

COURSE OUTLINE **Criminal Justice Ethics**

Course Description

AJ 216. Criminal Justice Ethics. 3 hours credit. This course will enable the student to examine criminal justice issues from a professional code of ethics perspective. The student will explore related contemporary ethical issues and develop a foundation for analyzing ethical dilemmas and their impact on the criminal justice system and the public.

Course Relevance

This course is designed to provide the student with a broad-based understanding of the basic principles of theoretical and applied ethical theories. These principles will provide the student with a framework to resolve moral and ethical issues encountered as a criminal justice practitioner.

Required Materials

Pollock, J., *Ethical dilemmas and decisions in criminal justice*. Belmont, CA:
Wadsworth

* - For complete textbook information, refer to <http://www.butlercc.bkstr.com>

Learning Outcomes

The intention is for the student to be able to

1. Demonstrate an understanding of theoretical and applied ethical theories
2. Apply professional ethical codes to resolve moral dilemmas associated within the criminal justice system
3. Analyze the effects of corruption on public perception
4. Develop a foundation for ethical decision making and professional integrity

Primary Learning PACT Skills that will be DEVELOPED and/or documented in this course

Through the student's involvement in this course, he/she will develop his/her ability in the following primary PACT skill areas:

1. Problem Solving
 - The student will develop problem solving and analytical skills to address ethical dilemmas inherent in the criminal justice process through written assignments and other activities conducted in class.
2. Ethical Conduct
 - The student will develop an understanding of the importance of ethical decision making and personal and professional integrity through class discussion and written assignments.

Secondary skills (developed but not documented):

Self-Concept

Critical Thinking
Effective Relationships
Valuing Diversity
Historical Interpretation
Reading
Writing
Internet Use

Major Summative Assessment Task(s)

These learning outcomes and the primary Learning PACT skills will be demonstrated by

1. Completion of a written project analyzing a policy related to a contemporary ethical dilemma inherent to the criminal justice field
2. Completion of an ethics self-survey by the student articulating the impact their personal values have on their professional conduct and ethical decision making

Course Content

- I. Themes – Key recurring concepts that run throughout this course:
 - A. Ethical systems operating within the criminal justice system and their impact on the public
 - B. Resolution of ethical and moral dilemmas encountered within the criminal justice system
- II. Issues – Key areas of conflict that must be understood in order to achieve the intended outcome:
 - A. Practitioner discretion vs. administration of law
 - B. Whistle-blowing and loyalty
 - C. Relationship between law enforcement and public perception
- III. Concepts – Key concepts that must be understood to address the issues:
 - A. Law, due process and justice
 - B. The roles and responsibilities of various officials in the criminal justice system
 - C. The role of police in society
- IV. Skills/Competencies – Actions that are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
 - A. Reading
 - B. Writing
 - C. Computer Literacy
 - D. Analytical Thinking
 - E. Ability to compare and contrast
 - F. Memorization
 - G. Application of concepts

Learning Units

- I. Morality, ethics, and behavior
 - A. Define morals and ethics
 - B. Morality and the law
 - C. Morality and behavior
 - D. Analyzing ethical dilemmas

- II. Determining moral behavior
 - A. Ethical systems
 - B. Methods of ethical decision making
 - C. Relativism and absolutism
 - D. Situational ethics

- III. Making ethical decisions
 - A. Theories of moral development
 - B. Ethics, behavior, and criminality

- IV. The origins and concept of justice
 - A. Origins of the concept of justice
 - B. Components of justice
 - C. Distributive justice
 - D. Corrective justice

- V. Law and the individual
 - A. Paradigms of law
 - B. Justifications for law
 - C. Criminal and moral culpability
 - D. Immoral laws and the moral person
 - E. Victims rights
 - F. Restorative justice

- VI. Ethics and the criminal justice professional
 - A. Policy making in criminal justice
 - B. Balancing law and justice
 - C. The criminal justice professional
 - D. Leadership and training

- VII. Police role in society
 - A. Community policing
 - B. Authority and power
 - C. Formal ethics for police officers
 - D. Police subculture
 - E. Discretion, duty, and discrimination
 - F. Crime fighter and public servant

- VIII. Corruption and the “code”
 - A. Types of corruption
 - B. Excessive force
 - C. Measures of corruption
 - D. Explanations of deviance

- IX. Noble-cause corruption
 - A. Investigations
 - B. Interrogation
 - C. Loyalty and whistle-blowing
 - D. Reducing corruption

- X. Ethics and legal professionals
 - A. Ethical issues for defense attorneys
 - B. Ethical issues for prosecutors

- XI. Justice and judicial ethics
 - A. Perceptions of judicial processing
 - B. Ethical issues for judges
 - C. Judicial independence and the constitution

- XII. Ethics of punishment and corrections
 - A. Rationales for punishment and corrections
 - B. Ethical framework for corrections
 - C. Punishment
 - D. Private corrections

- XIII. Ethics and institutional corrections
 - A. Correctional professionals
 - B. Correctional officers
 - C. Treatment staff
 - D. Management issues

- XIV. Ethics and community corrections
 - A. The concept of community corrections
 - B. Probation and parole officers
 - C. Parole
 - D. New paradigm of corrections

- XV. Ethical choices and the war on terror
 - A. The threat of terrorism
 - B. Crime control and “means-end” thinking
 - C. Crime control, human rights, and the war on terror

Learning Activities

Classroom: Learning activities will be geared toward assisting the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Activities may include lecture, instructor-led class discussions, group study, hands-on activities, library research, various audio/visual aids, case studies, guest speakers and student presentations and others at the discretion of the instructor.

Online: Textbook reading assignments and instructor notes/outlines, student activity assignments, discussion questions and study guide assignments.

Grade Determination

The student will be graded on assessment tasks, written assignments, exams, quizzes, study guides, student activity assignments, discussion questions, class participation, and other methods of evaluation at the discretion of the instructor.