WRITING FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONAL

CRJU 2943-102, FALL 2020

Instructor: Prof. Laura J Estrada

Telephone: 940-397-4036

Online Office Hours: MWF 10:00 – 11:30 (other times by appointment)

Class Days/Time: MWF, 9:00 – 9:50 a.m. (via Zoom)

Prerequisites: Introduction to Criminal Justice (CRJU 1113)

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**Course Materials**:

Aaron (2016), LB Brief (6th ed.) Pearson, ISBN: 9780134679433 (other editions may be substituted, please check with professor).

**Course Description**:

The purpose of this course is to further develop and enhance the basic writing skills you have obtained in ENGL 1113 and 1123, for use in a criminal justice-specific discipline. Skills relating to research, data analysis, the writing process, editing, as well as research format and style, will be taught through assignments relating to various criminal justice fields. Several skill-specific assignments will be required throughout the semester, in addition to a final research paper that will utilize the skills you will learn throughout the semester.

**Course Objectives**:

At the conclusion of this course, you should have a thorough understanding of research and writing, as required of a criminal justice professional.

1. Complete writing assignments using a professional writing style
2. Conduct thorough and complete research on various criminal justice-related topics.
3. Examine, analyze, and incorporate research into writing assignments
4. Summarize and paraphrase information in writing, using a concise and eloquent manner
5. Utilize information from both primary and secondary sources in your research and writing
6. Document research and writing through the use of a professional format and style

**Course Policies**:

1. Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings for this course, via Zoom, following the University attendance police. Attendance will be taken daily, and a late student is an absent student. As tardiness is unacceptable in the professional world, it is also not tolerated in my classroom. Missing more than three (3) class meetings will result in an automatic “F” for the course. If the absence is unavoidable, you must obtain approval from the professor *before* missing class. Whether or not an absence is excused is solely at the discretion of the professor. If you miss a class, you are responsible for contacting the professor or one of your classmates to obtain notes, hear announcements, and get class updates.

1. D2L:

D2L is required for this course. You are responsible for checking your messages for the course each day class meets to ensure you do not miss an important announcement. You are solely responsible for missing important information if you do not check your D2L email on class days.

1. Late Assignments:

Students are expected to submit assignments on the due date, and **late assignments will not be accepted unless approved by the professor *before* the assignment is due**. This will only be approved in extreme circumstances, to be determined by the professor. Unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor, students will receive NO credit for an assignment submitted past the due date (please do not ask after the assignment is due). Assignments are due on the date stated in the syllabus regardless of whether a student is in class on that date. If a student must miss class on the day an assignment is due, it is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements to submit the assignment on or prior to the due date.

1. Midwestern State University Student Handbook:

Issues not specifically addressed by the syllabus are governed by the student handbook at the MSU Texas Catalog. Make sure you have a copy and are familiar with all the procedures therein. Pay close attention to the Code of Student Conduct section in the handbook.

1. Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is something I take very seriously. As future professionals, it is imperative that you take this seriously as well. Establishing ethical work habits and maintaining both your own integrity and that of your profession begins during your education and training. All writing assignments must be your own original work, created and submitted exclusively for this course. Submitting a writing assignment identical to or substantially similar to work submitted for any other course, whether at MSU or another institution, will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and will result in an automatic grade of F for the course. Each student is expected to abide by the rules of ethical and academic honesty as defined by the student handbook. All cases of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade and a letter to the Dean of Students will be sent, requesting that you be withdrawn from the University. If there are any questions as to whether an action is academically dishonest, please consult with the professor.

1. Class Decorum:

Each student is expected to behave in a mature and professional manner throughout the duration of the course. During any interactions within the class, it is inevitable that there will be some disagreement. This is perfectly acceptable, and such discussion is a valuable part of the learning process. However, throughout these discussions, you *must* show respect for the thoughts and opinions of your fellow classmates. The use of derogatory or inappropriate language, or other forms of disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

1. Syllabus Change Policy:

The syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to reasonable changes. Students will be notified of any changes to the syllabus in a timely fashion.

1. Class Participation:

Active class participation is one of the most essential parts of a valuable learning experience. This course will involve some form of activity and participation each week. Your success in the course and mastery of the material depends heavily on your willingness to participate. Class participation accounts for 5% of your final grade. Good class participation includes 1) attending all Zoom class meetings; 2) reading the assigned material and having completed any assignment given; 3) voluntary, thoughtful, and respectful participation in class activities and/or exercises.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. A diagnostic assignment, a skills assessment assignment, and two longer essays will be required during the semester. The topics for these essays will be assigned, and the specific requirements for each will be given in detail during class meetings. These papers will involve your observation of a scenario (via video or written scenario) and then writing about various aspects of what you have observed. These assignments will give you the opportunity to demonstrate the writing skills you have learned up to that specific point in the course and will also serve as exercises in editing and revising your work.
2. Research Paper: Forty percent (40%) of your grade will be determined through your submission of a final research paper. The process of researching, writing, developing, and editing this paper will take place throughout the semester as you learn and develop the skills necessary to write such a paper. The requirements for the research paper will be discussed more extensively throughout the semester. The paper will show your ability to choose an appropriately narrow topic, conduct scholarly research, develop a thesis statement, draft the paper, and revise that paper at various levels to produce a professional work product. Several progressive steps will be taken in the completion of your final research paper. **All** portions of the research paper must be completed in order to receive full credit on the final research paper. For each portion of the research paper assignment that is not completed in accordance with the deadlines given, one (1) letter grade will be deducted from your final research paper grade.
3. Remember, exploring the scholarly work of others is an important part of active research. However, when the work of others is reflected in your own paper, credit must be given through proper citation. Failure to do this is plagiarism and constitutes academic dishonesty.

Grading Policy:

Assignment Percentage

Diagnostic paper = 5%

Skills Assessment Paper = 10%

First Paper = 20%

Second Paper = 20%

Final Research Paper = 40% (This is your final for this course)

Class Participation = 5%

TOTAL = 100%

* Failure to complete any of these assignments will result in a grade of “F” for the course.

Your grades will be determined on the following scale:

Number Letter

90–100 = A

80–89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

60-below = F

I reserve the right to lower any student’s final grade, at my discretion, for:

1. Repeated unpreparedness for class.
2. A negative, rude, or inattentive attitude in class.
3. Repeatedly disrupting the class.
4. Not showing respect for fellow classmates’ questions, opinions, etc.
5. Excessive unexcused absences/not logging in to Zoom on scheduled class days.

Extenuating Circumstances:

In the event of extenuating circumstances, such as illness, death in the family, etc., please get in touch with me as soon as possible. Assignments and deadlines may be modified on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the professor. Verifiable documentation of the circumstance may be required. The more quickly you let me know what is going on, the more options I will have for allowing you to complete the course.

This schedule is subject to change, as needed. In the event of change, you will be notified via D2L mail, via Zoom, or both.

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| DAY | DATE | TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES |
| MON | 8/24 | Discuss syllabus, intro. material, writing workshops, introduction paper |
| WED | 8/26 | Discuss Part 1 LB Brief (The Writing Process, pp. 2-29), discuss how writing assignments are presented in class (video, written scenario) |
| FRI | 8/28 | Writing workshop – **Introduce yourself paper due no later than 11:30 p.m. (under communications tab/discussions) NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| MON | 8/31 | Diagnostic writing assignment discussed and assigned (Read Part 3, the comma, semicolon, and colon in LBB) |
| WED | 9/2 | Discuss part 5 in LBB (pp. 290, 305, 308) – The comma, semicolon, and colon |
| FRI | 9/4 | Writing workshop – **Diagnostic paper due no later than 11:30 p.m. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| MON | 9/7 | NO CLASSES – LABOR DAY |
| WED | 9/9 | Graded diagnostic papers discussed – review corrections |
| FRI | 9/11 | Writing Workshop – Read Part 6 (pp. 328-333… 335-339 in LBB) spelling and mechanics |
| MON | 9/14 | Skills Assessment Paper discussed and assignment given |
| WED | 9/16 | Discuss part 6 (342 and 345 LBB), Abbreviations and numbers |
| FRI | 9/18 | Writing Workshop – **Skills assessment due no later than 11:30 p.m.** **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| MON | 9/21 | Discuss graded skills assessment papers. Correction activity. |
| WED | 9/23 | Discuss rubric and mechanics of Paper #1/Assign paper #1 |
| FRI | 9/25 | Writing workshop – Read part 1 in LBB (pp. 36-42) – Work on paper #1 |
| MON | 9/28 | Discuss p. 36-39 in LBB -- **Paper #1 Due in dropbox no later than 11:30 p.m.** **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| WED | 9/30 | Discuss and assign paper #2 |
| FRI | 10/2 | Writing Workshop – work on paper #2 |
| MON | 10/5 | Discuss graded paper #1  **(Homework: Read pp. 477-504 in LB Brief)** |
| WED | 10/7 | Discuss Part 7 in LBB (pp. 477-504 APA Documentation and Format). *Discuss topic choice for final paper.* |
| FRI | 10/9 | Writing Workshop – **Paper #2 due in dropbox no later than 11:30 p.m. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| MON | 10/12 | Discuss graded paper #2 and touch base on annotated bibliography. **Homework: Topic choice for final paper due in dropbox no later than 11:30 p.m. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** (If you do not turn in a topic choice by 11:30 p.m., the professor will assign one to you). |
| WED | 10/14 | Annotated bibliography discussed, clarified and assigned. Sample annotated bibliography will be available online and discussed in class. |
| FRI | 10/16 | Writing Workshop -- **Annotated bibliography due in dropbox no later than 11:30 p.m. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| MON | 10/19 | Discuss, organize, and plan research paper |
| WED | 10/21 | Discuss thesis statement and basic outline |
| FRI | 10/23 | Writing Workshop – Work on thesis statement and basic outline (Due Monday 10/26) |
| MON | 10/26 | **Thesis statement and basic outline due in dropbox no later than 11:30 p.m. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |
| WED | 10/28 | Discuss and assign first draft research paper |
| FRI | 10/30 | Writing Workshop – work on first draft research paper |
| MON | 11/2 | Thesis statement and basic outline returned and discussed. *Discuss mandatory writing conferences/choose times* |
| WED | 11/4 | Writing conferences begin |
| FRI | 11/6 | Writing conferences continue – Writing Workshop: Continue working on first draft research paper |
| MON | 11/9 | Writing conferences continue |
| WED | 11/11 | Writing conferences continue |
| FRI | 11/13 | Writing Workshop -- **First draft research paper due in dropbox no later than 11:30 p.m. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.** |
| MON | 11/16 | Writing conferences continue |
| WED | 11/18 | Discuss graded first draft research papers |
| FRI | 11/20 | Writing Workshop – Read Part 7, Pg. 416, Drafting, revising, editing, and formatting |
| MON | 11/23 | Discuss Part 7, Pg. 416, Drafting, revising, editing, and formatting |
| WED | 11/25 | Holiday – no classes |
| FRI | 11/27 | Holiday – no classes |
| MON | 11/30 | Work on final draft – class will meet for questions/concerns |
| WED | 12/2 | Work on final draft – class will meet for questions/concerns |
| FRI | 12/4 | Last day of classes – wrap up – Final Draft Research Paper due no later than 11:30 p.m. **tonight** |
| FRI | 12/4 | **Final draft due no later than 11:30 p.m. via dropbox (this is your final) ABSOLUTELY NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** |

Important Dates to Remember

**Fri 8/28** – Introduction paper due No Later Than 11:30 p.m.

**Fri 9/4** – Diagnostic Paper due No Later Than 11:30 p.m.

**Fri 9/18** – Skills Assessment due No Later Than 11:30 p.m.

**Mon 9/28** – Paper #1 due No Later Than 11:30 p.m.

**Fri 10/9** – Paper #2 due No Later Than 11:30 p.m.

**Mon 10/12** – Topic Choice due No Later than 11:30 p.m.

**Fri 10/16** – Annotated Bibliography due No Later Than 11:30 p.m.

**Mon 10/26** – Thesis Statement and Basic Outline due No later than 11:30 p.m.

**Fri 11/13** – First Draft Research Paper due no later than 11:30 p.m.

**Fri 12/4** – Final Draft Research Paper due no later than 11:30 p.m.