

AJ 22 Course Outline as of Fall 2025**CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: AJ 22 Title: CRIMINAL LAW CONCEPTS

Full Title: Concepts of Criminal Law

Last Reviewed: 2/24/2025

Units	Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks		Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	6	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade Only

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly:

Catalog Description:

In this course, the student will study the historical development, philosophy of law and constitutional provisions in the administration of justice system. The course includes defining and classifying crime, legal research, study of case law, significance of evidence and the investigation, criminal culpability, and principles of criminal defenses.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:**Recommended Preparation:**

Eligibility for ENGL C1000 or equivalent

Limits on Enrollment:**Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: In this course, the student will study the historical development, philosophy of law and constitutional provisions in the administration of justice system. The course includes defining and classifying crime, legal research, study of case law, significance of evidence and the investigation, criminal culpability, and principles of criminal defenses. (Grade Only)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL C1000 or equivalent

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

AS Degree: Area Effective: Inactive:

CSU GE: Transfer Area Effective: Inactive:

IGETC: Transfer Area Effective: Inactive:

CSU Transfer: Transferable Effective: Fall 1981 Inactive:

UC Transfer: Transferable Effective: Fall 1981 Inactive:

CID:

CID Descriptor: AJ 120 Concepts of Criminal Law

SRJC Equivalent Course(s): AJ22

Certificate/Major Applicable:

Both Certificate and Major Applicable

COURSE CONTENT

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the origins and foundational concepts of civil and criminal law.
2. Explain how laws are developed and modified.
3. Identify, classify, and apply the essential elements of offenses against the person, property, and public order.
4. Analyze criminal liability and defenses.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the primary sources on which the law is based, including the concept of social contract, English common law, the United States Constitution, and the California Penal Code.
2. Distinguish between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law.
3. Differentiate between civil law, criminal law, and case law.
4. Differentiate between substantive law and procedural law.
5. Recall the statutory definition of a crime.
6. Classify the punishments under California law.
7. Define and differentiate corpus delicti, mala en se, and mala prohibita.
8. Identify the essential elements of offenses against person, property, and public order.
9. Explain the concept of lesser-included offense.
10. Identify inchoate crimes.
11. Classify crimes by severity into felony, misdemeanor, and infraction.
12. Identify parties to a crime per California law and criminal culpability.
13. Explain the categories of persons considered legally incapable of committing crime.
14. Explain common criminal defenses and legal justifications.

Topics and Scope:

I. Sources of Law

- A. Social Contract
- B. Common law
- C. Case law
- D. Constitutional law
- E. Procedural law
- F. Substantive law
- G. Classifications of crimes

II. General Principles of Law

- A. Definition of criminal and civil law
- B. Letter of the law versus spirit or the law
- C. Principle of Legality
- D. Statutory law
- E. Punishment and sentencing

III. Criminal Law

- A. Definition and classification of a crime
 - 1. Mala en se
 - 2. Mala prohibita
 - 3. Actus reus
 - 4. Mens rea
 - 5. Corpus delicti
- B. Parties to a crime
 - 1. Principals
 - 2. Accomplices
 - 3. Accessories
- C. Inchoate crimes
 - 1. Attempt
 - 2. Conspiracy
 - 3. Solicitation
- D. Lesser-included offenses

IV. Defenses

- A. Persons legally incapable of committing a crime
- B. Procedural
- C. Justifications
- D. Excuses

V. Crimes Against the Person

- A. Bodily injury
 - 1. Assaults
 - 2. Batteries
- B. Robbery
- C. Restraint crimes
- D. Criminal sexual conduct
- E. Homicide

VI. Crimes Against Property

- A. Theft
- B. Burglary
- C. Arson

VII. Crimes Against Public Order

- A. Disorderly conduct
- B. Quality of life crimes

Assignment:

1. Read 20-30 pages weekly
2. Written responses to reading or class activities
3. Research paper and written essays (1- 2) on legal concepts
4. Objective examination(s) (1-10)

Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

Writing: Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Research paper, essays (1-2), written responses or class activity responses	Writing 35 - 65%
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Problem Solving: Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None	Problem solving 0 - 0%
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Skill Demonstrations: All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%
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Exams: All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Objective exam(s)	Exams 35 - 65%
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Other: Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

None	Other Category 0 - 0%
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Representative Textbooks and Materials:

1. Contemporary Criminal Law: Concepts, Cases, and Controversies Sixth Edition Lippman, Matthew 2022. (classic).
2. Principles of Criminal Law. 6th ed. Wallace, Harvey and Roberson, Cliff. Pearson. 2016. (classic).
3. Criminal Law. 12th ed. Samaha, Joel. Cengage. 2017. (classic).
4. Instructor prepared materials