

## JUST 430 – Senior Seminar

Fall, 2008  
Section 01, M W 14<sup>30</sup>-15<sup>20</sup> BT 2226

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OFFICE HOURS: MWF 10<sup>00</sup>-11<sup>20</sup>  
TR 13<sup>30</sup>-16<sup>00</sup>  
(or by appointment)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as the capstone experience for the major. It provides an overview of the significant concepts and information gained from major courses. Students will demonstrate advanced knowledge of relevant research through an individual project. Prerequisites: senior status and completion of Section I Justice Systems courses.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a medium for each student to synthesize information from the knowledge base of the Justice Systems major.
2. To provide an assessment of each student's knowledge of the major, primarily through the senior test.
3. To provide a public forum for each student to demonstrate an advanced knowledge of scholarly research in Justice Systems.

### EVALUATION

*(Completion of all assignments is required in order to receive a passing grade in the course)*

In-Class Participation/Attendance	(10% of final grade)
Article Discussions	(10% of final grade)
ACAT Practice Tests	(10% of final grade)
ACAT	(15% of final grade)
Portfolio Submissions	(10% of final grade)
Outline	(10% of final grade)
Presentation	(25% of final grade)
Final Exam	(10% of final grade)

### GRADING

90-100% = A	60-69% = D
80-89% = B	59% and below = F
70-79% = C	

### CLASS PARTICIPATION

A significant aspect of the learning process and of personal development is communication of one's ideas and thoughts in a respectful and appropriate manner. In this regard participation will be assessed throughout the semester (this assessment will come from both the instructor and self-assessment by the student). A key feature of the participation grade will be the quality of the discussion generated. While we will conduct numerous class activities meant to stimulate class discussion, students are expected to initiate discussions as well. Students who will be absent from class for a university sponsored event or due to illness should contact me prior to the date they will be away; this ensures they will have the same opportunity to obtain grades for participation as the rest of the students. Unexcused absences of three or more classes will result in a 'zero' for the participation aspect of the overall grade (including during the presentations).

### ARTICLE DISCUSSIONS

Each student will provide an in-class critique of two scholarly articles (i.e. articles from peer-reviewed journals). The critique will entail a brief summary of the main points of the article, who the author is (including their expertise), and a critical assessment of the method and logic evident in the article. These critiques will form the basis of class discussions for the designated class periods. The article summaries will be done in random order for each week (so have your summary ready for the corresponding article!). The first article summary is to be on a *non-Justice Systems related topic* and will be completed during the first week of article discussions; while the second article summary is to be related to your presentation topic and will be completed during the second week of article discussions. Please check with the instructor if you are unsure as to the appropriateness of an article for either week's discussion. Summaries must be completed during the scheduled times and students who do not have a summary ready will receive a 'zero' for this portion of their final grade.

### ACAT PRACTICE TESTS & ACAT

Blackboard will be utilized to conduct an interactive review in preparation for the senior test, the Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT) in criminal justice. The review will encompass the nine areas covered by ACAT: Administration, Correction Processes, Criminal Law, Criminology, Criminal Justice Systems, Juvenile Justice, Law Enforcement, Legal Aspects, and Research Methods. Assignments will require each student to take practice tests, check the answers, do further review as needed, and retake the tests until a score of 75% is reached on each test. The deadlines for completing the practice tests are:

Block I, Criminal Law and Criminology	Sep. 10/08
Block II, Policing	Sep. 17/08
Block III, Courts and Juvenile Law	Sep. 24/08
Block IV, Corrections	Oct. 1/08

## Just 430 – Senior Seminar Syllabus

Completion of the practice tests will not be allowed once these dates have passed. Your grade for this section of the course will be based on timely completion of the practice tests.

The ACAT will be administered on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> (6pm VH 1412), 7<sup>th</sup> (6pm VH 1412), & 8<sup>th</sup> (230pm VH 1130). Your score (percentile), plus one point, will form your grade on the ACAT portion of your overall grade in the course.

### LAS PORTFOLIO

Submitting the LAS portfolio is a requirement for a passing grade. Each of the six prompts will be submitted individually by email to the instructor by the due date. We will take class time to discuss the different sections of the portfolio in order to best prepare students for submission of appropriate work. The completed portfolio with cover letter will be submitted online or on a CD. Late submissions will result in a deduction from this portion of the overall grade. An explanation of the requirements for the senior portfolio project is available at:

<http://assessment.truman.edu/components/portfolio/studentguide.asp>

The due dates are:

Critical Thinking	Sep. 3/08
Interdisciplinary Thinking	Sep. 8/08
Scientific Reasoning	Sep. 10/08
Historical Analysis	Sep. 17/08
Aesthetic Analysis	Sep. 22/08
Most Personally Satisfying	Sep. 29/08
Completed Portfolio	Oct. 13/08

### RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project is the nucleus of the senior seminar. Each student will choose three different topics from the Criminal Justice Periodical Index and obtain four peer-reviewed sources for each topic. The topic list (with references) must then be emailed to the instructor by Sep. 8/08 (the instructor will then choose one of the three topics for the student to research). In this project, students will be expected to demonstrate an advanced knowledge of published scholarly research relevant to justice systems. This will include academic journals in the discipline as well as those providing an interdisciplinary perspective. The *minimum* number of sources for the final presentation of the project is twelve (these are to be from peer-reviewed sources). Internet sources (e.g. Wikipedia, personal web pages, unofficial agencies' web pages, etc.) are NOT scholarly sources and are therefore not appropriate for this project.