

# BUTTE COLLEGE

## COURSE OUTLINE

### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

**AJ 4 - Criminal Law**

**3 Unit(s)**

**Prerequisite(s):** NONE

**Recommended Prep:** Reading Level IV; English Level III

**Transfer Status:** CSU/UC

51 hours Lecture

This course offers an analysis of the doctrines of criminal liability in the United States and the classification of crimes against persons, property, morals, and public welfare. Special emphasis is placed on the classification of crime, the general elements of crime, the definitions of common and statutory law, and the nature of acceptable evidence. This course utilizes case law and case studies to introduce students to criminal law. The completion of this course offers a foundation upon which upper-division criminal justice course will build. The course will also include some limited discussion of prosecution and defense decision making, criminal culpability, and defenses to crimes. (C-ID AJ 120). Graded only.

### II. OBJECTIVES

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

- A. Discuss the goals and characteristics of criminal law.
- B. Explain the adversary system and sources of criminal law.
- C. Discuss the philosophical and historical evolution of criminal law, noting the role of the judiciary in its development.
- D. Know the basic terminology, definitions and theories of criminal law.
- E. Identify elements of offenses against the person, property, morals and public welfare.
- F. Classify crimes according to severity.
- G. Explain the concept of lesser included offenses.
- H. Explain capacity to commit crime, causation, and culpability.
- I. Critically analyze various components of our system of criminal law.
- J. Prepare legal briefs of appellate court decisions.

### III. COURSE CONTENT

#### **A. Unit Titles/Suggested Time Schedule**

Lecture

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1. Historical Background of Criminal Law	6.00
2. Fundamentals of the Adversarial System	6.00
3. Criminal Law Classifications	3.00
4. Offenses Against Persons, Property, Morals, and Public Welfare	21.00
5. Criminal Defenses and Justifications	15.00
Total Hours	51.00

### IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- A. Lecture
- B. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- C. Discussion

D. Multimedia Presentations

V. **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

- A. Homework
- B. Objective and subjective examinations/quizzes
- C. Case analysis
- D. In class exercises/presentations

VI. **EXAMPLES OF ASSIGNMENTS**

A. Reading Assignments

- 1. Read six appellate court decisions and be prepared to discuss in class.
- 2. Review the U.S. Supreme Court decision "Kansas v. Crane", paying particular attention to the legal issue of the involuntary civil commitment of convicted sexual violent predators. Come to class prepared to discuss the "sexual violent predator act" both conceptually and as it relates to an "involuntary commitment".

B. Writing Assignments

- 1. Read the chapter on offenses against the person. Prepare a one-two page legal brief of an appellate court decision and orally present in class.
- 2. Prepare a reference for common legal terms used in the judicial system. Your reference should contain a minimum of 150 terms.

C. Out-of-Class Assignments

- 1. Define and summarize instructor provided vocabulary related to criminal law.
- 2. Identify six constitutional legal issues that relate to written statutes and in a 3-5 page essay summarize each.

VII. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS OF INSTRUCTION**

Textbooks:

- A. Boyce, J & Drips, D & Perkins, R.. Criminal Law and Procedure. 11th Edition. West Group, 2010.

Materials Other Than Textbooks:

- A. Handouts regarding constitutional issues provided by the instructor.

**Created/Revised by:** John Holland

**Date:** 03/25/2013