



Title	<u>Introduction to American Criminal Law and Procedure</u>
Lecturer(s):	Steven Oberman
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Brief description	<p>This course is a lecture and discussion hybrid that will familiarize the students with the fundamental concepts and doctrines of substantive U.S. criminal law, the basic premises of how laws are passed by American legislatures, and statutory analysis and interpretation. In addition, the course will further the students' understanding of the structure of the American legal system, the hierarchy of courts, and the interaction of different types of legal authorities (<i>e.g.</i>, constitutions, statutes, case law, regulations, and other administrative guidance).</p> <p>The course will build students' general legal competence in analyzing and synthesizing cases, reading and analyzing statutes, thinking critically about legal and policy issues, learning through reflection and self-critique, paying attention to detail, and exercising practical judgment.</p> <p>Throughout the course, students will explore the principles and purposes of American Criminal law, the scope and elements of select crimes, both prosecution and defense philosophies, and various punishment theories and alternatives. There will also be a discussion of affirmative defenses available to those facing criminal charges.</p> <p>Each of the weekly classes will consist of a review of the previous reading assignment to ensure that students have an understanding of the relevant materials, which will focus on a particular crime or topic. Immediately following the review, there will be discussions of the assigned materials with the students. We may compare American criminal laws with those of Hungary and other European countries, including an exploration of the differences in cultural purposes and needs. In order to maintain dynamic involvement, enhance their understanding of the issues, and teach respect for an</p>

	<p>opposing opinion, some weeks students will be divided into two groups to argue opposite sides of a legal issue during class.</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the American Criminal Law course, students will have acquired a basic knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The principles and purposes of American criminal law; 2. The elements and requirements for selected offenses, including <i>actus reus</i> (guilty act) and <i>mens rea</i> (guilty mind); 3. The presumption of innocence and other select constitutional rights of criminal defendants in the United States; 4. Prosecution and defense theories and perspectives; 5. Statutory language analysis from the Model Penal Code standards or a state statute and application to real world facts or hypothetical situations; and 6. How various theories of punishment may be applied to different fact scenarios.
Schedule	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to U.S. Criminal Law 2. Actus Reus, Mens Rea, & Culpability 3. Intentional Killings, Felony Murder, & “Heat of Passion” Killings 4. Rape & Sexual Assault 5. Theft & Embezzlement 6. Intermediate Exam 7. Drug Offenses 8. Defenses: Self Defense, Necessity, & Insanity 9. Rights of the Defendant, Proof of Guilt & Jury Nullification 10. Sentencing & Death Penalty 11. Theories of Punishment and Sentencing 12. Final Exam
Materials/Recommended readings	<p>Selected portions of the U. S. Model Penal Code and/or United States statutes as well as selected case law. All materials will be made available in English to the students at no cost to them.</p>
Assessment/Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class attendance • Active in-class participation (including short presentations based on assignments) • An intermediate exam and a final exam