



**MONROE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Course Outcome Summary

Required Program Core Course

CRJ 165 The American Court System

Course Information

Division: Humanities/ Social Science

Contact Hours 45

Credit Hours 3

Prerequisites

RDG 090 and ENGL 090 or qualifying scores on accepted placement tests.

Course Description

This course takes an in-depth look at the US court system. It will expose the student to the three elements of the Criminal Justice System law enforcement, corrections and a heavy emphasis on the courts. The process of determining guilt to innocence will be explained through the perspectives of the members of the court process. The process, the roles people play and the effects on society will be pursued to gather a better understanding of this portion of the Criminal Justice System.

This course is a required core course for students pursuing an AAS in Criminal Justice.

Program Outcomes Addressed by this Course:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to meet the program outcomes listed below

- A. Develop knowledge and understanding of the functions and processes of the US Criminal Justice System
- B. Using critical thinking skills, develop and use problem solving skills in a variety of situations
- C. Understand criminal law both substantive and procedural, criminological concepts and the study of crime and criminality.
- D. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.
- E. Discuss Constitutional protections applied to the criminal justice system.
- F. Promote professionalism through the use of ethics and diversity in course offerings.

Course Outcomes

In order to evidence success in this course, students will be able to

1. Explain the role of the court in the Criminal Justice System.

-Applies to program outcomes A,B,C,D,F

2. Explain the differences between the courts: Federal, state, circuit, district, family, probate, juvenile.
-Applies to program outcomes A,B,C,D,F
3. Discuss the internal dynamics within a court.
-Applies to program outcomes A,B,C,D,F
4. Explain the roles of the different parties in a court case: prosecutor, defense, judge, defendant, witness, victim, etc.
-Applies to program outcomes A,B,C,D,F
5. Explain the court process from arraignment to appeals, including all of the steps in between
-Applies to program outcomes A,B,C,D,F
6. Discuss the practical and ethical problems in the court and the practice of law.
- Applies to program outcomes A,B,C,E,F



US Court System Outline

- I. Law, Crime, Courts and Controversy
 - A. Concept of Justice
 - B. Courts in the Criminal Justice System
 - C. Overview of US Courts
 - D. Actors in the Courthouse
 - 1. Prosecutors
 - 2. Defense Attorneys
 - 3. Judges
 - 4. Defendant
 - 5. Victims
 - E. Overview of the Judicial Process
 - F. Common Law Heritage
 - G. Adversarial System
 - H. Right of the Accused
 - I. Fundamentals of Criminal Law
 - 1. Elements of A Crime
 - 2. Defining Crimes
 - 3. Criminal Defenses
- II. Federal Courts
 - A. Court Organization
 - 1. Dual Court System
 - 2. Jurisdiction
 - B. History
 - C. US Magistrate Judges
 - D. US District Courts
 - E. US Courts of Appeals
 - F. US Supreme Court
 - G. Specialized Federal Courts
 - H. Federal Judicial Administration

- III. State Courts
 - A. History
 - B. Jurisdiction of Trial Courts
 - C. Lower Courts
 - 1. Justice of the Peace
 - 2. Municipal Courts
 - 3. Sentencing at the Lower Court
 - 4. Problems in the Lower Court
 - 5. Community Justice
 - D. Trial Court Jurisdiction
 - E. Intermediate Courts
 - F. State High Courts
 - G. Court Unification
- IV. Juvenile Courts
 - A. History
 - B. Differences between adult and juvenile court
 - C. Organization of Juvenile Courts
 - D. Juvenile Court Jurisdiction- Subject Matter
 - E. Juvenile Court Jurisdiction- Age
 - F. Transfers to Adult Court
 - G. Due Process
 - H. Courtroom Work Group
 - I. Steps in the Juvenile Process
- V. Dynamics of the Court
 - A. The People who Work There
 - B. Security and Technology
 - C. Courthouse Justice
 - D. Assembly Line Justice
 - E. Discretion
 - F. Courtroom Work Group
 - G. Legal Ethic
- VI. Prosecutors
 - A. Origins
 - B. Role
 - C. Federal Prosecutor
 - D. State Courts
 - E. Ethic
 - F. Prosecutor in the Courtroom Work Group
- VII. Defense Attorney
 - A. Right to Counsel
 - B. Defense Attorneys and the Courtroom Workgroup
 - C. Criminal Bar
 - D. Indigent Attorney

- E. Lawyer Client Relationship
 - F. Defense Ethics
- VIII. Judges
 - A. Position of Judge
 - B. Judges in the Courtroom Workgroups
 - C. Judicial Selection
 - D. Judging a Judge
 - E. Judicial Ethics
- IX. Defendants, Witnesses, and Victims
 - A. Defendant Characteristics
 - B. Defendants in Court
 - C. Courts from the Victims Perspective
 - D. Victims and Witness through the eyes of the Court
 - E. Victim Characteristic
 - F. Assistance
 - G. Manipulation of Witness and Victim
- X. Arrest to Arraignment
 - A. Crime Statistics
 - B. Arrest
 - C. Initial Appearance
 - D. Charge
 - E. Bail
 - F. Preliminary Hearing
 - G. Grand Jury
 - H. Arraignment
- XI. Evidence Hearings
 - A. Discovery
 - B. Suppression
 - C. Interrogations and Confessions
 - D. Search and Seizure
 - E. Exclusionary Rule
- XII. Plea Negotiations
 - A. Types of Plea Agreements
 - B. Discretion
 - C. Dynamics of Bargaining
 - D. Plea Agreement
- XIII. Trials and Juries
 - A. History
 - B. Right to Jury Trial
 - C. Jury Selection
 - D. Burden of Proof
 - E. Basic Evidence
 - F. Media in the Courtrooms

XIV. Sentencing

- A. Why do we punish?
- B. Who Administers Punishment?
- C. Sentencing in the Courtrooms Workgroup
- D. Structured Sentencing Schemes
- E. How severe should the sentence be?
- F. Death Penalty
- G. Normal Penalties
- H. Sentencing Outcomes

XV. Appeals

- A. Nature of the Appellate Process
- B. Appellate Court Procedures
- C. Criminal Appeals
- D. Postconviction Review
- E. Wrongful Convictions
- F. State Courts of Last Resort
- G. The US Supreme Court