**Wayland Mission Statement**

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

**Contact Information**

**Course**

: CRIJ 5340 VC01 – Criminal Justice Capstone

**Campus**

: WBUonline

**Term/Session**

**:** Fall 2 2025

**Instructor**

**:** Dr. Colleen Mruzik

**Office Phone Number**

**:** 618-406-3550

**WBU Email Address**

**:** mruzikc@wbu.edu

**Office Hours, Building, and Location**

**:** I will answer e-mails within 24 hours. I am available by phone MThF 9am - 5pm CST, T 8am - 12pm, and Sa 1pm - 6pm.

**Class Meeting Time and Location**

**:** Virtual Campus

**Course Information**

**Catalog Description**

**:** Application of major criminal justice theories of deviant, delinquent, or abnormal behaviors and crime to evaluate the primary elements of the justice system: law enforcement, courts, and corrections; analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of current issues in the criminal justice system through a critical thinking, problem-solving process.

**Prerequisite(s): Completion of all core courses + at least four specialization courses in the program.**

**Textbook Information**

**Required Textbook(s) and/or Required Materials**

**:** Case Studies in Criminal Justice Ethics Braswell Waveland Press 3rd 2021 9781478646204

*The textbook for this course is part of the* ***Wayland’s Automatic eBook*** *program. You will have access to an eBook and interactive learning material on the first day of class through your Blackboard course site. The cost of this Automatic eBook will be billed directly to your student account when you register for the course. You will be notified via email with access instructions and additional information. If you do not wish to participate in the Automatic eBook program, you will have the first 12 days of class to opt-out of the program (additional details will be outlined in your email instructions). For more information on the Automatic eBook program, visit the Wayland Bookstore* [*Automatic eBook FAQ*](https://bookstore.wbu.edu/site_inclusive.asp) *page.*

**Course Outcome Competencies**

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

* Demonstrate an understanding of the methodological frameworks of major criminological theories and how to apply the principles to issues, problem areas, or policies
* Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through collaborative discussions and demonstrate those skills in weekly discussions, a capstone paper, and a final exam
* Research and evaluate a position regarding an issue, problem area, or policy and effectively defend their position using research-based information
* Demonstrate a need for the study of a topic utilizing a variety of professional resources to compose a literature review
* Analyze, evaluate, and interpret alternative positions of thought regarding issues, problems areas, and policies
* Analyze issues, problem area, and policies that impact law enforcement, corrections, and judicial systems
* Create and present effective written and oral presentations that implement current technology

**Attendance Requirements**

WBUonline

Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses. Online courses are no different in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Student “attendance” in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus. Instructors in online courses are responsible for providing students with clear instructions for how they are required to participate in the course. Additionally, instructors are responsible for incorporating specific instructional activities within their course and will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for documenting student participation. These mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, participating in a weekly discussion board, submitting/completing assignments in Blackboard, or communicating with the instructor. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements. Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 2 or more weeks of an 8-week session, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress for students with excessive non-participation. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given session is considered a “no-show” and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus. Additional attendance and participation policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university’s attendance policy.

**University Policies**

[Link to Statement on Academic Integrity , and reference one of the following in regard to how generative artificial intelligence (GAI) such as ChatGPT may or may not be used in this course:](https://www.wbu.edu/academics/writing-center/Academic%20Integrity%20Statement%20Pol%208.4.1%20Attch%20Oct%2020222.pdf)

1. Generative AI tools permitted in specific context and with proper citations.
   1. Students are allowed to use, reference, or incorporate generative AI tools into specific assignments for this course. When used, students must properly cite the generative AI tool in their submitted work.
   2. While there is no true substitute for direct help and instruction for your instructor, students may be allowed to use generative AI tools to provide further explanations of course content, readings, and other assignments. Any use of generative AI tools to help further explain or translate to content must be properly referenced and cited.
   3. Specific parameters for generative AI usage are provided by the instructor.
   4. Any use of generative AI tools outside of the approved instructor parameters will be considered a form of plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

**Disability Statement**

**:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Disability Services Coordinator and Academic Coach serves as the coordinator of students with disabilities and must be contacted concerning accommodation requests (office (806) 291-1057. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

Accessibility issues with content in WBUonline courses or in Blackboard should be addressed to the WBU accessibility coordinator, Dr. Rick Hammer, [hammerr@wbu.edu](mailto:hammerr@wbu.edu) or call (806) 292-9150.

**Course Requirements and Grading Criteria**

Reading AssignmentsReading assignments are to be completed on time (i.e., by the Wednesday of the week they are scheduled for discussion). You should be prepared to participate in online discussions about the assigned reading.

Discussion BoardsThere will be a discussion topic each week of class. All first posts must be done by Wednesday @ 11:59 p.m. CST of each week, and the remaining 2 posts must be in by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. CST each week.

* Your original response to each set of discussion questions must be at least 400 words.
* Additionally, each of your 2 responses to your classmates must be at least 100 words each.
* No Discussion will take place when the week is over.

**Note:** Posting all your discussions answers on Bb is a major requirement of this course. In this context, Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any way (Wayland Baptist University Policy on Dishonesty). You may view your peers work and postings to learn from one another, but you can’t copy their work. Students who have circumstances which prevent them from participating or completing an assignment on time must communicated with me in order to find reasonable accommodations to complete the required course work.

There are specific assignments that must be completed each week.   Your individual responses must be insightful, thorough, and interesting.   These responses should demonstrate an understanding of the assigned readings and should be substantiated by two or more examples from the textbook and/or appropriate websites.

Each response to your classmates should be substantive.  Participation is measured on the student’s interaction and contribution with the course and other students as demonstrated through active involvement on the virtual classroom discussion board. A student’s contribution must add value to the course.  A discussion board posting is determined to be of substance by containing information that supplements, contradicts, questions, or furthers discussion on a subject area contained in the course.  Additionally, it is expected that student participation reflect critical thinking and good grammar.

# Research Project

**(Note) Please address each of the following points in order**

***Each section will be due throughout the Semester with a completed Research Project submitted Week 11***

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| **Capstone Paper Explanation**  **All papers shall use 12 point font, double spacing, and APA format. Please use the provided template for your paper.** | **Title/Pages in section** |
| **Select a specific PROBLEM** –  Students shall select a problem or policy within the criminal justice system, and clearly describe how their topic is a problem or how a policy has created more problems within the criminal justice system.  The paper can take the shape of a problem analysis paper, policy analysis paper, applied problem solving and/or organizational dilemma paper, or a formal APA research paper.  Students should clearly describe whether the problem is theoretical or practical (applied) in nature. An in depth description of the problem should include, at a minimum, answers to causes of the problem including who, what, why, where, when and how the specific problem originated within the criminal justice system and why it continues within the criminal justice system. | **Introduction**  **1-2 pages** |
| **LITERATURE REVIEW-**  Students are expected to read and review historical and recent research on their problem when developing a literature review.  Students should find 20-25 sources within the reference section of their paper.  Research sources may include books, peer reviewed publications, government publications and professional trade journals. | **Literature Review**  **7-8 pages** |
| I would suggest using EBSCO, NCJRS, BJA, ONDCP, OJJDP, FirstGov, and other credible websites. WIKIPEDIA IS NOT ALLOWED. Any online sources other than these do require the student to contact the instructor so the credibility of the website can be assessed. |  |
| **SELECTION OF RELEVANT CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY-**  Students should review pertinent criminological theories and provide a rationale as to why the problem under investigation has a basis in a particular criminological theory (in your informed opinion) and provide research on the problem and your belief of a theoretical basis.  Make sure to use in text citations using author last name, year of publication and page numbers regarding information on the problem (Siegel, 2004, p. 85). Students should also check EBSCO and NCJRS to determine if there are prior studies describing the problem.  Any online sources other than these do require the student to contact the instructor so the credibility of the website can be assessed. | **Criminological**  **Theory**  **2- 3 pages** |
| **CASE(S)-**  Students should thoroughly review credible websites such as EBSCO, First Gov,  LexisNexis Oyez.org, and FindLaw, to determine to what extent the problem has been identified within the court system.  In the event students find the particular problem has not been identified within the courts,  students should research case precedents within the court system which are closely associated with the particular problem.  Students should provide a thorough background of the case and the judicial opinion of the case. Any online sources other than these do require the student to contact the instructor so the credibility of the website can be assessed. | **Case**  **2 pages** |
| **POSITION –**  Articulate your beliefs clearly and cogently regarding the position you espouse as being the best way to address the problem you are discussing.  Support your thoughts with a logical process of critical thinking that provides irrefutable evidence of your beliefs- provide an informed opinion based on what you have learned doing your research, yet using your own creative thought process.  Exemplary papers will include a plan of action to support your position yet oblige alternative positions on how your idea(s) might be implemented. | **Position**  **2 pages** |
| **ALTERNATIVE POSITIONS –**  Provide an in depth description of other alternatives that  may provide a logical solution to your position. Feedback from classmates via the discussion board may assist you in this aspect. | **Alternative**  **Position(s)**  **1-2 pages** |
| **CRITICAL REFLECTION-**  Using critical thinking and reflection skills, provide an explanation of how the problem under investigation, your position, and alternative positions might affect the three elements of the criminal justice system; police, courts and corrections.  Provide an explanation of how the problem under investigation, your position, and alternative positions could also affect the federal, state and local government(s). | **Critical Reflection**  **2 pages** |
| **CONCLUSION –**  Use a detailed final description which ties the problem, theory, literature  review, position and alternative positions together into a clear statement which addresses the overall problem. | **Conclusion**  **1-2 pages** |
| **REFERENCES-**  Include a detailed References section using APA format.  Papers with incorrect APA format will be returned with no grade for revision. | **References**  **2-3 pages** |

*Please note that this assignment is through Safe Assignment and I will not accept any submissions with a 50% or more Matching Percentage.*

*If your Matching Percentage is 50% or more you will receive an automatic “F” for the assignment. This information will then be reported to the Dr. Bobby Hall and he will handle any further sanctions from the University.*

*Furthermore, there will be a great reduction in your grade for Matching Percentages between 21% and 49%.*

**The only allowable Matching Percentage is 0 % t o20%.**

This must be submitted in APA format. Your topic must be pre-approved by the instructor. Plagiarism shall result in disciplinary action. Late papers will receive lower grades unless the instructor determines that there is a satisfactory reason for the late receipt. **Papers must be submitted in Times New Roman 12 Point Font.**

**D. Final Project Presentation:**

You will schedule a private meeting with me via Zoom to present your paper during Week 11. I will organize the meeting and send the link once we have agreed on a date and time. For your presentation, I expect you to explain your paper, the current research, and your findings. Be prepared to answer questions regarding your paper and the research process. Meetings will take no more than 30 minutes.

**Means of Assessment:**

Assessment % Final Grade

Discussion Board/Participation 40

Final Project Presentation 20

Final Project (each section weighted equally) 40

**The University has a standard grade scale:**

A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F= below 60, W = Withdrawal, WP = withdrew passing, WF = withdrew failing, I = incomplete. An incomplete may be given within the last two weeks of a long term, within the last week of an 8-week session, or within the last two days of a microterm to a student who is passing, but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work for reasons beyond the student’s control. A grade of “incomplete” is changed if the work required is completed prior to the last day of the next long 16-week term or 8-week session, unless the instructor designates an earlier date for completion.  If the work is not completed by the appropriate date, the I is converted to an F.

**Student Grade Appeals**

**:** Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Vice President of Academic Affairs to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

**Tentative Schedule**

**Section 1: Ethics and Law Enforcement**

**Week 1** Scenario 1-4

Meet & Greet Discussion Board (DB)

Week 1 DB

Introduction due Sunday

**Week 2** Scenario 5-8

Literature Review due Sunday

**Week 3** Scenario 9,10, 14, 16

Week 3 DB

Criminological Theory due Sunday

**Section 2: Ethics and the Courts**

**Week 4** Scenario 1-8

Case due Sunday

**Week 5** Scenario 9-16

Week 5 DB

Position due Sunday

**Section 3: Ethics and Corrections**

**Week 6**  Scenario 1-8

Alternative Position due Sunday

**Week 7** Scenario 9-16

Week 7 DB

Critical Reflection due Sunday

**Week 8**  Final Submission (including remaining parts)

Final Project Presentation