

Syllabus for CRJ-3350

VOICES AND VIEWS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines how various social factors interact with the criminal justice system. Students explore the demographic composition of U.S. society and consider challenges faced by different groups. The course is structured around how these societal dynamics influence law enforcement, the courts, and corrections, looking at the experiences of offenders, victims, and criminal justice professionals. Students are encouraged to analyze historical and contemporary approaches to criminal justice and consider legal, social, moral, and cultural perspectives on fostering a fairer system and society.

COURSE TOPICS

- Social foundations of diversity
- Legal responses to diversity
- Diversity in American society
- Diversity issues within the criminal justice system
- Approaches to diversity, inclusion, and equity issues

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- CO 1** Examine the diversity of American society and the issues that emerge among groups in society, especially issues involving the criminal justice system.
- CO 2** Investigate the theories that underlie the remedies for discrimination based on protected characteristics.
- CO 3** Evaluate shifts in group identities and cultural understanding over the span of U.S. history and their intersection with criminal justice.
- CO 4** Analyze disparities within the criminal justice system, including the dynamics of unequal power relations between groups, both historically and currently.

CO 5 Articulate legal, social, and political responses to diversity issues within the criminal justice system.

CO 6 Explore the role and benefits of diversity in enhancing the criminal justice system.

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need the following materials to complete your coursework. Some course materials may be free, open source, or available from other providers. You can access free or open-source materials by clicking the links provided below or in the module details documents. To purchase course materials, please visit the [University's textbook supplier](#).

Required Textbook(s)

- McNamara, R., & Burns, R. (2023). *Multiculturalism, crime, and criminal justice* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.
ISBN-13: 978-0197662335 (ebook); 978-0197662304 (paperback)

COURSE STRUCTURE

Voices and Views in Criminal Justice is a three-credit, online course consisting of six modules. Modules include an overview, topics, learning objectives, study materials, and activities. Module titles are listed below.

- **Module 1: Diversity, Social Groups, and Criminal Justice**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 3, CO 4, CO 6
- **Module 2: Theoretical Foundations**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 5
- **Module 3: Marginalized Groups in the Criminal Justice System**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 3, CO 4, CO 5, CO 6
- **Module 4: Law Enforcement and Cultural Diversity**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 3, CO 4, CO 5, CO 6
- **Module 5: The Courts and Cultural Diversity**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 4, CO 5
- **Module 6: Corrections and Cultural Diversity**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 3, CO 4, CO 5, CO 6

ASSESSMENT METHODS

For your formal work in the course, you are required to participate in online discussion forums, complete written assignments, and complete a final project. See below for details.

Consult the Course Calendar for due dates.

Promoting Originality—One or more of your course activities may utilize a tool designed to promote original work and evaluate your submissions for plagiarism. More information about this tool is available in [this document](#).



Discussion Forums

You are required to complete **eight** discussion forums. The discussion forums allow you to share your learning with your classmates and apply concepts. There is also one ungraded but required Introductions Forum in Module 1.

Communication with your mentor and among fellow students is a critical component of online learning. Participation in online class discussions involves two distinct activities: an initial response to a discussion question and at least two subsequent comments on classmates' responses.

All of these responses must be substantial. Meaningful participation is relevant to the content, adds value, and advances the discussion. Comments such as "I agree" and "ditto" are not considered value-adding participation. Therefore, when you agree or disagree with a classmate or your mentor, state and support your position.

You will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of your participation, including your use of relevant course information to support your point of view, and your awareness of and responses to the postings of your classmates. Remember, these are discussions: responses and comments should be properly proofread and edited, mature, and respectful.



Written Assignments

You are required to complete **five** written assignments. The written assignments ask you to demonstrate your grasp of the readings and other resources and to carefully analyze issues at the intersection of diversity and criminal justice. Your answers should be well organized and should follow the guidelines provided within the assignment.

Quizzes

You are required to complete **five** quizzes. The quizzes are on a variety of topics associated with the course modules.

Module 3 Project

For the Module 3 project, you will choose **one** racial/ethnic group and **one** other marginalized group, as described in the assignment directions. You will create a brief PowerPoint presentation comparing and contrasting various historical and contemporary issues for the two groups. You'll be asked to do some research beyond the text and cite scholarly articles to support your argument.

Final Project

In this final project, you will compose a paper of 4 to 5 pages or a presentation of 12 to 15 slides. You will begin by briefly summarizing the insights you have gained in this course regarding historical events and the criminal justice system. Then you will propose two practical solutions that you believe will positively affect the criminal justice system.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

- Online discussions (8)—24%
- Written assignments (5)—40%
- Module 3 project—15%
- Quizzes (5)—5%
- Final project—16%

All activities will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

A	= 93–100	C+	= 78–79
A–	= 90–92	C	= 73–77
B+	= 88–89	C–	= 70–72
B	= 83–87	D	= 60–69
B–	= 80–82	F	= Below 60

To receive credit for the course, you must earn a letter grade of C or better (for an area of study course) or D or better (for a course not in your area of study), based on the weighted average of all assigned course work (e.g., exams, assignments, discussion postings).

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

First Steps to Success

To succeed in this course, take the following first steps:

- Read carefully the entire syllabus, making sure that all aspects of the course are clear to you and that you have all the materials required for the course.
- Take time to read the entire Online Student Handbook. The Handbook answers many questions about how to proceed through the course and how to get the most from your educational experience at Thomas Edison State University.
- Familiarize yourself with the learning management systems environment—how to navigate it and what the various course areas contain. If you know what to expect as you navigate the course, you can better pace yourself and complete the work on time.
- If you are not familiar with web-based learning, be sure to review the processes for posting responses online and submitting assignments before class begins.

Study Tips

Consider the following study tips for success:

- To stay on track throughout the course, begin each week by consulting the Course Calendar. The Course Calendar provides an overview of the course and indicates due dates for submitting assignments, posting discussions, and submitting the final project.
- Check Announcements regularly for new course information.

Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students

TESU's [Academic Code of Conduct](#) permits student AI use in support of their writing and research process—not as a replacement for original writing. Document AI use with an acknowledgment statement at the end of each assignment, noting the tools and prompts used. Cite any AI-generated content on the References page. Please review [Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students](#) for more detailed information.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Thomas Edison State University recognizes, values, and relies upon the diversity of our community. We strive to provide equitable, inclusive learning experiences that embrace our students' backgrounds, identities, experiences, abilities, and expertise.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Thomas Edison State University adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990; ADAAA, 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) oversees requests for academic accommodations related to disabilities; a student who is pregnant, postpartum, or a student parenting a newborn who is not the birth parent [as covered under NJSA18A]; and students requesting academic accommodation for a short-term/temporary illness and/or injury. Information can be found on the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) web page and questions can be sent to ADA@tesu.edu.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

To ensure success in all your academic endeavors and coursework at Thomas Edison State University, familiarize yourself with all administrative and academic policies including those related to academic integrity, course late submissions, course extensions, and grading policies.

For more, see:

- [University-wide policies](#)
- [Undergraduate academic policies](#)
- [Undergraduate course policies](#)
- [Graduate academic policies](#)
- [Graduate course policies](#)
- [Nursing student policies](#)
- [Nursing graduate student policies](#)
- [International student policies](#)
- [Academic code of conduct](#)