

Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement

CRJU 2213 | Course Syllabus

Midwestern State University | Criminal Justice

Contact Information

Instructor: Michael Alpers

Course location: Online

Office: Martin Hall, Room 105

Office hours: Monday 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; Tuesday 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.; Thursday 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., by appointment

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Course Description

Credit: 3 semester hours. This course examines substantive law relating to law enforcement, with special attention to constitutional issues and case law. Emphasis is placed on applying statutes and cases to law enforcement and on the potential liability of peace officers.

Textbook and Instructional Materials

Required text: Lippman, M. Criminal Procedure (5th ed.). SAGE Publications. ISBN 978-1-0718-7934-4.

The textbook may be purchased through the MSU Texas bookstore. Additional readings, cases, websites, and instructional materials may be assigned in D2L.

Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- Explain the foundations of criminal procedure and police authority.
- Explain how constitutional provisions and case law govern searches and seizures of persons and property, including stop-and-frisk encounters.
- Analyze officer responsibilities concerning probable cause and arrests.
- Apply constitutional and case-law standards to interrogations, confessions, eyewitness identifications, and scientific identifications.
- Explain the exclusionary rule and the law of entrapment.
- Identify civil and criminal remedies for constitutional violations by police officers.
- Describe the criminal justice process, including pretrial, trial, and post-trial procedures.
- Explain how the USA PATRIOT Act has influenced criminal-procedure reforms.

Course Format

This course is delivered fully online with no scheduled in-person meetings. All homework, assignments, discussions, quizzes, and examinations must be completed online by the deadlines posted in D2L. Questions about readings, quizzes, or exams should be posted in the appropriate forum when the answer may benefit the class. Students may also contact the instructor by email or telephone.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

Students should schedule regular weekly time for assigned reading, case analysis, discussion participation, quizzes, and examinations. Academic-support availability may vary by semester; consult current MSU Texas student-support information or contact the instructor for guidance.

Course Requirements and Grading

Table 1: Points Allocated to Each Assignment

Assignment	Points
Introduction and personal profile	100
Four examinations, including final exam	400
Quizzes	100
Discussion forums	100
Total	700

Table 2: Final Grade Scale

Grade	Percentage of Total Points
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

Equivalent point ranges are calculated from the 700 points available. Current scores and the calculated course grade are available in the D2L gradebook. Missing work receives zero points unless the instructor approves an exception.

Introduction and Personal Profile

The personal profile helps students become acquainted in the online course. Include only information you are willing to share, such as hometown, major, classification, work experience, and personal or professional goals. After creating the profile, introduce yourself in the introduction forum and welcome your classmates.

Examinations

There will be four examinations, including the final examination. Exams will primarily contain multiple-choice, true/false, and matching questions; fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, or essay questions may also be included. Each exam is administered online and must be completed within the allotted time.

Quizzes

Quizzes must be completed by the deadline posted in D2L, generally 11:55 p.m. on Saturday. Quizzes are timed for five minutes and may be viewed only while they are being taken. Be prepared to finish a quiz before beginning it. Note questions about quiz content and post them in the appropriate chapter forum after completing the quiz.

Discussion Forums

Discussion forums are the primary method for exchanging ideas with classmates and the instructor. Students must discuss assigned readings, uploaded materials, websites, and outside materials in a seminar-style format.

- Post an individual response to the main topic each week.
- Respond substantively to at least two classmates' posts.
- Participate throughout the discussion period, generally Monday through Saturday at 11:55 p.m.
- Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling; avoid internet and text-message acronyms.

Discussion grades may consider the number of initiated posts and responses, timeliness, appropriateness, contribution value, and accuracy. Posts that do not demonstrate engagement with assigned material may receive minimal credit. Missed discussions cannot be made up.

Late Work and Make-Up Work or Tests

Quizzes and examinations must be completed as assigned. A zero will be recorded for missing work unless the instructor approves an exception. If an examination is missed for a valid, university-acceptable reason, contact the instructor immediately and provide written documentation. At the instructor's discretion, a make-up examination may be given the following week, later in the semester, or at the end of the semester. Work-related absences are generally not excused. There are no make-ups for discussions.

Incomplete Grades

A grade of Incomplete (I) will be issued only in rare circumstances when a student cannot complete required work near the end of the course because of truly exigent circumstances and otherwise meets university requirements for an incomplete grade.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

D2L is the primary source for assignments, course materials, announcements, grades, and schedule changes. Students must monitor D2L and their official university email regularly; checking only once per week may be insufficient. [Access MSU Texas D2L](#). Contact D2L support or the instructor if difficulties occur.

Online Computer Requirements

Students need a computer with a reliable internet connection. High-speed cable or DSL service is strongly recommended. Use a current, supported browser. Test equipment and connectivity before deadlines; internet, work, or family problems do not justify waiting until the last minute to begin an assignment.

Attendance and Participation

In this online course, attendance is demonstrated through regular D2L access, timely submission of work, and meaningful discussion participation. Virtual discussions depend on student preparation. Missed exams and quizzes are excused only with proper documentation for dire emergencies or approved university-sponsored or sanctioned events.

Instructor Class Policies

Etiquette, Communication Expectations, and Freedom of Expression

Academic work depends on the ability of participants to express and examine ideas freely. Course topics may involve ideas or behavior that some find offensive, but discussion must remain civil. Students must be courteous and tolerant and refrain from personal attacks. Do not post comments that are obscene, harassing, threatening, hostile, or defamatory.

Respectful Learning Environment

The instructor considers this course a place where every person will be treated with respect regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or disability. Diversity of thought is welcomed when participants disagree respectfully.

Recording Classes

Recording course content or class interactions is generally prohibited without the instructor's explicit permission. Permitted recordings are for personal use only and may not be uploaded, shared, transmitted, or published without prior consent. Disability-related recording accommodations must be approved through Disability Support Services.

Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, and other unethical practices will not be tolerated. Consequences may include a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course, consistent with university policy.

Plagiarism includes presenting another person's words, ideas, reasoning, or work as your own without appropriate citation, whether quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. Students may study together before an assessment but may not collaborate while taking an individual quiz or examination. Reusing work previously submitted for credit without prior permission is prohibited.

For current university standards and procedures, consult the [Office of Student Conduct](#) and the Student Handbook.

Student Honor Creed

As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so.

Students share responsibility for maintaining a community in which integrity and honorable conduct are the norm. Each student is expected to submit honest, original work and avoid giving or receiving unauthorized assistance.

Student Handbook

Students are responsible for policies and procedures contained in the [MSU Texas Student Handbook](#).

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides books, peer-reviewed journals, legal and criminal-justice databases, multimedia materials, equipment checkout, study rooms, and research assistance. Visit the [Moffett Library get-started page](#) to explore available resources.

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University provides reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should apply through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, at (940) 397-4140. Current documentation may be required, and each request is reviewed individually.

Additional information is available from [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected circumstances can affect housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks, or other necessities. For assistance, contact the Office of Student Affairs, Clark Student Center Room 108, (940) 397-7500, or student.affairs@msutexas.edu.

Review [Student Emergency Support and Resources](#) for current options.

Important University Dates and Schedule Changes

Students are responsible for current deadlines for schedule changes, graduation applications, drops, withdrawals, and refunds. Dates vary by term.

Consult the [MSU Texas academic calendar](#) and published registration information.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn may be eligible for a refund of some tuition, fees, or room and board charges. If the student received financial aid, some or all of a refund may be returned to the applicable aid programs. Eligibility and calculations depend on the circumstances and withdrawal date.

College and Campus Policies

Campus Carry

Licensed individuals may carry a concealed handgun in permitted campus areas, subject to university rules and legal requirements. Open carry is not permitted on college campuses. Review the current [MSU Texas Campus Carry rules and policies](#).

Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Tobacco

Students must comply with university policies and all applicable local, state, and federal laws concerning alcohol, illicit drugs, smoking, and tobacco on university property and at university-sponsored activities.

Active Aggressor Preparedness

Campus safety is a shared responsibility. Students are encouraged to review MSU Police Department guidance on responding to an active aggressor, including the Run, Hide, Fight options and related emergency-preparedness resources.

Grade Appeal Process

A student who believes a final course grade was assigned incorrectly should follow the grade-appeal procedures in the current university catalog and Student Handbook, beginning with timely communication with the instructor.

Course Schedule

The schedule is tentative. Specific chapters, cases, activities, assessments, and due dates are posted under the D2L Content tab and course calendar. The instructor may revise the schedule, assignments, or syllabus when needed; changes will be communicated through D2L and university email.

Table 3: Course Activity Schedule

Course Component	Activities and Assessments	Due-Date Source
Orientation	Review syllabus and faculty expectations; create profile; post introduction; welcome classmates.	D2L course calendar
Weekly modules	Complete readings and case materials; participate in discussion; complete assigned quizzes.	D2L Content tab and course calendar
Examinations	Complete four online examinations, including the final, within the allotted time.	D2L course calendar
Final module	Complete the final examination and any remaining assigned activities.	D2L course calendar

