

POLS 3600: Criminal Justice Administration

Dr. Karson P. Ray

University of Georgia, Fall 2026

E-mail: karson.ray@uga.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:30 pm

Office: Baldwin Hall 305A

Class Hours: 12:00 – 12:55 pm

Classroom: Baldwin Hall 102

Course Description

Criminal Justice Administration examines the actors and agencies in the administration of criminal law in the United States. Topics surveyed include the criminal justice system, police, arrest, bail, prosecution, plea bargaining, trials, conviction, sentencing, corrections, probation, and reentry.

Required Materials

- *A Time for Mercy* by John Grisham (available on Amazon or at most local bookstores).
- *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham. This work can be either read (available on Amazon or at most local bookstores) OR watched as a film. I recommend reading the book for the best experience, but the film is excellent as well.
- All other readings will be available on ELC weekly.

Course Objectives

1. Students will understand the legal, political, and social dynamics of the criminal justice system.
2. Students will be familiar with the relevant institutions and actors involved with the various stages of the criminal justice system, including consideration of law enforcement, courts, and corrections.
3. Students will have critically analyzed criminal justice system practices and procedures.
4. Students will have developed an ability to discuss criminal justice policy issues from multiple perspectives in a disciplined and cogent manner.

Course Structure

Class Structure

This course is designed to prepare you for a future in law school, graduate school, or the workforce in the field of criminal justice. The abundance and intensity of readings is meant to challenge you; I do not expect you to have a full and complete understanding of the readings before class. What I do expect is for you to come to class with questions, and to leave with a more complete knowledge of these different aspects of the U.S. criminal justice system.

Grades

- **Exams** will be administered three times during the semester. These exams will be comprised of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer (2-3 sentences), and essay questions. You will have the entirety of the class to take the first two exams (1 hour and 15 minutes). Exams will not be cumulative. Exams 1 and 2 will each count for 25% of your final grade. Exam 3 will be administered during the final exam period and will count for 10% of your grade. The dates of each exam are listed in the schedule, but are subject to change dependent upon our pace throughout the semester. **Makeup exams are only permitted in extraordinary circumstances. Please review the "Policy on Incomplete Grades, Last Assignments, and Makeup Assessments" for full information on when makeup exams will be administered.**
- **Attendance** will be taken every day throughout the semester. Some days, attendance will be taken by brief in-class assignments. Attendance will count for 5% of your grade. Please review the "Full Attendance Policy" below to review what counts as a "no questions asked" unexcused absence and what constitutes an excused absence. **Participation** will be assessed through both in-class and out-of-class activities to be held on select Fridays throughout the semester. Engagement with these activities and your performance thereof will count for 10% of your grade. A full list of Friday participation activity dates will be given at the start of the semester.
- A **Simulation** will allow you an opportunity to apply the criminal justice concepts you've learned throughout the semester to a fake case and trial. This event will take place at the end of our semester and will last two weeks in total. Your grade will be comprised of your participation in class each day during the simulation and will count for 10% of your final grade.
- Two **Quizzes** will be administered in class during the semester. Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade; 10% total. Quizzes are closed-book and closed-note. They are comprised of multiple choice, fill in the blank/short answer, and written response questions.
- **Analysis** for your assigned reading of *A Time For Mercy* will count for 5% of your final grade. You will be expected to view or read *A Time to Kill* on your own prior to the week in which we analyze *A Time for Mercy*, for comparative purposes.

Grading Summary

I reserve the right to curve the scale dependent on overall class scores at the end of the semester. Your final grade will count these assessments using the following proportions:

- 60% of your grade will be determined by 3 in-class exams. Exams 1 and 2 will each count for 25% and Exam 3 will count for 10%.
- 15% of your grade will be determined by attendance and participation combined (10% for participation and 5% for attendance).
- 10% of your grade will be the "Simulation."
- 10% of your grade will be Quizzes. Each quiz is worth 5%.
- 5% of your grade will be based on your *A Time For Mercy* analysis.

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77
C-	70-73
D	60-69
F	< 60

Class Policies

Communication

Email is the best way to contact me. I ask that you give me at least 24 hours during the week and at least 48 hours over the weekend to respond. Please only email me using your UGA email address, and do not email me through ELC (I will likely not see it). Requests for meetings must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the proposed meeting time.

During Class

I understand that using laptops to record notes is important, so computers will be allowed in my classroom, as long as the use of these devices does not disturb the learning capability of other students. If laptops are discovered to be used for any other purpose than academics, pertaining to this course, then the privilege of electronic devices will be taken away. I aim to respectfully allow each student the same learning capability, which could be hindered by the use of electronic devices. **Phones will not be allowed during class time, except in case of emergency.** Use of cell phones during class is grounds for removal from class for that day and attendance grade penalties. Eating and drinking are permitted, so long as we can respect our classroom and allow for regular class to be conducted.

Full Attendance Policy

Attendance will be taken every day of in-person class, and this will account for 10% of your grade. **Attendance requires active listening and/or participation. Wearing headphones, scrolling on phones, or doing anything on your laptop other than taking notes/using the textbook will result in your attendance point for the day being taken away.**

"No Questions Asked" Absences: You will be allotted **three** unexcused absences, no questions asked, with no attendance grade penalty. These "no questions asked" absences include absences for feeling unwell but not sick enough to go to the doctor, missing class for pre-scheduled doctor's appointments, classes missed because of work/volunteering/interviews/activities/graduate school visits, leaving campus early for break or vacation, missing class because you could not find parking or your ride was late or your roommate took your shower slot (though I sympathize), as well as the days where you simply do not want to go to class. **You do not need to email me when you use one of these absences. Absolutely do not email me asking to be "excused" for any of these reasons.** Life happens, and this is why you have these absences. It is your responsibility to use these absences in an appropriate matter.

Excused Absences: For additional absences beyond the "no questions asked" absences, you will need to provide documentation for any days of class missed in order for it to count as an "excused absence." Excused absences are

considered only in extreme circumstances, including (1) performance of military duty; (2) legal obligations to appear or participant in a judicial or administrative proceeding, including jury duty; (3) any medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth; (4) a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and as documented by the student with the Accessibility and Testing Office, which prevents the student from attending class; (5) observance of a religious practice, holiday, or holy day; (6) participation in an authorized University activity; (7) illness or injury that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class; (8) death or severe illness of an immediate/dependent family member; (9) university closure for weather-related or other emergencies. In the event you miss class for one of these reasons, you must contact me in writing as soon as possible and provide documentation of your absence, at which time I will excuse you from participation for that day.

Lecture notes will not be shared with those absent. Please plan to get notes from classmates before coming to office hours to fill in any gaps.

Policies on Incomplete Grades, Late Assignments, and Makeup Assessments

I will accept incomplete or late assignments and will administer makeup assessments when a documented excuse is provided; review the full attendance policy above to understand what counts as a legitimate excuse (same circumstances as excused absences). Makeup exams or assessments require documentation, and notice as soon as possible. Under no circumstances will makeup assessments be given without documentation, and makeup assessments must be scheduled within one week (at maximum) of the original assessment date. I am flexible, and understanding, but I must be aware of your circumstances to be able to accept incomplete or late work. Incomplete work without an excuse will be given a "0" and late work without an excuse is subject to a 10% reduction in overall grade for every day after the deadline. Assignments will not be accepted if submitted 7 days or more after the deadline and will receive a "0".

Policies on Extra Credit and Grades

Extra credit may be offered to the class as a whole during the semester. Extra credit will not, under any circumstance, be offered on an individual basis. Emails asking for individual extra credit at the end of the semester will not be answered.

I automatically round final numerical grades that are 0.5 and above to the next highest numerical grade.

If you have questions about grading on assignments/assessments, please reach out via email to schedule a meeting (in person or via Zoom) about the assignment. I will not discuss grading specifics over email.

Please do not email me asking when grades will be posted. Under most circumstances, grades are returned one to two weeks after assessments take place. Emailing to ask when grades will be posted will delay grades being posted.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Please see UGA's extensive policies on academic honesty (<http://honesty.uga.edu>). Be aware that under no circumstances will cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty be tolerated in this class. UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu.

Please note that in my class, the use of unauthorized devices on in-class assessments will result in an automatic report to UGA's Office of Academic Honesty and severe grade penalties. Should you need to have access to your phone for emergency purposes during an examination, you must speak with me **before** the assessment takes place.

If found to be in violation of the UGA's academic integrity policy prior to the withdrawal deadline, you will not be allowed to withdraw from this course.

Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

To ensure you develop and master the foundational knowledge and skills in this course, the use of generative AI (GAI) tools is strictly prohibited. This includes all stages of your work process, even the preliminary ones. This prohibition

extends to AI writing tools like Grammarly and Wordtune, as well as GAI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, Writesonic, Rytr, and Rytutor. If you are uncertain about using a particular tool to support your work, please consult with me before using it.

The use of Artificial Intelligence on assignments/assessments will result in an automatic report to UGA's Office of Academic Honesty, a 0 on the assignment/assessment, and severe grade penalties.

Mental Health and Wellness at UGA

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community. Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity. UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Accessibility & Testing: accessibility.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting well-being.uga.edu.

Disability Accommodations

If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Accessibility and Testing Center (A&T), formerly the Disability Resource Center (DRC). I will accommodate requests from A&T in this course. Additional information can be found here: <https://accessibility.uga.edu>

Prohibition on Class Recordings and Distribution of Course Materials

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

For more information on securing an accommodation to record lectures, see: <https://accessibility.uga.edu/faculty-guidelines-for-record-lecture/>.

Student Success Resources

The Office for Student Success and Achievement (OSSA) empowers students to achieve success throughout their academic journey. Through free peer tutoring, academic coaching, UNIV student success courses, Bulldog Basics, and first-generation student support, we promote well-being, student learning, and community building. To connect with OSSA, email ossa@uga.edu, call (706) 542-0163, or visit Milledge Hall (near Reed Hall and Sanford Stadium).

Schedule

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The schedule is tentative and subject to change, though I commit to giving you plenty of advance notice if anything changes. The learning goals expressed in the syllabus above should be viewed as the key concepts you should grasp after each week.

(Week 1) August 17th, 19th, 21st: Introduction to Criminal Justice and Types of Crime

- "Intro to CJ readings.pdf"
- "Crime, Crime Types, Data Reading.pdf"

(Week 2) August 24th, 26th, 28th: Criminal Law and Procedure

- "Criminal Law and Procedure Readings.pdf"

(Week 3) August 31st, September 2nd, 4th: Introduction to Police

- "Intro to Policing Readings.pdf"

(Week 4) September 9th and 11th: Policing Issues and Quiz 1

- Labor Day observance on September 7th: No class
- "Policing Issues Readings.pdf"
- Optional: "NYT-Thin Blue Line Getting Thinner-6-12-22.pdf"
- Optional: "NYT-Uvalde Families Police Accountability 6-5-22.pdf"
- Quiz 1 in class on September 11th

(Week 5) September 14th, 16th, 18th: Police Diversity, Police and Law

- "Policing Diversity and Representation Readings.pdf"
- "Body camera policy-July 2022 article.pdf"
- "Race, Place, and Effective Policing"
- "police and law readings.pdf"
- No class on September 18th: Constitution Day Lecture at UGA

(Week 6) September 21st, 23rd, 25th: Content Wrap-Up and Exam 1

- Wrap-up all Exam 1 content, review in class if time permits.
- Exam 1 in class on September 25th

(Week 7) September 28th, 30th, October 2nd: Judges, Courts and Adjudication

- "Judges, Courts, and Adjudication Readings.pdf"

(Week 8) October 5th, 7th, 9th: Pre-Trial & Bail

- "Pre-trial and Bail Readings.pdf"

(Week 9) October 12th, 14th, 16th: Plea Bargaining & Trial

- "plea bargaining and trials readings.pdf"

(Week 10) October 19th, 21st, 23rd: Punishment & Sentencing, Quiz 2

- "Sentencing and Punishment Readings.pdf"
- Quiz 2 in class on October 23rd

(Week 11) October 26th and 28th: Wrongful Convictions, Corrections

- "Wrongful convictions readings.pdf"
- "Corrections and Prisons Readings.pdf"
- Fall Break on October 30th: No class

(Week 12) November 2nd, 4th, 6th: Incarceration/Prison Society, Juvenile Justice System and Exam 2

- "Corrections and Prisons Readings.pdf" continued
- Exam 2 in class on November 6th

(Weeks 13 and 14) November 9th, 11th, 13th, 16th, 18th, 20th: Simulation and *A Time For Mercy* Analysis

- Simulation will take place in class on November 9th, 11th, 13th, and 16th. Attendance is required.
- *A Time For Mercy* should be read by November 18th and you should have read or viewed *A Time to Kill* by this date as well. Analysis will be completed in class on November 18th and 20th. Alternate assignments will be available to those with documented excuses.

(Week 15) Thanksgiving Break from November 23rd – November 27th, No classes

(Week 16) November 30th: Probation/Reentry and Final Exam Preparation

- "Probation, Intermediate, and Reentry Readings.pdf"

Withdrawal deadline is November 11th.

Reading Day is December 2nd.

Final exam period is December 3rd – 9th.

FINAL EXAM is Monday, December 7th from 12 to 3 pm.