



Syllabus
CRIM 1010
Introduction to Criminal Justice
2026

Committee Members:

- Michael David, Central Community College
- N/A, Metropolitan Community College
- Sheri Hink-Wagner, Mid-Plains Community College
- Matt McCarthy & Colleen Barnes, Northeast Community College
- Rita Dondlinger, Southeast Community College
- Tiffany Wasserburger, Western Nebraska Community College
- N/A, Little Priest Tribal College
- N/A, Nebraska Indian Community College

Facilitator: Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Institution agrees to the contents in this syllabus including course prefix, number, course description and other contents of this syllabus.

 Chief Academic Officer, Central Community College	02/12/2026	Adopt
 Chief Academic Officer, Little Priest Tribal College	02/13/2026	Not Offered
 Chief Academic Officer, Metropolitan Community College	02/16/2026	Adopt
 Chief Academic Officer, Mid-Plains Community College	02/11/2026	Adopt
 Chief Academic Officer, Nebraska Indian Community College	02/16/2026	Adopt
 Chief Academic Officer, Northeast Community College	02/11/2026	Adopt
 Chief Academic Officer, Southeast Community College	02/20/2026	Adopt
 Chief Academic Officer, Western Nebraska Community College	02/18/2026	Adopt



I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Course Number: CRIM1010
Course Title: Introduction to Criminal Justice
Prerequisite(s): None

Catalog Description: Provides an overview of the history, development, and philosophies of the criminal justice system within the United States. Areas covered include crime and the criminal justice system, the police, the courts, corrections, and the juvenile justice system.

Credit Hours: 3.0 semester hours/4.5 quarter hours

Contact Hours: 45 hours

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES

A. Course will:

1. Identify the basic components of justice processes
2. Recognize the major sources of crime data, and their uses and limitations
3. Examine the historical evolution of the role of policing in a modern society
4. Examine criminal court systems and adversarial concepts
5. Examine correctional systems and the purposes of punishment
6. Define the basic differences between juvenile and adult systems
7. Identify emerging and international forms of justice

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

A. Students will be able to:

1. Describe the structure and functions of the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, courts, and corrections.
2. Explain the role of criminal law in defining crimes, protecting rights, and guiding the justice process.
3. Identify and discuss key theories related to crime, criminal behavior, and victimization.
4. Analyze the criminal justice process from arrest through corrections, including due process and constitutional protections.
5. Analyze current issues and challenges in policing, the courts, and corrections (e.g., ethics, diversity, technology, public policy).
6. Apply critical thinking skills to analyze the effectiveness and fairness of criminal justice practices.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of career opportunities and professional responsibilities within the field of criminal justice.

IV. COURSE CONTENT / TOPICAL OUTLINE (chronology may vary)

1. Criminal Justice Today
2. Measuring and Explaining Crime
3. Inside Criminal Law
4. Law Enforcement Today
5. Problems and Solutions in Modern Policing
6. Police and the Constitution
7. Courts and the Quest for Justice
8. Pretrial Procedures and the Criminal Trial
9. Punishment and Sentencing
10. Probation and Intermediate Sanctions
11. Prisons and Jails
12. The Prisoner Experience and Prisoner Reentry
13. Juvenile Justice System
14. Today's Challenges in Criminal Justice

V. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. The following texts are suggested for this course:
 1. Criminal Justice in Action, Gaines & Miller, Cengage Learning, Latest Edition.
 2. CJ2022, Fagin, Pearson, Latest Edition
 3. Introduction to Criminal Justice: Practice and Process, Peak & Madensen-Herold, Sage, Latest Edition
 4. Open Educational Resources that meet the listed course objectives/competencies and student outcomes, chosen at the instructors' discretion. These resources will be comparable in content to the textbooks listed above.

- B. Supplemental Materials (handouts, articles, videos, website, etc.) to be supplied by the instructor.

VI. METHOD OF PRESENTATION/INSTRUCTION

- A. Lecture/Discussion
- B. Hybrid, Blended, Virtual
- C. Online
- D. Subject Matter Experts

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION

- A. Exams
- B. Written Assignments
- C. Oral Assignments
- D. Projects

VIII. INSTITUTIONAL DEFINED SECTION

Content and schedule determined by instructor.