



School of Criminal Justice & Criminology
Fall 2024
CJ 4331: Serial Murder – CRN: 15599

Instructor: Josh Davis, M.A.
Class Time: Monday & Wednesday 2:00 pm – 3:20 pm
Class Location: Hines 206
Office Location: Hines G10 (lowest level of Hines)
Office Hours: Mondays 1:00 – 2:00 pm & Wednesdays 3:20 – 4:20 pm or by Appointment
Office Phone: (512) 245-2174
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How to use this syllabus: This syllabus provides you with information specific to this course, and it also provides information about important university policies. *This document should be viewed as a course overview; it is not a contract and is subject to change as the semester evolves.* Any changes will be communicated in class and through Canvas.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

CJ 4331 Serial Murder (3). This course covers the phenomenon of serial murder and the police investigative response. Theories, concepts, and law enforcement analytic methods are covered in detail. Emphasis is placed on understanding the reality versus the myth of serial murder, serial killers, and criminal profiling.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

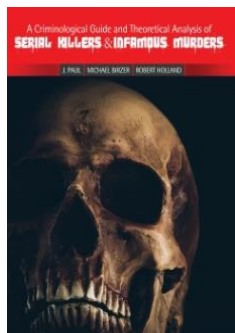
- Analyze & assess the different types of multiple murder (i.e., mass, spree, and serial murder);
- Differentiate the causes of serial murder using biochemical, psychological, and/or sociological theories;
- Compare & contrast the categories of serial murder;
- Evaluate the traits or vulnerabilities of victims of serial murder;
- Explain and critique the challenges that police face in the investigation of serial murder;
- Demonstrate the techniques utilized by law enforcement to aid in the identification of serial murderers;
- Critique the responses of the criminal justice and mental health systems to serial murderers.

Sensitive Topic Discussion



This class covers very sensitive and graphic material related to crimes of violence. At times, some of this material can be disturbing. **If you find material of this nature offensive or have personal or moral opposition to such material, please consider not taking this course.**

Required Texts/Reading



Textbook:

Paul, J., Birzer, M. L., & Holland, R. (2020). *A Criminological Guide and Theoretical Analysis of Serial Killers & Infamous Murders*. Kendall Hunt. ISBN: 9781524977238

Other Readings:

Documents from the FBI's Behavior Analysis Unit and other sources will be used throughout the course. These documents and any additional readings will be posted in Canvas to complement your learning.

Learning Management Platform - CANVAS

All additional readings (outside the textbook) and some PowerPoints will be posted in Canvas. All assignments must be submitted through Canvas. **Email submissions or paper copies will not be accepted.**

Other Equipment/Materials

Students are required to have complete access to a functioning computer device with internet capabilities. This device must have Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. If you do not have Microsoft Word or PowerPoint on your device, Texas State does provide free access to Microsoft Office 365 for students.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Class Behavior

To allow for orderly learning and differing discourse, students are reminded to follow the rules of courtesy during classroom discussions. This is a college course, and student vocabulary and word choice should be appropriate for a college classroom. Students should stay on-topic, handling non-class-related matters outside of class. We will be covering topics that can be socially sensitive; therefore, we must remain respectful of each other's points of view during the course.

Class Protocol

While attendance is not mandatory, a portion of the grade is based solely on participation. In-class activities and discussions constitute part of the class. In order to have an effective learning experience and to master the material, students should make every effort to attend all class sessions. If a student should miss class, it is the student's responsibility to understand what they missed and to get the notes/information from another student. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to re-teach any portion of the class.

Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and activities. Asking questions, providing varying perspectives, and discussing the topics at hand make the class much more enjoyable and exciting for everyone.

Students will be held responsible for all assigned materials. Examinations must be taken on the date indicated unless a documented excuse is provided, as stated below. Grades are not negotiable and will be determined by the final point total. All scores are final and will not be

rounded up. Every student will have the same opportunities to earn points. Students will receive the grade they earned.

Please make sure all cell phones are either off or put on silent. If a student needs to take a call, please exit quietly to avoid disrupting the class discussion or students trying to pay attention.

Furthermore, it is expected students will:

- Prepare for class, read assigned materials before class, satisfactorily participate in class discussions, and turn in required coursework on time.
- Take responsibility for their learning. The instructor is not responsible for your learning. This requires your effort.
- Submit all assigned material, including but not limited to assignments, quizzes, exams, and canvas discussions, on time.

Grading Scale

At the end of the semester, your grade will be determined by the total number of points earned, not by the percentage. Also, no grades of Incomplete will be awarded.

Points (Percentage)		Letter Grade	Grade Points
630 - 700	(90% and above)	A	4.00
560 - 629	(80 - 89.9%)	B	3.00
490 - 559	(70 - 79.9%)	C	2.00
420 - 489	(60 - 69.9%)	D	1.00
0 - 419	(0 - 59.9%)	F	0.00

Contact Policy

Although you may attempt to reach me by phone, ***email communication is always preferred*** and has a faster response rate as I am not always in the office. Feel free to email me any questions or concerns following these guidelines:

- Always use the course number (CJ 4331) in the subject line of the email
- Remember to sign your name.
- **Always** email me from your Texas State email address. Email sent from personal email servers like Gmail, Yahoo, etc., tend to end up in my spam folder, and I never see them. You may also email me through Canvas via the Inbox.
- You should NOT contact me for tech support.

Response Times

To Email and Canvas Inbox:

Please include CJ 4331 and topic in your email subject line, as this helps me prioritize a response to you. I will respond to you within 48 hours, generally within 24 hours. Weekends and official

University breaks may delay this period. Students are always welcome to schedule an in-person meeting if they would like.

Feedback on Assignments:

Feedback on Assignments and Exams will happen within one week; this may happen sooner or be slightly delayed based on the requirements of the courses I am taking. Students worried about feedback should email the instructor to set up a meeting.

In-Person Meetings:

While I am not always in the Criminal Justice Office, I will be more than happy to meet with you outside of class. To request an In-Person Meeting, please notify me via email with some dates and times you are available. Please put "CJ 4331- In-Person Meeting Request" in the subject line. I will respond within 24 hours to these requests, excluding weekends and official University breaks.

WHAT IS MY GRADE BASED ON?

Assignments

Syllabus Quiz	20 points
3 Exams	300 points
Project Proposal	100 points
Final Project	150 points
4 Learning Logs	80 points
Participation	50 points
Total Points	700 Points

Syllabus Quiz

Students will be required to take and pass a ten-question quiz on the course syllabus. They will be allowed to retake the quiz until they receive a passing score. Students should aim to complete this as soon as possible, as the rest of the course will not open until a passing score is reached. This quiz **will be worth a total of 20 points.**

Exams

Exams will be given during class time and consist of multiple-choice, matching, and true/false questions. There will be three exams. Each exam will have approximately 30 to 40 questions and be worth approximately 100 points, for **a total of 300 points.**

Project Proposal

Students will write a 3–5-page narrative on the case they will present for their final project. Your proposal must include a title page, a three-to-five-page narrative, and reference pages). The proposal will be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins. APA

format must be followed with in-text citations. The narrative will tell all the relevant facts of the case, including how the case ended. *Students should NOT use a case listed on the syllabus. Students who use a case that is on the Syllabus will receive a Zero. This assignment is due to Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, October 18th, and will be worth a total of 100 points.*

Final Project

Students will create a final project presentation on a serial murder case/event as outlined in their project proposal. The presentation will cover the crime(s) and applicable facts of the case, disposition of the case, law enforcement response, and a critique of that response. Students will be able to pick the method of presentation they wish to use (ex. PowerPoint, Video, Podcast, Song, Art Project, etc.). A separate typed reference page in APA format listing all used sources must accompany the submission. The presentation will be handed in via Canvas, and the submission portal will be available AFTER the Proposals **are due**. The final project will be **due to Canvas by 11:59 pm on Friday, December 6th**. *No late project will be accepted. This will be worth a total of 150 points.*

Learning Logs

Students will complete four learning logs during the semester, covering the course readings. Each log consists of two to three assigned questions that must be answered in full. ***Learning Logs are due prior to class on the due date. Each learning log is worth approximately 20 points, for a total of 80 points.***

Participation/Discussion

While attendance is not required, participation is required. **A total of 50 points of the student's grade will be devoted to participation** awarded at the end of the semester. This will be based on total attendance and participation during class. It is hard to participate if you are not in class.

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be given as a standard; however, if an opportunity presents itself during the semester, the entire class may receive an extra credit opportunity. On those occasions, a class announcement will be made on how extra points may be earned. No other extra credit opportunities will be given.

Late Assignments and Missed Exams

The Final Project has a firm deadline and will not be accepted late. Exams may be made up with appropriate documentation; see below.

All other assignments may be handed in ONE WEEK LATE without penalty. After this point, the assignment will NOT be accepted.

A missed exam will only be allowed to be made up with documentation in the event of an extreme emergency (i.e., emergency medical condition, verifiable accident, death of an immediate family member, etc.) Notifying the instructor of such an event must occur as soon as possible (preferably within 48 hours). Documentation must also be presented to the instructor before an alternative exam is scheduled at the instructor's availability. Please know exams will not be allowed to be made up for lack of planning (i.e., forgetting, a missed due date, poor or no internet connection, etc.).

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a part of the world. Therefore, we must use AI responsibly and safely to enhance our educational experience. However, if misused, AI and other tools can severely limit students' potential learning goals.

Guidelines:

1. Prior Instructor Approval:

- All usage of AI programs in this class ***requires prior approval from the instructor***. Before incorporating any AI tool into an assignment or activity, you must discuss your intent with the instructor.

2. Responsible Use:

- AI programs should complement learning, not replace it. Use AI as a tool to assist your understanding and creativity, but do not rely on it exclusively for an assignment.

3. Originality and Attribution:

- All work generated with the assistance of AI programs must be original. Plagiarism, even if AI-generated, is not acceptable. Properly attribute AI-generated content if it is used in your assignments.

4. Academic Integrity:

- Maintain academic integrity in all AI-assisted work. Any violation of academic honesty will be subject to appropriate consequences.

5. Privacy and Data Security:

- Respect the privacy and data security of yourself and others when using AI programs. Do not share sensitive information or engage in any unethical activities.

6. Assistance, Not Substitution:

- AI programs are tools for assistance. They are not a substitute for your own critical thinking and understanding of the subject matter.

7. Verbal Review:

- ***Any assignment created with (or supposedly without) the use of AI programs is subject to a verbal review with the instructor.*** Be prepared to explain and discuss the content of your work, without the contributions or assistance of AI. If you cannot adequately represent your work, it will be assumed AI was utilized as a replacement for your learning, and the consequences will be subject to the instructor's discretion.

Conclusion:

We embrace the use of AI programs in our classroom as a means to enhance our learning experiences. However, it is crucial to maintain the integrity of our academic work and follow ethical guidelines. Remember that **prior instructor approval** is necessary for any AI-related activities, **and all assignments created with AI assistance are subject to a verbal review**. By adhering to these guidelines, we can harness the power of AI to support our educational journey responsibly and effectively.

This policy was adapted from Dr. Tyler Tarver

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Honesty Policy

Students at Texas State University are expected to uphold high academic standards. Texas State will not tolerate a lack of academic integrity. Submission of any work for a grade for which unauthorized help has been received is termed academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a failing grade in the course. "Unauthorized" is a term used here to designate stealing, copying (with or without permission), or collaboration with other individuals. Furthermore, acts of cheating, collaboration and collusion, plagiarism, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty as defined in UPPS No. 07.10.01 are also strictly prohibited (<https://policies.txst.edu/university-policies/07-10-01.html>). Students are strongly encouraged to refer to the Texas State's student handbook for policies related to academic dishonesty.

Engaging in Academic Dishonesty will not be tolerated! Students must work independently unless specified by the instructor. The first violation will result in an "F" for the assignment or exam. The second violation will result in an "F" in the class.

Honor Code

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our university live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

WE ARE CONSCIENTIOUS. We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses.

WE ARE RESPECTFUL. We act civilly toward one another, and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

WE ARE HONEST. We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

THE PLEDGE FOR STUDENTS. Students at our university recognize that, to ensure honest conduct, more is needed than an expectation of academic honesty, and we therefore adopt the practice of affixing the following pledge of honesty to the work we submit for evaluation:

I pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our university.

THE PLEDGE FOR FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION. Faculty at our university recognize that the students have rights when accused of academic dishonesty and will inform the accused of their rights of appeal laid out in the student handbook and inform them of the process that will take place:

I recognize students' rights and pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our university.

ADDRESSING ACTS OF DISHONESTY. Students accused of dishonest conduct may have their cases heard by the faculty member. The student may also appeal the faculty member's decision to the Honor Code Council. Students and faculty will have the option of having an advocate present to insure their rights. Possible actions that may be taken range from exoneration to expulsion.

See (www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html) for more information.

Students with Disabilities

A student with a disability may require an accommodation(s) to participate in the course. They must contact the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. They will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at that time. Failure to contact the instructor in a timely manner will delay any accommodations they may be seeking. Ongoing care by a physician does not automatically qualify you as an ODS special needs student. Students are required to file paperwork for accommodations with ODS each semester. Accommodations granted one semester do not automatically carry forward to the next.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</u>
1	Aug. 26 th & Aug. 28 th	Aug. 26th – Syllabus Day & Introductions Read the Syllabus Aug. 28th – Course Introduction 
2	Sept. 2 nd & Sept. 4 th	Sept. 2nd – NO CLASS: Labor Day Sept. 4th – <i>Serial Killers: What is a Serial Killer anyway?</i> Read Chapter 1 Syllabus Quiz due by 11:59 pm Wednesday, Sept. 4th
3	Sept. 9 th & Sept. 11 th	Sept. 9th – <i>Homicide Investigations: An Overview; Clutter Murders</i> Read Death Investigations: A Guide for Scene Investigators Sept. 11th – <i>Mass & Spree Murder Incidents: 9/11 Attacks, Columbine High School Shooting & Las Vegas Concert Shooting</i> Last Day to Drop with the Class not on your record (Sept. 11th)
4	Sept. 16 th & Sept. 18 th	Sept. 16th – <i>Serial Murder Investigations: The Basics, Myths & Typologies, Organized vs. Disorganized Killers</i> Read Serial Murder (p. 2-12); Investigations (p. 24-27) Sept. 18th – <i>The Unknown Killers: Jack the Ripper & Zodiac</i>

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</u>
5	Sept. 23 rd & Sept. 25 th	Sept. 23rd – Material Completion & Exam I Review Learning Log #1 - Due Monday, Sept. 23rd by 2pm Sept. 25th – EXAM I
6	Sept. 30 th & Oct. 2 nd	Sept. 30th – <i>The Boys Next Door</i>: Ted Bundy & Jeffery Dahmer Read Chapter 2 Oct. 2nd – <i>Team Killers</i>: Lucas & O’Toole & Beltway Snipers Read Chapter 3
7	Oct. 7 th & Oct. 9 th	Oct. 7th – <i>Bind, Tourte, Kill</i> (Part I): Otero to Williams (1974–1979) Read BTK Affidavit on Canvas (p. 1-20) Learning Log #2 - Due Monday, Oct. 7th by 2pm Oct. 9th – <i>Bind, Tourte, Kill</i> (Part II): Hedge to Capture (1980–2005) Read BTK Affidavit on Canvas (p. 21-44)
8	Oct. 14 th & Oct. 16 th	Oct. 14th – <i>Bind, Tourte, Kill</i> (Part III): The Investigation (2005–2024) Read BTK Affidavit on Canvas (p. 45-92) Read Chapter 10 Oct. 16th – NO CLASS, Finish your Proposals PROPOSAL DUE by Friday, Oct. 18th by 11:59pm
9	Oct. 21 st & Oct. 23 rd	Oct. 21st – Material Completion & Exam II Review Oct. 23rd – EXAM II Last Day to Drop the Course with a “W” (Oct. 27th)
10	Oct. 28 ^{th*} & Oct. 30 th	Oct. 28th – Guest Speaker: Gwen Kovaleski: Cult & Ritualistic Mass Murder/Serial Killings Read Chapter 7 Learning Log #3 - Due Monday, Oct. 28th by 2pm Oct. 30th – <i>Female Serial Killers</i>: Aileen Wuornos Read Chapter 4

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</u>
11	Nov. 4 th & Nov. 6 th	Nov. 4th – Edmund Kemper, The CoEd Killer & Rodney Alcala, Dating Game Killer Read Chapter 5 Nov. 6th – Flex Day: TBA
12	Nov. 11 th & Nov. 13 th	**No Class, American Society of Criminology Conference – See Canvas for Documentaries to Watch** <i>The California Night Stalkers:</i> - Nov. 11th - James DeAngelo, The Golden State Killer/EAR/ONS - Nov. 13h - Richard Ramirez, The Night Stalker
13	Nov. 18 th & Nov. 20 th	Nov. 18th – <i>America's Most Prolific Serial Killer:</i> Samuel Little, Read Chapter 6 Learning Log #4 - <u>Due Monday, Nov. 18th by 2pm</u> Nov. 20th – The Future of Serial Murder Investigations Read Chapter 9
14	Nov. 25 th & Nov. 27 th	Nov. 25th – No Class: Work on your Final Project Nov. 27th – No Class: Have a Happy Thanksgiving! 
15	Dec. 2 nd & Dec. 4 th	Dec. 2nd - Material Completion & Exam Review Dec. 4th - EXAM III Final Project Due no later than 11:59pm on Friday, Dec. 6th
Final	Wednesday, Dec. 11th	FINAL EXAM 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Our Guest Speaker may need to reschedule her visit based on her work demands. If this happens, a new date will be communicated as soon as possible in class and via Canvas.*