



REQUIRED TEXT

Students must enroll in the Lexis Classroom page titled “**CrimLaw-A-F25-Jones**” with Passcode: **R4RD9N** no later than the end of the first week of classes

This introductory course covers general principles and policies of criminal law as well as substantive “black letter” doctrine. Topics include the basic components required to criminalize behavior, crimes against the person, crimes against property, inchoate crimes, crimes of complicity, and affirmative defenses. Prosecuting and defending those accused of committing crime is a significant area of the law; this course provides the necessary foundation to understand and critically analyze this subject matter.

Class attendance is important, and it is mandatory. Students who miss more than four class sessions are subject to administrative dismissal from the course per the WSCL Attendance Policy (reprinted in the Student Handbook). Note: just because you can miss four classes without being dropped from this course does not mean that you should miss four classes.

Students earn a numeric grade for this course. The final course grade will consist of two “closed book” examinations: a midterm (during a regularly scheduled class) and a three-hour final exam. Final grades will be based on the midterm (15%), the final examination (70%), and P&P (participation & professionalism) (15%).

PARTICIPATION, PROFESSIONALISM, & PREPARATION

Participation & Professionalism (P&P): Law school success involves active learning. You should read the assigned material prior to class, listen to what is said in class (including what is said in response to other students), and refrain from multi-tasking (checking social media, reading for other courses, etc) during class. This Crim Law class only meets twice a week for 180 total minutes; if you devote yourself to this class time you will derive its maximum benefits.

For volunteer participation, quality is valued over quantity. Being an engaged participant is important, and you should feel comfortable asking questions when and if you have them. But please don't feel obliged to talk in every single class. All views are welcome.

Your "P&P" grade will be based on the quality & quantity of your contributions to class discussions, preparation for class, attendance, punctuality, and conduct during class.

You may not record this class without my prior approval. Students in violation of course policies may be referred to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Outside Preparation: Criminal Law is a bar-tested topic and a graduation requirement. You should anticipate that, on average, preparing for class will take you a minimum of 2 hours for every 1 hour of class time. To repeat: because Criminal Law is a three-unit class, you should estimate your class preparation will require 6 or more hours outside of class.

LEARNING GOALS

After completion of this course, students should be able to:

- ◆ Understand, and think critically about, the components, elements, and policies of basic crimes and defenses.
- ◆ Identify the factual and legal issues implicated by a fact pattern.
- ◆ Apply and distinguish cases, with the ability to identify the salient features of appropriate precedent cases and to identify and explain legally significant similarities and differences between the precedent case and a fact pattern.
- ◆ Apply rules to facts, with the ability to articulate a rule implicated by the issue, to identify legally significant facts in a fact pattern, and to explain why the facts are significant by connecting the facts to the requirement(s) of the rule.

OFFICE HOURS

Fall 2025 Office Hours TBD ...

SYLLABUS

Weeks 1-2: FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF CRIMINAL LAW

WEEK 1: Monday August 11 & Wednesday August 13

Introduction: Criminal Law Principles & Components

pp. vii & viii; 5(n6)-12(thru n2); 406-407(n2 & n3); 200(n3); 208(n3); 99-104; 107-108(thru n3); 133

WEEK 2: Monday August 18 & Wednesday August 20

Criminal Law Principles & Components

pp. 134-136; 149(n2)-151; 161-162; 168(n3)-181; 237-244; 257

Weeks 3-6: CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON

WEEK 3: Monday August 25 & Wednesday August 27

Homicide: Intentional Killings (1° Murder ↔ Voluntary Manslaughter)

pp. 263-265; 281-300

WEEK 4: Wednesday September 3

Homicide: Intentional Killings (1° Murder ↔ Voluntary Manslaughter)

pp. 263-265; 281-300

WEEK 5: Monday September 8 & Wednesday September 10

Homicide: Unjustified Risk Taking (2° Murder ↔ Involuntary Manslaughter); Felony Murder

pp. 324-330; 333-339(thru n9); 342

WEEK 6: Monday September 15 & Wednesday September 17

Rape

pp. 417-418; 423(n4); 445-454; 460-469; 483-486

Week 7: CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY

WEEK 7: Monday September 22 & Wednesday September 24

Theft Offenses

pp. 965-975(thru n5); 982-990; 995-1000

WEEK 8: Monday September 29 & Wednesday October 1

Review (Monday) & MIDTERM (Wednesday)

Weeks 9-10: INCOMPLETE CRIMES & CRIMES OF COMPLICITY

WEEK 9: Monday October 6 & Wednesday October 8

Attempt

pp. 766-767; 781-786; 794-802

WEEK 10: Monday October 13 & Wednesday October 15

Solicitation; Conspiracy; Accomplice Liability

pp. 825-829(thru n4); 831-838; 852-857; 893-899; 911-916

WEEK 11: FALL BREAK

Weeks 12-14: AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

WEEK 12: Monday October 27 & Wednesday October 29

Self Defense

pp. 511; 521-522; 524-542; 547(n8)-548

WEEK 13: Monday November 3 & Wednesday November 5

Intoxication (Voluntary & Involuntary); Necessity; Duress

pp. 637-640; 644(n6)-645; 589-592; 595(n5); 53-55; 605-612(thru n6); 617-620

WEEK 14: Monday November 10 & Wednesday November 12

Insanity; Infancy

pp. 645-660; 706-712

WEEK 15: Monday November 17 & Wednesday November 19

Criminal Law in Today's Digital Age; Wrap-Up & Review

Download & Read: Jones, Elizabeth N., *Crim Pro Rewired: Why Current Police Practices Require Candor in the Classroom*. 21 Seattle J. Soc. Just. 541 (2023),

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4408884



Disability Services Statement: Western State College of Law provides accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. The Disabilities Services Office assists qualified students with disabilities in acquiring reasonable and appropriate accommodations and in supporting equal access to services, programs, and activities at Western State College of Law. To seek reasonable accommodations, a student must contact Senior Assistant Dean Donna Espinoza, Student Services Director and Disabilities Services Coordinator, whose office is in the Students Services Suite #111. Dean Espinoza's phone number and email address are: (714) 459-1117; despinoza@wsulaw.edu. When seeking accommodations, a student should notify Dean Espinoza of her or his specific limitations and, if known, her or his specific requested accommodations. Students who seek accommodations will be asked to supply medical documentation of the need for accommodation. Classroom accommodations are not retroactive but are effective only upon the student sharing approved accommodations with the instructor or professor. Therefore, students are encouraged to request accommodations as early as feasible with Dean Espinoza to allow for time to gather necessary documentation. If you have a concern or complaint in this regard, please notify Dean Espinoza; or please notify Dean Marisa Cianciarulo at mcianciarulo@wsulaw.edu or (714) 459-1168. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the College of Law's "Policy against Discrimination and Harassment."

Western State College of Law Programmatic Learning Outcomes: Western State College of Law's curriculum is designed so that every student achieves a level of competency prior to graduation in each of the eight Programmatic Learning Outcomes listed below:

- (1) **Doctrinal Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of substantive and procedural law in the core curriculum subjects, including Contracts, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Torts, Property, Business Associations, Evidence, Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Estates, Community Property, Remedies, and Professional Responsibility.
- (2) **Practice Skills:** Students will demonstrate the development of other law practice skills. Each student's chosen outcomes within this category will be varied based on the student's particular interests, coursework and work experiences. They may include, but are not limited to, the following topics: oral presentation and advocacy; interviewing; counseling; client service and business development; negotiations, mediation, arbitration, or other alternate dispute resolution methods; advanced legal research and writing (excluding purely academic papers and the first four units earned in introductory first-year legal research and writing class); applied legal writing such as drafting contracts, pleadings, other legal instruments; law practice management or the use of technology in law practice; cultural competency; collaboration or project management; financial analysis, such as accounting, budgeting project management, and valuation; cost benefit analysis in administrative agencies; use of technology, data analyses, or predictive coding; business strategy and behavior; pre-trial preparation, fact investigation, such as discovery, e-discovery, motion practice, assessing evidence, or utilizing experts; trial practice; professional civility and applied ethics; a law clinic that includes a classroom component; or a legal externship that includes a classroom component.
- (3) **Legal Analysis:** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the factual and legal issues implicated by a fact pattern and to appropriately use cases (including identifying the salient features of an appropriate precedent case, identifying legally significant similarities or differences between the precedent case and a fact pattern and explaining why those are legally significant) and rules (including the ability to connect legally significant facts in a fact pattern to the rule) to predict how a court would decide the issue. Students will also demonstrate the ability to identify and evaluate the public policies of a precedent case or rule, and be able to evaluate how public policy can impact the application of a rule to the legal issue.
- (4) **Legal Research:** Students will demonstrate the ability to locate relevant legal authority using a variety of book and electronic resources, and to properly cite to such legal authority.
- (5) **Communication:** Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate both orally and in writing in a manner appropriate to a particular task to effectively convey the author or speaker's ideas. This includes audience sensitivity in written and oral communication (the ability to adopt a tone, style and level of detail appropriate to the needs, knowledge and expertise of the audience); and written communication basic proficiency (the ability to use the conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction and usage appropriate to the task and sufficient to convey effectively the author's ideas).
- (6) **Advocacy of Legal Argument:** Students will demonstrate the ability, in both oral and written formats, to evaluate the legal, economic and social strengths and weaknesses of a case and use case and statutory authority as well as public policy to persuade others. Making policy-based arguments includes the ability to identify and evaluate the public policies of a precedent case or rule and their implications, and be able to assert such appropriate arguments to support a particular application or distinction of a precedent case to a legal controversy or a particular resolution of the application of a rule to the legal controversy.
- (7) **Client Sensitivity and Cultural Competency:** Students will demonstrate an awareness of clients' needs and goals, including a sensitivity to clients' background and circumstances (including, but not limited to, socio-economic, gender, race, ethnicity, educational, disability and/or religious background(s)), the ability to make decisions that reflect an appropriate focus on those needs and goals, and awareness that cultural issues may affect the relevance of facts and application of the law.
- (8) **Legal Ethics:** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify ethical issues in law practice contexts and make appropriate decisions to resolve such issues.