

<b>Course</b>	Criminal Law: A Comparative Analysis
<b>Program, semester, year</b>	International Studies Program, Spring, 2026
<b>Credits ECTS</b>	3 USA
<b>Instructor's full name and email</b>	Dr. Michael Hulderman <a href="mailto:Hulderman-M@mssu.edu">Hulderman-M@mssu.edu</a>
<b>Block dates</b> (days and time)	Block Dates TBA, Monday-Thursday, 9am-12pm
<b>Classroom</b>	TBA
<b>Class hours</b>	45
<b>Office Hours</b>	M-Th 8 AM-9 AM
<b>Requirements</b>	N/A
<b>Language of instruction</b>	English
<b>Type of teaching</b>	In person

## **INTRODUCTION**

This course is a comprehensive examination of substantive criminal law of the United States and Spain, emphasizing a critical assessment of their strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness toward achieving justice.

## **COMPETENCES**

Know and understand the history and sources of substantive criminal law of the United States and Spain.

Know the theory behind the drafting of criminal code of the United States and Spain and be able to apply the theory to fact patterns.

Read and analyze criminal code, understanding the elements required for a variety of criminal offenses and being able to explain the difference when there are multiple degrees for criminal offenses.

Know and explain how criminal liability can extend to attempts of criminal offenses and parties of criminal offenses.

Appreciate that there are times that what is defined as criminal behavior may at times be justified or excused under the law.

Apply punishment and sentencing principles utilized to punish those that are convicted of criminal offenses.

Compare and contrast substantive criminal law of the United States and Spain focusing on their strengths and weaknesses for achieving justice.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This course primarily consists of lectures and class discussions of course information. Professional visits to area criminal justice facilities, such as police stations or courts, may be included during scheduled class meetings or during other times as necessary.

## **PREPARATION FOR CLASS**

For this course, students will be expected to dedicate twelve hours per week in scheduled classroom meetings, where they should take notes, ask questions, and discuss course information. A minimum of four hours per week outside class in the completion of outside activities including, but not limited to, preparing for class discussions, studying for quizzes and the final exam, completing written assignments, and preparing for an in-class capstone oral presentation.

## EVALUATION

*Attendance/Participation (16 days @ 5 points each day):* In addition to attendance, participation is required to be at a satisfactory level each day. Points may be deducted for lack of participation with regard to asking questions, responding to questions, and additional participation in discussions.

*Written Assignments (7 @ 10 points each):* Bi-weekly written assignments related to course lectures and discussions will be assigned every Monday and Wednesday at the end of each class and due every Tuesday and Thursday at the beginning of each class. Assignments can be submitted neatly hand-written or typed.

*Quizzes (14 @ 20 points each):* With the exception of the first day and last day of class, there will be a written quiz each day at the beginning of class covering course information from the previous class meetings. Each quiz will consist of ten true-false, multiple-choice, and fill-in-the-blank questions.

*Final Exam (100 points):* There will be a written final comprehensive exam given on the last day of class. The exam will consist of fifty true-false, multiple-choice, and fill-in-the blank questions.

*Oral Presentation (100 points):* Reflective, personal perspective on notable similarities and differences of substantive criminal law of the United States and Spain, emphasizing specific areas of substantive criminal law that you believe could be improved for both countries with rationale. The presentation must be a minimum of ten minutes and not longer than fifteen minutes.

The evaluation of this course is as follows:

Attendance/Participation	15 %
Written Assignments	11 %
Quizzes	43 %
Final Exam	15 %
Oral Presentation	15 %

Final grade in the course will be determined by total points earned divided by the total points possible. The following grading scale is used for the course:

A: 90-100%

B: 80-89%  
C: 70-79%  
D: 60-69%  
F: 59% or below

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is a violation of academic norms and as such it can result in a failed course. In extreme cases it can include the expulsion from the program. In order to avoid this, it is recommended to remind students of how to cite and rephrase the works of authors when writing papers.

## **ATTENDANCE (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)**

Attendance is mandatory. Students are not permitted to miss any classes of the program without proper justification (i.e. emergencies, health problems, in this case students have to show a medical note). The following types of excuses are not justified: family visits, illnesses without a medical note, personal trips, etc. Each unjustified absence will result in a grade deduction of ten percentage points in the final grade of the class (example: from A to B). Students will not be allowed, in the classroom or fieldtrips, to arrive ten minutes late or more. If a student has continual delays, he/she will be penalized with an absence and the instructor may not allow them into class or the visit.

## **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)**

Students with special needs should contact Antonio Fernández: [antonio.fernandezm@uah.es](mailto:antonio.fernandezm@uah.es)  
Instituto Franklin-UAH can accommodate these students who show through a medical note or a note from their academic advisor that require help in order to fulfill the program.

## **USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS**

The use of technology is essential today in education, but if is used inappropriately it can be harmful for students. It is necessary that students ask for permission from the teacher in order to use any technological devices. Faculty should make clear to students in what instances technology can be used.

## **USE OF BLACKBOARD**

All courses offered by Instituto Franklin-UAH can be taught through the Blackboard virtual classroom. Also teachers can have materials, forums, etc. in the virtual classroom even if they don't teach the class virtually. For more information about using it contact Antonio Fernández: [antonio.fernandezm@uah.es](mailto:antonio.fernandezm@uah.es)

## CLASS SHCEDULE

### **Week 1 TBD**

M 9 AM-12 PM

Course Introduction and Orientation

Pretest (Final Exam)

T 9 am-12 pm

The Nature and History of Criminal Law

Quiz, Assignment

W 9 am-12 pm

Criminal Liability and the Essence of Crime

Quiz

Th 9 am-12 pm

Extending Criminal Liability: Criminal Attempts and Parties to Crime

Quiz, Assignment

### **Week 2 TBD**

M 9 am-12 pm

Expanding the Concept of Crime

Quiz

T 9 am-12 pm

Justifications as Defenses

Quiz, Assignment

W 9 am-12 pm

Defenses: Excuses and Insanity Crimes Against Persons: Homicide

Quiz

Th 9 am-12 pm

Crimes Against Persons: Homicide

Quiz, Assignment

### **Week 3 TBD**

M 9 am-12 pm

Crimes Against Persons: Assault, Sex Offenses, and Other Crimes

Quiz

T 9 am-12 pm

Property and Computer Crimes

Quiz, Assignment

W 9 am-12 pm

Offenses Against Public Order and the Administration of Justice

Quiz

Th 9 am-12 pm

Offenses Against Public Morality

Quiz, Assignment

### **Week 4 TBD**

M 9 am-12 pm

Terrorism and Human Trafficking

Quiz

T 9 am-12 pm  
Victims and the Law  
Quiz, Assignment  
W 9 am-12 pm  
Punishment and Sentencing  
Quiz  
Th 9 am-12 pm  
Oral Presentations, Final Exam

*Note:* Class schedule is subject to change with the inclusion of any outside classroom activities, such as professional visits.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

de La Cuesta, J. L. (2013). Criminal responsibility of legal persons in Spanish law. *Revue internationale de droit pénal*, 84(1), 143-179.

Schmallegger, F. (2021). *Criminal law today*. (7th ed.). Pearson.

Winter, L. B., & del Moral García, A. (2020). *Criminal Law in Spain*. (3rd ed.). Wolters Kluwer.

## INSTRUCTOR



Hello, everyone! I am a Professor of Criminal Justice at Missouri Southern State University. I hold a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration, Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice, and a Doctor of Education degree in Occupational and Adult Education. I have twenty years of full-time university teaching experience. My research interests include police decision-making and British serial murderers. I am a former police officer of two southwest Missouri municipalities. My wife's name is Autumn, and I have three daughters, Taylor, Sarah, Beatrice, a grandson, Bellamy, and a granddaughter, Claire. I enjoy spending time with my family, landscaping, house remodeling, traveling, and golf.

If you need to contact me in person, you can contact me at my assigned office during the above posted office hours. If I am not in my office during a posted office hour, I will try to have a note posted on the door. You can also contact me by calling my cell phone. You can also contact me through my home university campus email. I will try to respond to your message or email within 24 hours (except for Friday-Sunday). If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, please send another email or call me again and I will try to respond as soon as possible.