16-18/25	TOPIC: MAJOR ETHICAL ISSUES AND CONCEPTS (continued)	
		ASSIGNMENT:1) Re-read Chapter 2 in Text	
		2) Write a 100-word response to <u>Eth. Dil.</u> 3 – p. 42	
Week 5	9/23/25	TOPIC: MAJOR ETHICAL ISSUES (continued)	
	9/25/25	TOPIC: PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE	
		ASSIGNMENT: List three (3) ways someone has shown <u>harmful</u> discrimination or prejudice <u>against you</u> so far in your life.	

EXAM #1 WILL BE OVER THE ABOVE TEXTUAL AND INSTRUCTOR MATERIAL (WEEKS 1-5)

Week 6 9/30/25 **EXAM #1**

10/2/25 TOPIC: UNETHICAL THEMES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
(Instructor Material)
ASSIGNMENT: None

Week 7 10/7-9/25 TOPIC: PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE
ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapter 3 in text
 2) Answer **Discussion Exer.** #3 – page 65
 3) Write a 100-word response to **Eth. Dil.** 4 – page 66

Week 8 10/14-16/25 TOPIC: ETHICS AND LAW
ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapter 8 in Text
 2) What is an example of behavior that most people consider wrong, but there is no law against that behavior? What is a behavior prohibited by law that most people do not consider evil? Write up your response.

Week 9 10/21-23/25 TOPIC: DEFINING AND DEVELOPING MORAL BEHAVIOR
ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapter 4 in Text
 2) *Talk with a child, ages three through eight.* Ask them to describe a good person, and a bad person. Give them a moral dilemma (finding another person's money, etc.) and ask them how they would respond. Write up your interview.
 3) Respond to **Ethical Dilemma 5** (page 90) in less than 100 words, explaining your moral rationale, and how you arrived at this decision at this point in your life. Might your answer have been different before this year? Might it be different in the future?

EXAM #2 WILL BE OVER THE ABOVE TEXTUAL AND INSTRUCTOR MATERIAL (Weeks 6-9)

Week 10 10/28/25 **EXAM #2**

10/30/25 TOPIC: ETHICS AND THE COURTS

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapter 9 in your text
2) Answer **Study Question #3**, pg. 230
3) Write out 1 question each (3 total) for:
a) a defense attorney,
b) a prosecuting attorney, and
c) a judge.
(Turn in 1 copy, keep 1 set)
Be prepared to discuss legal dilemmas with guest speaker[s]).

Week 11 11/4-6/25 TOPIC: ETHICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapters 5 in your text.
2) Respond to **Situation 3**, page 115

Week 12 11/11/25 TOPIC: (ETHICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT –cont.)

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapters 6 in your text.
2) Respond to **Ethical Dil. #3** (page 142)

11/13/25 TOPIC: CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read pages 272-276 in your text.
2) Write a 100-word response to **Situation 3 - Page 291**

Week 13 11/18-20/25 TOPIC: ETHICS AND INSTITUTIONAL CORRECTIONS

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Chapter 11 in your text.
2) Answer **Discussion Exercise 1** - pg 290
3) Write a 100-word response to **Ethical Dilemma #4** – page 291

Week 14 11/25/25 TOPIC: ETHICS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Read Pages 309-315 in your text
2) Write a 100-word response to **Situation 4**– page 316

11/27/25 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 15 12/2-4/25 TOPIC: ETHICS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

ASSIGNMENT: None

EXAM #3 WILL BE OVER THE ABOVE TEXTUAL AND INSTRUCTOR MATERIAL FROM WEEKS 10-15, AND THE DEFINITIONS OF ALL “KEY TERMS” FOUND AT THE END OF EACH CHAPTER STUDIED DURING THE SEMESTER.

Week 16 12/9/25 **EXAM #3** Tuesday, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Guide to Grade Computation

- 10% ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION - Two (2) unexcused absences are permitted during the semester. Any other **unexcused** absences for the semester, above two (2), result in minus two (-2) points for each period missed from the final grade for the course. Student must present to instructor, *in writing*, any absence which should be excused.
- 20% WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS – Average grade of the best twelve of the thirteen required weekly submissions (See Syllabus for Assignments). The weekly assignment is ***due on Tuesday of the week assigned*** (unless otherwise indicated). Assignment received after class period on assigned date (late submission of weekly assignment) and before the next class period will result in 50% credit. No assignment will be accepted after the week of subject matter.
- 20% EXAM #1 – September 30
- 20% EXAM #2 – October 28
- 20% EXAM #3 – December 19 [optional for graduating seniors who have maintained a minimum semester grade of at least 81 prior to 12/2/25]
- 10% REVIEW OF BOOK or MOVIE [due November 25]
Read or view one of the prescribed books or movies, and follow the format below:
1. The report is to be three to five (3-5) pages, double spaced, computer generated (no handwritten submission accepted).
 2. Name of the book or movie (date of release).
 3. Relate 1) the main *theme*, 2) the *story* line, and 3) the *chief characters* and their *personal traits*, with enough detail to summarize the main developments in the storyline.
 4. ***Identify and explain the ethical dilemma(s) faced by the main character(s).***
 5. ***Identify and explain the ethical paradigm(s) and/or ethical systems relied upon by those characters to resolve the dilemma.***
 6. Evaluate the quality of your book or movie

The following lists the books or movies authorized to be utilized in this report.:

<u>The Coffin Dancer</u> – Deaver (book)	<u>Primal Fear</u> – Diehl (book)
<u>The Prince</u> – Machiavelli (book)	<u>A Time To Kill</u> – Grisham (book)
<u>Rage of Angels</u> – Sheldon (book)	<u>The Runaway Jury</u> – Grisham (book)
<u>The Firm</u> – Grisham (book)	<u>The Pelican Brief</u> – Grisham (book)
<u>Underboss</u> – Maas (book)	<u>The Green Mile</u> (movie)
<u>A Few Good Men</u> (movie)	<u>Amistad</u> (movie)
<u>Class Action</u> (movie)	<u>Criminal Law</u> (movie)
<u>The Fugitive</u> (movie)	<u>Ghost of the Mississippi</u> (movie)
<u>Guilty By Suspicion</u> (movie)	<u>Murder At 1700</u> (movie)
<u>Prince of the City</u> (movie)	<u>Rush</u> (movie)
<u>Serpico</u> (movie)	<u>Shawshank Redemption</u> (movie)
<u>The Firm</u> (movie)	<u>The Nuremberg Trials</u> (movie)
<u>The Star Chamber</u> (movie)	<u>To Kill A Mockingbird</u> (movie)
<u>Point Break</u> (movie)	<u>Oppenheimer</u> (2023)

The above movies are available at local video stores or streaming On Demand. If you are offended by varying degrees of violence, verbal obscenities or nudity, you may wish to approach certain of these movies with some caution.

If student wishes to choose another book or movie that deals with Ethical Dilemmas in Criminal Justice other than above, said student must contact Prof. Paddack no later than November 11, 2025, and receive Instructor's written approval, signing off on the alternate choice of Movie/Book Project.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Should you have a documented disability or are requesting special help in any way during this course, contact Ted Paddock, Martin 112, 397-4090, and Disability Support Services, in Student Wellness Center, 397-4120 at the beginning of this semester. Should the student require the use of electronic devices during the class period, instructor consent is required.

EXTRA CREDIT

No work for extra credit in this course will be allowed, unless the student documents extreme circumstances which were unforeseeable and unpreventable.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No use of hand-held electronic devices is allowed in the classroom during the class period, including (but not limited to) cell phones, text-messaging, electronic games, etc. No “ear-buds” are allowed during the class period. No hoodies will be worn during the class period. Should you use a laptop in the class, it is subject to inspection by the instructor at all times, and must contain notes from that date’s presentation.

EMAIL ACCESS/PDF DOCUMENT CAPABILITY

Should the semester requirements change where no meeting for classroom instruction is possible, all course work and correspondence will be by email. No D2L is utilized in this class. Student will be requested to supply a current email address and a current phone number at the beginning of the semester. Assignments may be submitted to Instructor by PDF attachment to student’s email.

DIVERSITY LANGUAGE

There is a continuous attempt to use respectful language and terminologies in accommodating various identity groups. Language changes on a continual basis, sometimes on the part of small identity groups. There are many different types of generational, regional, and other variations sometimes referring to the same population grouping. In this class, we will use the best possible descriptives, and those most generally preferred to refer to commonly identifiable persons and groupings. Should a student find a descriptive either offensive or misused, the student will address that issue with civility and request consideration of alternative terminology.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Some material included in Instructor Material in this course may be found in Ethics In Criminal Justice: In Search Of The Truth by Dr. Sam Souryal (Anderson, 2011).

Some material included in Instructor Material in this course may be found in Ethical Reasoning by Dr. Richard Paul and Dr. Linda Elder (Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2003)

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**“As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal
or help anyone else to do so.”
MSU Student Honor Code**

Any detection of cheating or plagiarism may result in failure for the semester!