COURSE NUMBER: CJ402
COURSE NAME: Courts and Courtroom Procedures
Fall 2015, Session II – Opelika
Wednesday, 10/7, 14, 21, 28, 11/4 from 5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

INSTRUCTOR’S NAME: Dr. Michael Short

CONTACT INFORMATION: mshort@hawks.huntingdon.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides an overview of the state and federal criminal court systems, focusing on the role of courtroom personnel in the administration of justice. It also focuses on various administrative issues pertaining to trial courts and their impact on the criminal justice system. It examines the responsibilities of and issues facing court administrators and the judiciary.

PREREQUISITE: CJ100 (or equivalent)


COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:
The student will understand and be able to explain the following:

- Basic structures and functions of the court systems within the United States
- Key personnel involved within a court system
- Procedures governing arrest and trial
- Rules of evidence
- General court procedures
- Court rulings
- Current issues involving discretion, disparity, and discrimination

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING CRITERIA:

Exams: Five quizzes. Each quiz is worth 100 points, for a total possible of 500 points from quizzes. Each quiz covers the subject matter of its respective class session and is not cumulative. Each quiz will also include one discussion question which may be answered at your option. Discussion answers will be evaluated, and points earned will be “bonus” points for the respective quiz. The purpose of the quiz is to make certain that you have read the text. Questions appearing on the quiz may not necessarily be taken from the presentation and discussion of the material during the class.
**Writing Assignments:** There will be a writing assignment due for each class. Each writing assignment will be worth 25 points, for a total possible of 125 points from writing assignments. The subject matter of each writing assignment will be taken from the material covered in the text for that class period. The purpose of the writing assignments is to assess your critical thinking skills and ability to apply what you have learned in the text to a real-life situation. Wherever you see instructions to “use the Internet and do a search,” please do the following: a) go to the Library’s web site, and use our online catalogue (Countess OneSearch); and b) go into the Library’s databases. If you do not find what you are seeking there, you may search the Internet at large, but do not use Google; use Google Scholar for your searches.

Quiz scores will be averaged and will be equivalent to 50 percent of your overall grade for the course. Written assignments will be equivalent to 40 percent of your overall grade for the course. Participation will make up the additional 10 percent of our overall grade for the course.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Elements</th>
<th>Percentage:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Assignments</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**GRADE POINT EQUIVALENTS** - Describe the point range for each letter grade.

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 59-below

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

**Absences and Tardiness – All students are required to attend the first session.** Those who do not attend the first session will be automatically dropped from the course. Students with more than one absence will receive an "F" for the course. Since this class meets only five times, missing a single class meeting is equivalent to missing three weeks of a regular term. If you cannot attend a class you must let the instructor know via email as soon as possible. In case of absences you are responsible for obtaining all handouts and assignments. Tardiness may result in a deduction in your class participation grade. Excessive tardiness may count as an absence.

**Participation** – Participation is not the same as attendance. Participation requires students to come to class prepared to actively participate, which makes the classroom experience more meaningful. However, participation is not just speaking out in class. The contributions made by the student should be related to the course content and meaningful to the class discussion.
Late Assignments – Late assignments are **NOT** accepted unless under extreme emergency situations.

**Accommodation of Special Needs**- Huntingdon College makes every reasonable accommodation for disabilities that have been processed and approved through our Disability Services Committee in accord with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In order to request disability-related services at Huntingdon College, students must self-identify to the Disabilities Intake Coordinator, Camilla Irvin, and provide appropriate and up-to-date documentation to verify their disability or special needs. After the accommodations have been approved by the Disability Services Committee, the 504 Coordinator, Dr. Lisa Olenik Dorman, will notify your professor(s) of the committee’s decision. If you have any questions regarding reasonable accommodation or need to request disability-related services, please contact Disability Services at (334) 833-4577 or e-mail at disabilityservices@huntingdon.edu.

**Academic Honesty** – Plagiarism is literary theft. Failure to cite the author of any language or of any ideas *which are not your own creation* is plagiarism. This includes any text you might paraphrase, as well. Anyone is capable of searching the Internet or any printed media; your research paper is intended to broaden your knowledge, stimulate your creativity, and make you think, analyze, and learn. It is not consistent with the College Honor Code, nor with scholarly expectations to submit work which is not the product of your own thinking and research. Severe penalties will result upon the submission of any work found to be plagiarized, including potential failure of the entire course. It is easy and simple to properly cite all sources used in your paper. Take no risks – cite your sources.

**Huntingdon College Library**: As an EB student you have access to the full-range of electronic resources provided by the Library of Huntingdon College. Your first step upon enrollment at Huntingdon should be to register for a library account. You can do this by going to the Library’s web site at [http://library.huntingdon.edu/](http://library.huntingdon.edu/) and under “EB Services” complete the “Library Card Application” form and submit it. You will receive shortly your personal library account information, which will then allow you to access a variety of resources including databases. Should you ever have a problem accessing the Library’ electronic resources, please contact the Library (specifically, Systems Librarian Brenda Kerwin at bkerwin@huntingdon.edu <mailto:bkerwin@huntingdon.edu>).

* Among the Library’s electronic resources, you will find a number of databases specific to the area of business administration and its allied fields of study (e.g. databases within /EbscoHost/, /Gale/, and /ProQuest/, as well as /Oxford Journals/). You will also find databases that support your core courses in such fields as English, history, communications, the arts, and the sciences. You may be familiar with the AVL (the /Alabama Virtual Library/) and have your own AVL card. As a student at Huntingdon College, you no longer need to maintain your own AVL card, if you access the AVL through our web site. Simply click on “Campus &Library” rather than “Home
Access” within the AVL. A few other mentions: /Countess/ is the name of the Library’s online catalogue and among its holdings you will find electronic books. If you want to know what full-text electronic journals are available to you through the Library’s databases, you can use the /Serials Solutions/ link on our web site. You can limit your search by discipline (such as “Business & Economic”). If you use Google for any of your research, we greatly encourage you to use /Google Scholar/ and /Google Books/. These features of Google will direct you to resources appropriate for academic research.*

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week One – Courts and the Legal System

Reading Assignment
Chapter 1: Courts, Crime, and Controversy
Chapter 2: Law and Crime
Chapter 3: Federal Courts
Chapter 4: State Courts

Writing Assignment #1
Read “Should the Double Jeopardy Clause Prohibit Parallel State and Federal Prosecutions?” on page 60 of the text. Some scholars have argued that the Army violated the spirit – if not the precise letter – of the Constitution’s prohibition on double jeopardy. (1) What do you think? (2) Are federal prosecutions after failed state prosecutions a good way to remedy miscarriages of justice, or are the rights of defendants unnecessarily placed in jeopardy? Answer the questions in the form of an essay. Be prepared to present your essay to the class.

Quiz #1 at the end of the session.

Week Two – Legal Actors

Reading Assignment
Chapter 5: The Dynamics of Courthouse Justice
Chapter 6: Prosecutors
Chapter 7: Defense Attorneys
Chapter 8: Judges
Chapter 9: Defendants and Victims

Writing Assignment #2
Read “‘Nancy Grace’” on page 164 of the text. (1) Do you think that media distort or sensationalize criminal justice processes? (2) How? (3) In light of the First Amendment protections of free speech and a free press, what might be done to curtail media figures from
interfering with the rights of the accused? Answer the questions in the form of an essay. Be prepared to present your essay to the class.

**Quiz #2 at the end of the session.**

**Week Three – Processing the Accused**

**Reading Assignment**
Chapter 10: From Arrest and Bail through Arraignment  
Chapter 11: Disclosing and Suppressing Evidence  
Chapter 12: Negotiated Justice and the Plea of Guilty  
Chapter 13: Trials and Juries

**Writing Assignment #3**
Read “Should Fingerprint Evidence Be Admissible?” on page 352 of the text. The National Academics of Science and numerous scholars cast doubt on the courts’ routine acceptance of fingerprint evidence for the purposes of individualizing identifications, while most police and prosecutors believe that fingerprinting analysts should be permitted to testify as experts in criminal trials that the defendant’s prints “match” those found at a crime scene. Where do you stand on the matter? Explain your reasoning. Answer in the form of an essay. Be prepared to present your essay to the class.

**Quiz #3 at the end of the session.**

**Week Four – Sentencing the Convicted**

**Reading Assignment**
Chapter 14: Sentencing Options  
Chapter 15: Sentencing Decisions

**Writing Assignment #4**
Read “Should a Moratorium on the Death Penalty Be Imposed?” on page 392 of the text. Of the three main issues in the death penalty debate – morality, deterrence, and fairness – (1) which provides the best argument for abolishing the death penalty, and (2) which one offers the best grounds for keeping the death penalty? (3) Do you think that the issue of innocents on death row justifies a moratorium on the death penalty? Answer the questions in the form of an essay. Be prepared to present your essay to the class.

**Quiz #4 at the end of the session.**

**Week Five – Appellate and Juvenile Courts**
Reading Assignment
Chapter 16: Appellate and *Habeas Corpus* Review
Chapter 17: Juvenile Courts

Writing Assignment #5
Read “Should Juveniles Be Tried as Adults?” on page 482 of the text. (1) Should juveniles be prosecuted as adults? (2) If yes, under what conditions should juveniles be prosecuted as adults, and for what crimes? (3) In what ways are your standards similar to or different from existing practices? (4) If no, what would you suggest to strengthen rehabilitative efforts in juvenile court? (5) In what ways are your recommendations similar to or different from existing practices? (6) Do you think that the recent decrease in juvenile crime, particularly violent crime, is temporary or long term? Answer the questions in the form of an essay. Be prepared to present your essay to the class.

Quiz #5 at the end of the session.