



Course Syllabus: WRITING FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONAL

College of Health Sciences and Human Services
CRJU 2943-X11
Fall 2021

Contact Information

Instructor: Laura J Estrada

Office hours: MWF 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (Online. Please email, and I will respond immediately during these hours).

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to further develop and enhance the basic writing skills you have obtained in ENGL 1113 and/or 1123, for use in a criminal justice-specific discipline. Skills relating to research, data analysis, the writing process, editing, and 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, which will utilize the skills you will learn throughout the semester.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Aaron (2016), *LB Brief* (6th ed.) Pearson, ISBN: 9780134679433. This book is important in that it will help you with your writing, and it is strongly recommended that you purchase or rent it. You will not be tested over the book, but the material from the book will be extremely useful when writing your papers, in that it will answer many questions about how to write professional papers.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2020-21](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of

work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading

Course Grade – You will have a diagnostic writing assignment, a skills assessment assignment, two longer essays, and a final paper for this course. The papers will become progressively longer throughout the semester.

Table 1: You will be graded as follows:

| Assignments | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Diagnostic Paper | 5% |
| Skills Assessment Paper | 10% |
| First Essay | 20% |
| Second Essay | 20% |
| Final Research Paper | 40% |
| Class Participation | 5% |
| Total Points | 100% |

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

| Grade | Points |
|-------|----------|
| A | 90-100 |
| B | 80-89 |
| C | 70-79 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | 60-below |

Homework

You will have a diagnostic assignment, a skills assignment, two longer essays, and a final paper this semester. The topics for these assignments will be explained in detail online. The specific requirements for each assignment will be sent to your D2L email, and available online. These papers will involve your observation of a scenario (via video or written scenario). You will then write 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. 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 constitute academic dishonesty. If in doubt, use a citation or consult with the professor. All work must be your own, submitted for this class, this semester.

Exams

No exams will be given in this course – your final, as explained below, is a research paper.

Projects Required

During the second half of the semester, each student will be required to complete a research paper, which will be your final for this course, and is worth 40% of your grade. 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, as we get closer to the actual writing of the paper. 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. **IMPORTANT:** You will turn in a rough draft of your final paper (see syllabus for date). You do not have to have the entire paper completed, but you **must** turn in something. The more you submit at that time, the more feedback I can provide.

Final Exam

Your final is the research paper, which will be due Saturday, December 4, 2021, no later than 11:50 PM.

Late Work

Students are expected to submit assignments on or before the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor. Otherwise, students will not receive any credit for an assignment submitted after the due date.

Make Up Work/Tests

Makeup assignments will only be allowed in extreme circumstances, and with the proper documentation. You are responsible for letting the professor know if you have any extenuating circumstances before the due date of the assignment. In the event of an extenuating circumstance such as an 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. 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.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor. Remember, you are responsible for checking D2L daily for any possible course-related information, topics, and/or changes or updates to the course. Your papers will be submitted through DropBox.

Attendance

Please remember to check your D2L Email daily, in order to receive any study materials, changes to the course, etc. There will be occasions I will ask that you respond to my Email. Failure to do so will result in a low participation grade.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. **Assignments are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments.** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings, as well as the Academic Success Center. **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world, which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college can not work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

Students are required to complete assignments on or before the due date. Again, you are responsible for checking your D2L Email for updates, assignments, etc. You are responsible for letting the professor know if you have any questions or concerns regarding an assignment **before** the due date.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. Two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors

to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

I am available to answer any questions you may have about the course. When a question arises, you may contact me at laura.estrada@msutexas.edu , or call my office phone (listed at the top of the syllabus). The class schedule is subject to change, with notice.

Course Schedule

| Week/Day | Assignment | Topic |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Week 1 Mon 8/23 | Read and understand syllabus. Email Professor with any questions. "Introduce yourself" assignment online | Syllabus |
| Fri 8/27 | Intro. Assignment due no later than 11:50 PM (*questions are under the COMMUNICATIONS dropdown box, in DISCUSSIONS, on D2L) | Intro. Assignment Due |
| Week 2 Mon 8/30 | Assignment one – Diagnostic paper (and video link) available via D2L Email. Instructions included in Email. Please let me know if you have any questions | Diagnostic paper assignment available |
| Fri 9/3 | Work on diagnostic paper | Work on diagnostic paper |
| Week 3 Mon 9/6 | LABOR DAY – NO CLASSES | No classes |
| Fri 9/10 | Diagnostic paper due via dropbox no later than 11:50 PM (no late papers accepted) | Diagnostic paper DUE via Dropbox |
| Week 4, Mon 9/13 | Skills Assessment Paper available via D2L email | Skills Assessment Paper available |
| Fri, 9/17 | Work on skills assessment paper | Work on paper |
| Week 5, Mon 9/20 | Skills Assessment due via Dropbox no later than 11:50 PM | Skills Assessment Paper DUE |
| Fri, 9/24 | N/A | N/A |
| Week 6, Mon 9/27 | Essay I assignment available via D2L email | Essay I available |
| Fri, 10/1 | Work on Essay I | Work on Essay I |
| Week 7, Mon 10/4 | Work on Essay I | Work on Essay I |
| Fri, 10/8 | Essay I due via dropbox no later than 11:50 PM | Essay I DUE via dropbox |
| Week 8, Mon 10/11 | Essay II assignment available | Essay II available |
| Fri, 10/15 | Work on Essay II | Work on Essay II |
| Week 9, Mon 10/18 | Essay II due via dropbox no later than 11:50 PM | Essay II DUE |
| Fri, 10/22 | N/A | N/A |
| Week 10, Mon 10/25 | Final paper topic assigned (via D2L mail) | Final paper topic assigned. |

| Week/Day | Assignment | Topic |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Fri, 10/29 | Work on final paper Thesis Statement | Work on thesis statement |
| Week 11, Mon 11/1 | Thesis statement due via dropbox no later than 11:50 PM | Thesis statement DUE |
| Fri, 11/5 | Work on final paper | Work on final paper |
| Week 12, Mon 11/8 | Work on final paper | Work on final paper |
| Week 13, Fri, 11/19 | Final Essay Draft DUE via dropbox no later than 11:50 PM (late papers will not be accepted, and you must turn in something) | Final Essay Draft DUE |
| Week 14, Mon 11/22 | Work on final paper/Happy Thanksgiving Break begins Nov 24 th | Work on final paper/Thanksgiving |
| Week 15, Mon 11/29 | Last week of classes – finish up final paper | Finish up final paper |
| Fri, 12/3 | Last day of classes | Last day of classes |
| Sat, 12/4 | Final draft research paper DUE no later than 11:50 PM via dropbox. Absolutely no late papers can or will be accepted. REMEMBER, THIS IS YOUR FINAL FOR THIS CLASS | FINAL DRAFT RESEARCH PAPER DUE |