WRITING FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONAL

CRJU 2943-X21, SPRING 2021

Instructor: Prof. Laura J Estrada

Telephone: 940-397-4036

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

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).

**Important Class Note:** Please remember although this is an online course, I am available to you for questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding the course. Please contact me via the email above with any questions.

**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. D2L/DropBox:

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

Your assignments will be submitted via DropBox. If you have any issues with the submission of a paper, please contact me immediately. If you are not familiar with D2L or DropBox, please do not hesitate to contact me for instructions. I am here to help!

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, and/or via D2L mail.

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 when using discussion boards, or while communicating via Zoom. During any interactions within a 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 each week. Your success in the course and mastery of the material depends heavily on your willingness to participate in these activities. Class participation accounts for 5% of your final grade. Good class participation includes 1) Reading the assigned material and having completed any assignment given; 4) thoughtful, and respectful participation in online 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 explained online in detail, and the specific requirements for each will be given. 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. We will occasionally have an online discussion for which you must respond in order to receive credit for that assignment.
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 online throughout the semester. The final 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%

* You will not be allowed to make up a major assignment without a doctor’s note, unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor ***prior*** to the due date.

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.
3. Not showing respect for fellow classmates’ questions, opinions, etc.
4. Not checking your D2L Email for the course.

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.

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| DAY | DATE | TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES |
| MON | 01/11 | Read and understand syllabus (I am available online for questions)  |
| WED | 01/13 | Read Part 1 LB Brief (The Writing Process, pp. 2-29). |
| FRI | 01/15 | INTRODUCE YOURSELF paper due no later than 11:50 p.m. (under communications tab/discussions) **No late papers accepted.** (Instructions are included on paper) |
| MON | 01/18 | NO CLASSES – MLK BIRTHDAY |
| WED | 01/20 | Video available for DIAGNOSTIC PAPER (These will come to your D2L email. Please let me know if you have any questions). Instructions are included in email.  |
| FRI | 1/22 | Read pp 290, 305, & 308 in LBB (The comma, semicolon, and colon) |
| MON | 1/25 | DIAGNOSTIC PAPER DUE via D2L dropbox **(No later than 11:50 p.m. No late papers accepted)** |
| WED | 1/27 | Read pp. 328-333 & 335-339 in LBB |
| FRI | 1/29 |  |
| MON | 2/1 | SKILLS ASSESSMENT Paper assignment available (via D2L Email) |
| WED | 2/3 |  |
| SAT | 2/6 | SKILLS ASSESSMENT Paper Due via D2L dropbox (**no later than 11:50 p.m.) No late papers accepted.**  |
| MON | 2/8 | ESSAY I Video Available via D2L Email |
| WED | 2/10 |  |
| FRI | 2/12 |  |
| MON | 2/15 | ESSAY I Paper Due via D2L dropbox (**No later than 11:50 p.m. No late papers accepted).**   |
| WED | 2/17 | ESSAY II Video Available via D2L Mail  |
| FRI | 2/19 |  |
| MON | 2/22 |  |
| WED | 2/24 | ESSAY II DUE via D2L dropbox (**No later than 11:50 p.m. No late papers accepted).** |
| FRI | 2/26 |  |
| MON | 3/1 | FINAL PAPER TOPIC ASSIGNED (via D2L email).  |
| WED | 3/3 | BASIC OUTLINE AND THESIS STATEMENT assignment available VIA D2L |
| FRI | 3/5 |  |
| MON | 3/8 | BASIC OUTLINE AND THESIS STATEMENT due via D2L dropbox **(No later than 11:50 p.m.)** |
| WED | 3/10 |   |
| FRI | 3/12 |  |
| MON | 3/15 | FIRST DRAFT RESEARCH Paper Assignment given (via D2L Email) |
| WED | 3/17 |  |
| FRI | 3/19 |  |
| MON | 3/22 |  |
| WED | 3/24 |  |
| FRI | 3/26 |  |
| MON | 3/29 | FIRST DRAFT RESEARCH Paper Due (via D2l dropbox No Later than 11:50 p.m.) **No late papers accepted**).  |
| WED | 3/31 |   |
| FRI | 4/2 |  |
| MON | 4/5 | First draft research paper corrections will be completed (please contact me if you wish to review these online or via Zoom).  |
| WED | 4/7 |  |
| FRI | 4/9 | Read Part 7, Pg. 416, Drafting, revising, editing, and formatting  |
| MON | 4/12 |  |
| WED | 4/14 |  |
| FRI | 4/16 |  |
| MON | 4/19 |  |
| WED | 4/21 |  |
| FRI | 4/23 | LAST DAY OF CLASSES |
| SUN | 4/25 | **FINAL DRAFT RESEARCH PAPER due no later than 11:50 p.m. via dropbox (this is your final) ABSOLUTELY NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**  |

Important Dates to Remember

**Mon 1/11** – Introduction paper assignment given via D2L and D2L email.

**Fri 1/15** – Introduction paper due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Wed 1/20** – Video available for Diagnostic Paper

**Mon 1/25** – Diagnostic Paper due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Mon 2/1** – Video available for Skills Assessment Paper

**Sat 2/6** – Skills Assessment paper due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Mon 2/8** – Video available for Essay I

**Mon 2/15** – Essay I due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Wed 2/17** – Video available for Essay II.

**Wed 2/24** – Essay II due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Mon 3/1** – Final Topic Assigned (Professor will assign individual topics for final)

**Wed 3/3 –** Thesis Statement and Basic Outline Assignment Available.

**Mon 3/8** – Thesis Statement and Basic Outline due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Fri 3/15** – First Draft Final Research Paper Assignment Given

**Mon 3/29** - First Draft Research Paper Due via D2L dropbox No Later Than 11:50 p.m.

**Fri 4/23** – Last Day of Classes (please remember your final for this class is your research paper and is due no later than 4/25).

**Sun 4/25** - Final Draft Research Paper due via D2L dropbox no later than 11:50 p.m. **ABSOLUTELY no late papers accepted.**