

**Core Curriculum
Course Proposal Cover Sheet**

Department	Criminal Justice
College	COLFA
Department Head	Rhonda Dobbs

Course Prefix & Number	CRIJ 1301
Course Title	Introduction of Criminal Justice
Course Description	

A survey of the history, philosophy, and operations of the American criminal justice system. Topics include the nature of crime and justice, the history and development of the modern criminal justice system and the role of police, judiciary, and corrections in society.

SOCIAL and BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

FOUNDATIONAL COMPONENT AREA JUSTIFICATION FORM

Rationale: Please provide a rationale for the course which explains how the course being proposed fits into this component based on the component's description. For your convenience, the overall description and rationale for this component are included below.

Social and Behavioral Science (from THECB Chapter 4: 4.28)

- Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human.
- Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

The following four Core Objectives must be addressed in each course approved to fulfill this category requirement: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills and Social Responsibility.

- Critical Thinking Skills: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information;
- Communication Skills: to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication;
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills - to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Rationale for Inclusion in this Category:

Colleges and Universities in the State of Texas include courses focusing on the operations of state and federal government in the core curriculum. What is currently missing at Tarleton State is the focus on an important, highly visible component of government operations, namely, the criminal justice process. While many people recognize visible signs of the criminal justice system (i.e. police presence), few students outside of the criminal justice major have exposure to the full understanding of the criminal justice system and its impact on society as a whole as well as in their personal lives. Of the social sciences offered at institutional levels, the least understood component involves the application of criminal justice and criminology. While

entertainment media has capitalized on the popularity of criminal justice related programming, what comes with this are many myths about the criminal justice system (Barthe et al., 2013). Unfortunately, these myths lead to misunderstandings of how the criminal justice system actually operates, for example issues involving racial equity, critical issues in policing, application of correctional policies, and public opinions (Donovan & Klahm, 2015; Henderson, Cullen, Cao, Browning, & Kopache, 1997; Toch & Maguire, 2014). This can have far reaching consequences as can be seen throughout our society today. One of the key features of this core area is the “exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events.” There are many modern day examples of this within criminal justice that are often misunderstood. For example, after several highly publicized killings of black men by white police officers, tensions have increased between law enforcement and minority communities. While some of the concerns regarding police use of force that have been raised are valid, some are misinformed due to a lack of knowledge about law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Having people educated regarding criminal justice policy and procedure would likely make for more productive interactions regarding use of force as well as other modern criminal justice issues. Inclusion of the Introduction to Criminal Justice course into the core curriculum as a social and behavioral course option will potentially expose more students and help dispel some of these myths perpetuated in news and entertainment programming.

With an ever increasing role in contemporary society, criminal justice policy and application impacts numerous persons, through criminal actions by offenders, victims of criminal actions, government responses to quelling crime, economics of criminal activity, responding to needs of minority populations, and serving the needs of the community. It would certainly seem relevant, then, to include The Introduction to Criminal Justice course in this section of the core curriculum.

In addition, according to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) dataset, Intro to Criminal Justice 1301 is taught at several colleges and universities in the State of Texas. At the time of retrieval from the dataset September 25, 2018, fifteen colleges and universities offered CRIJ 1301 or a similar course as a part of their core curriculum. This evaluates only the CRIJ 1301 course and excludes other criminal justice courses. Intro to Criminal Justice is listed on page 93-94 of the Spring 2018 publication of the THECB Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual, or otherwise known as the ACGM (*Lower-division academic course guide manual*, 2018). The course description listed in the manual reads as such:

This course provides a historical and philosophical overview of the American criminal justice system, including the nature, extent, and impact of crime; criminal law; and justice agencies and processes.

The Department of Criminal Justice at Tarleton State (*2018-2019 University Catalog, 2018*) has a similar description as outlined by the THECB:

A survey of the history, philosophy, and operations of the American criminal justice system. Topics include the nature of crime and justice, the history and development of the modern criminal justice system and the role of police, judiciary, and corrections in society.

With inclusion of CRIJ 1301 Introduction to Criminal Justice as an option in the core curriculum, transfer students from community colleges or other universities have an additional component available to satisfy the Social and Behavioral Science requirement.

References:

- 2018-2019 *University Catalog*. (2018). Stephenville. Retrieved from <http://catalog.tarleton.edu/>
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- Bernier, A., & Males, M. (2017). Needed : A fresh perspective on campus violence. *The NEA Higher Education Journal*, (Winter), 47–58.
- Donovan, K. M., & Klahm, C. F. (2015). The role of entertainment media in perceptions of police use of force. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 42(12), 1261–1281. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0093854815604180>
- Henderson, M. L., Cullen, F. T., Cao, L., Browning, S. L., & Kopache, R. (1997). The impact of race on perceptions of criminal injustice. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 25(6), 447–462. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2352\(97\)00032-9](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2352(97)00032-9)
- Lower-division academic course guide manual*. (2018). Austin.
- Shulman, E. P., Steinberg, L. D., & Piquero, A. R. (2013). The Age-Crime Curve in Adolescence and Early Adulthood is Not Due to Age Differences in Economic Status. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 42(6), 848–860. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-013-9950-4>
- Toch, H., & Maguire, K. (2014). Public opinion regarding crime, criminal justice, and related topics: A retrospect. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 51(4), 424–444. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0022427813520444>

Instructions for the Student Learning Outcomes Alignment Form

The core objectives that are listed are those that must be addressed in each course in this category. You can add additional as you wish, however you may not delete any that are listed.

You may choose to use your own student learning objectives for the course as long as they somewhat match those adopted at Tarleton which are those shown. If it is a stretch to see how they fit, they may get rejected.

Make sure the learning activities and means of assessment match the objectives. Perhaps embedded multiple choice questions may not be useable to grade oral communication. If you are going to use a rubric to grade an essay then please include it with your submission.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME ALIGNMENT FORM
Social and Behavioral Science

Course Prefix/Number:

Course Title:

Core Objective: Critical Thinking CT1: Students will be able to evaluate evidence in analysis, interpretation or arguments

Course SLO(s): Students will accurately describe the history and philosophy of the American criminal justice system.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through testing and written assignments, secondarily through class participation.

Core Objective: Critical Thinking CT2: Students will be able to synthesize varied components of information to form a rational conclusion.

Course SLO(s): Students will accurately describe the structure of contemporary federal, state, and local justice agencies and processes.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through testing and written assignments, secondarily through class participation.

Core Objective: Communication C1: Students will express ideas in written, visual or oral forms to a range of diverse audiences in multiple settings.

Course SLO(s): Students will competently compose a written evaluation of the development, concepts, and functions of law in the criminal justice system.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through written assignments.

Core Objective: Empirical and Quantitative Skills EQS1: Students will gather, interpret or use numerical data/observable facts to arrive at an informed conclusion.

Course SLO(s): Student will competently analyze the impact and consequences of crime by understand the key ways crime is measured, the strengths and weaknesses of each measurement of crime, and the historical patterns of crime and incarceration in the U.S.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through testing and written assignments, secondarily through class participation.

Core Objective: Social Responsibility SR1: Students will demonstrate an understanding of different cultural perspectives.

Course SLO(s): Students will competently explain the nature and extent of crime in America, especially as it relates to patterns of crime across diverse groups of people as well as disparities in criminal justice intervention across diverse groups.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through testing and written assignments, secondarily through class participation.

Additional objectives at the discretion of the department.

Core Objective: (Critical Thinking)

Course SLO(s): Understand how discretion is used in the criminal justice system and the implications of discretionary tactics in law enforcement and court systems.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through testing and written assignments, secondarily through class participation.

Core Objective: Social Responsibility

Course SLO(s): Evaluate changes in criminal justice policies in relation to changes expressed in various social climates.

Learning Activities: The course comprises of lectures, guest speakers, and group discussion.

Means of Assessment: Mastery, understanding, and familiarity with course content will primarily be demonstrated through testing and written assignments, secondarily through class participation.

As department head, I will ensure that all faculty that teach this course are aware of the requirements that these core objectives and learning strategies be incorporated into the above referenced course. This action is taken so that Tarleton State University will be in compliance with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board foundational component area and core objective requirements for the General Education Core Curriculum.

Signature _____

We, the undersigned faculty, support the proposed changes to this course and agree to incorporate them into our section of the above referenced course. This action is taken so that Tarleton State University will be in compliance with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board foundational component area and core objective requirements for the General Education Core Curriculum.

(Signed document should be kept in department office, listing names below on the electronic document implies acceptance)