INSTRUCTOR: Daire Irwin  

OBJECTIVE: The course begins with an overview of the concept of punishment and goes on to study the burden of proof and criminal defenses; it also provides a critical look at the most common crimes. Students will learn common terminology in criminal law and how to consider a crime thoroughly in terms of its elements.

EXPECTATIONS: You will be expected to spend an average of 8 hours per week reading and completing writing assignments. Please note that, barring extenuating circumstances, extensions will not be granted for this online course. 70% is the minimum passing score on all tests and assignments for this course. Students may consider working ahead in the curriculum if they have the time. Coursework in Criminal Law is equivalent to 45 clock hours of study.

PREREQUISITES: Successful completion of Paralegal I and II, or equivalent experience.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


HIGHLY RECOMMENDED LEGAL RESOURCES:

- WESTLAW legal research access, available for the duration of the course for only $75. [Order Online Now](#)

Reading Assignments for Lesson Topics:

**Lesson One:** General Principals and Terminology  
Read the Preface, the Perspective, and Chapters 1, 8 & 9 in *Criminal Law in a Nutshell (Nutshell)*  
Read the following case on the Internet: [http://wings.buffalo.edu/law/bclc/web/dudley.htm](http://wings.buffalo.edu/law/bclc/web/dudley.htm)

**Lesson Two:** The Burden of Proof and Limitations of Criminal Law  
Read Chapters 12, 13 & 18 in Nutshell

**Lesson Three:** Defenses  
Read Chapters 10, 11 & 6 in Nutshell

**Lesson Four:** Inchoate Crimes  
Read Chapters 14, 15, 16, & 17 in Nutshell

**Lesson Five:** Crimes Against the Person  
Read Chapters 2, 3, 4 & 5 in Nutshell
Lesson Six: Crimes Against Property
Read Chapter 7 in Nutshell

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: For each lesson you will submit a 50-point short answer/essay assignment covering the topics in that lesson’s reading. These assignments are due by 9:00 a.m. each Friday.

EXAMS: You will complete two exams. Each is worth 100 points. The Midterm exam is to be submitted with your Lesson Three Assignments; the Final exam is to be submitted with your Lesson Six Assignments.

BULLETIN BOARD ASSIGNMENTS: You will also post your responses to six class participation assignments. These assignments are referred to as Bulletin Board Submissions and will be submitted by either selecting Bulletin Board Submission from within the lesson material, or by selecting ‘Forums’ under Activities on the Left Hand Block.

All lesson objectives, assignments, and tests can be found in the Lesson Materials.

GRADING: Your grade will be based on your completion of six writing assignment assignments, two exams, and class participation/Bulletin Board Submissions. The exams and writing assignments can be accessed from within the lesson material, or by selecting ‘Assignments’ under Activities on the Left Hand Block. You will have the opportunity to engage in “class participation” by using the Bulletin Board tool to respond to the bulletin board assignments throughout the course. Also, participating in the bulletin board assignments will enhance your understanding of the reading material.

Your final grade will be figured as follows:

- The six writing assignments are worth 50 points each and comprise 40% of your grade.
- The two exams are worth 100 points and comprise 40% of your grade.
- Your participation in class participation assignments comprises 20% of your grade.