Department:

Criminal Justice

Course Description:

This course provides a general overview of American criminal law. The course will cover principles of criminal law, principles of criminal liability, complicity, inchoate offenses, defenses, justifications, crimes against persons, crimes against property, and crimes against public order. The course will also include the basic rules of criminal procedure, including, but not limited to, constitutional aspects of criminal justice processes, pretrial processes, trials, sentencing, and appeals.

Course Competencies:

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe the differences between criminal and civil liability, and explain the structure of the court systems and the duties of the judicial branch.
2. Explain the justifications for law and the purposes of punishment.
3. Explain the two essential elements of crime: mens rea, the mental aspect, and actus reus, the physical aspect.
4. Define the elements of crimes against persons, property, and the public.
5. Explain the concepts of attempt, conspiracy, and solicitation to commit crimes.
6. Explain the nature of factual and statutory defenses, including insanity, self-defense, defense of others, entrapment, and alibis.
7. Explain the constitutional principles of self-incrimination, double jeopardy, due process, equal protection, and free speech.

Course Content:

A. Criminal Procedure
   1. Courtroom work group, including prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, law enforcement personnel, defendants, and victims
   2. The adversarial nature of the criminal justice process
   3. Terminology and definitions
B. Constitutional Aspects of Law
   1. Exclusionary rule, search and seizure, good faith exceptions, lawful arrest
   2. Types of warrants and affidavits used in criminal law
C. Concepts and Practices Associated with the 6th Amendment
D. Lawfulness of Interviews, Interrogation, Confessions, and Admissions
E. Right to Counsel, Right to Confront Witnesses, Right to a Fair, Public, and Speedy Trial
F. Pretrial Processes
   1. Formal charging documents
2. Arraignment
3. Preliminary hearing
4. Discovery

G. Trial Processes
1. Rights of defendant in a criminal trial
2. Protocol of jury selection, seating of jury, and instructions to jury
3. Protocol of presentation of state and defense cases
4. Verdict

**Learning Assessments:**

Course competencies will be assessed by worksheets, assignments, case study reports, written papers, and exams.

**Instructional Materials:**


**Guidelines for Requesting Accommodations Based on Documented Disability or Medical Condition**

It is the intention of Highland Community College to work toward full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to make instructional programs accessible to all people, and to provide reasonable accommodations according to the law.

Students should understand that it is their responsibility to self-identify their need(s) for accommodation and that they must provide current, comprehensive diagnosis of a specific disability or medical condition from a qualified professional in order to receive services. Documentation must include specific recommendations for accommodation(s). Documentation should be provided in a timely manner prior to or early in the semester so that the requested accommodation can be considered and, if warranted, arranged.

In order to begin the process all students must complete the “Disabilities Self-Identification Form” at this link: https://highlandcc.edu/pages/disability-services.

This form can also be accessed at the Highland Community College homepage under Students Services/Student Resources/Disability Service or by contacting the Disabilities Coordinator.