



**School of Criminal Justice & Criminology
Spring 2026**

CJ 2310: Police Systems and Practices – CRN: 41018

Instructor: Josh Davis, M.A.
Class Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 am – 12:20 pm
Class Location: Hines 201
Office Location: Hines G08 (lowest level of Hines)
Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 10:00 – 11:00 am or by Appointment
Office Phone: (512) 245-2174
E-mail: jdavis@txstate.edu [preferred contact method]

How to use this syllabus: This syllabus provides you with information specific to this course and 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 2310 Police Systems and Practices (3). Police profession: organization of law enforcement systems, the police role, police discretion, ethics, police-community interaction, and current and future issues. Prerequisite: CJ 1310 with a grade of "D" or better.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

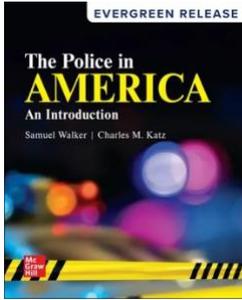
- Evaluate and interpret the role of the police in society.
- Differentiate the historical developments and eras of policing in America.
- Categorize the levels of police in America.
- Identify the management and organizational design of police agencies.
- Compare and contrast constitutional limitations placed on the American police.
- Analyze contemporary police problems and strategies.
- Investigate the realities of policing and critique the theoretical knowledge gained in class through an applied learning project.

Sensitive Topic Discussion



This class covers very sensitive and, at times, graphic material related to crimes. 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:

Walker, S. & Katz, C.M. (2025). *The police in America: An introduction*. McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-1-266-67139-5

Other Readings:

Other sources may be used throughout the course. These documents and any additional readings will be posted in Canvas.

McGraw-Hill Connect Application

Students will also need to be able to access the McGraw-Hill Connect application. Access should be provided through the bookstore for students participating in the Book Smart program.

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 ensure orderly learning and respectful discourse, students are reminded to follow the rules of courtesy during classroom discussions. This is a college course, and students' vocabulary and word choice should be appropriate for a college classroom. Students should stay on topic and handle non-class-related matters outside of class. We will cover topics that can be socially sensitive; therefore, we must remain respectful of each other's points of view throughout 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 master the material, students should make every effort to attend all class sessions. If a student misses 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 instructor's responsibility 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 distracting students who are trying to pay attention.

Furthermore, it is expected that 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 offers a faster response, 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 2310) in the subject line of the email
- Remember to sign your name.
- **Always** email me from your Texas State email address. Emails sent from personal email servers like Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc., tend to end up in my spam folder, and I never see them.
- You should NOT contact me for tech support.
- Please **DO NOT** use the **Canvas Inbox to contact me**. I tend to miss those messages.

Response Times

To Email:

Please include CJ 2310 and the topic in your email subject line, as this helps me prioritize a response. I will respond within 48 hours, generally within 24 hours. Weekends and official University breaks may delay this timeframe. Students are always welcome to schedule an in-person meeting.

Feedback on Assignments:

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

In-Person Meetings:

Although 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 email me with a few dates and times you are available. Please include "CJ 2310

- In-Person Meeting Request" in the subject line. I will respond to these requests within 24 hours, excluding weekends and official University breaks.

WHAT IS MY GRADE BASED ON?

Assignments

Syllabus Quiz	10 points
4 Exams	400 points
McGraw-Hill Connect Questions	150 points
Applied Learning Project	100 points
Participation	40 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 they reach a passing score. This quiz **will be worth 10 points in total.**

Exams

Exams will be given during class time and consist of multiple-choice, matching, and true/false questions. There will be four exams. Each exam will have approximately 35-50 questions and be worth approximately 100 points, for a **total of 400 points**.

McGraw-Hill Connect

Students will answer questions on the reading assignments in McGraw-Hill Connect. The number of questions and points per reading assignment will vary. Due dates will also vary and will be posted in Canvas, **with a total of 150 points**.

Applied Learning Project

Students choose one of the two options below for the applied learning project:

Option 1:

Arrange for a ride-along with a law enforcement officer. Contact the department of interest and make all necessary arrangements. Some police agencies require several weeks of advance notice. During the ride-along, observe the police role. What types of activities in terms of service-related, law enforcement, or traffic did the officer engage in the most? How much paperwork did the officer do? Is the police role different from Hollywood depictions? Is the academic study of the police (what you are learning in class) and the actual reality of policing different or similar? What was the most significant learning moment for you during the ride-along? After the completion of your ride-along, **write a three-page, double-spaced report on your experience. In the report, include the name of the police agency and the officer's name.** Include the time and date of the ride-along. Proofread your report and ensure it is free of spelling and grammatical errors. *In the concluding paragraph of your report, address anything you learned during the ride-along that could be applied to what you have learned in class.*

Option 2:

Interview with one law enforcement officer. Retired officers/Former officers are okay, too. This can be by phone or in person. The interview should be about the officer's job. For example, the following questions should guide the interview and benefit you as you learn about the police.

1. Is the job of a police officer what you thought it would be when you entered policing?
2. What is the most rewarding part of your job?
3. What is the worst part of the job?
4. What activities do (did) you find yourself doing the most during a patrol shift?
5. Would you enter the police profession again if you had the chance to start over?
6. Why did you want to become a police officer?
7. Would you recommend the job of a police officer to others?

After the interview, **write a three-page, double-spaced report** of what you learned. Be sure to proofread your report and make sure it is understandable and free of spelling and grammatical errors. *In the concluding paragraph of your report, address anything you learned during the interview that could be applied to what you have learned in class.*

This project is worth 100 points and will be due by 11:59 pm on Friday, May 1st.

This assignment will not be accepted late for any reason.

Participation

While attendance is not required, participation is required. **A total of 40 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 arises during the semester, the entire class may receive an extra-credit opportunity. On those occasions, a class announcement will be made explaining how extra points may be earned. No other extra-credit opportunities will be given.

Late Assignments and Missed Exams

Assignments have firm deadlines and will not be accepted late. If a student has missed a deadline, they should contact the instructor immediately. Exams may be made up with appropriate documentation; see below.

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 integral to the world; however, due to the nature of the assignments in this course, AI would not be an appropriate tool to use. Therefore, no AI should be used on any assignments during this course. The use of AI in this course will constitute Academic Dishonesty. See the policy below for the consequences of Academic Dishonesty.

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)

Week	Day	Date	Topic/Reading	Assignment	Important Dates
1	T	1.20	Syllabus Day & Course Introduction	Read the Syllabus	
	Th	1.22	Policing in Society	Chapter 1	
2	T	1.27	The History of American Police	Chapter 2	
	Th	1.29	The History of American Police & The Contemporary Law Enforcement Industry	Syllabus Quiz due by 11:59 pm Sunday, Feb. 1st	1.28 - Last Day to Add the Course
3	T	2.3	The Contemporary Law Enforcement Industry	Chapter 3	2.4 - Last Day to Drop with the Class not on your record
	Th	2.5	Police Organizations	Chapter 4	
4	T	2.10	Police Organizations & Exam Review		
	Th	2.12	EXAM #1		
5	T	2.17	Recruitment & Training for Changing Society	Chapter 5	
	Th	2.19	Recruitment & Training for Changing Society		
6	T	2.24	On the Job	Chapter 6	
	Th	2.26	On the Job		

7	T	3.3	**NO CLASS, Academy of Criminal Justice Science Conference – See Canvas for Assignment** Patrol: The Backbone of Policing (Chapter 7)		
	Th	3.5			
8	T	3.10	Patrol: The Backbone of Policing & Exam Review		
	Th	3.12	EXAM #2		
--	T Th	3.17 3.19	Spring Break Enjoy your time Off		
9	T	3.24	Peacekeeping & Order Maintenance	Chapter 8	
	Th	3.26	The Police & Crime	Chapter 9	
10	T	3.31	The Police & Crime		3.31 - Last Day to drop with a "W"
	Th	4.2	Advance Police Strategy	Chapter 10	
11	T	4.7	Advance Police Strategy & Exam Review		
	Th	4.9	EXAM #3		
12	T	4.14	Police Discretion	Chapter 11	

	Th	4.16	Legitimacy & Trust & Confidence in the Police	Chapter 12	
13	T	4.21	Police Corruption	Chapter 13	
	Th	4.23	Accountability of the Police	Chapter 14	4.23 - Last Day to Withdraw from the University
14	T	4.28	The Future of Policing in America	Chapter 15	
	Th	4.30	Catch-up Day & Review for the Final Exam	Applied Learning Project due by Friday, May 1st by 11:59pm	
FINAL	Th	5.7	Final Exam Time 11:00 am to 1:30 pm	EXAM #4	