

USC Gould

School of Law

LLM Criminal Law – Law 504

Location: LAW 2

Fall 2024, Friday, 10:00 am-12:50 pm

Units: 3

Instructor: Correen (Cori) Ferrentino, Esq.

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: cferrentino@law.usc.edu

Course Description

This class will explore selected topics in criminal law: the sources of criminal law in the U.S. including the Model Penal Code (MPC), basic elements of a criminal charge, certain offenses like homicide and crimes against property, as well as attempt, solicitation, and conspiracy. It will also identify the most common defenses to a criminal charge and discuss problems of statutory construction and interpretation.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to answer correctly any Criminal Law Bar Examination MBE Multiple Choice or Essay Question. Students will also be able to critically analyze the mental states and actions required of each crime, the elements required of each crime, and the purposes of punishment.

Course Notes

Copies of lecture slides and class recordings will be placed on Brightspace. PowerPoint and other multimedia will be used throughout the course.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

[Laurie Levenson's Roadmap: Criminal Law Seventh Edition](#) will be the coursebook. Supplementary readings will be issued in class or online.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Readings will be assigned and discussed in class.

Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance is mandatory at all classes. Participation is required and graded as stated above. Students will be respectful of the opinions of others and mindful of the severity of criminal law topics.

Grading Breakdown

Multiple Choice Final Exam is 90% of the grade. Participation is 10%.

Grading: Standard, as well as CR/D/F.

Grading Timeline

Grades will be posted within the required timeframe following the final exam.

Use of AI in this Course

Except where expressly permitted by the instructor, all work submitted for this course, including exams and papers, must be completed by you, personally. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to generate text as part of preparing your work is strictly prohibited. Submission or presentation of material generated by AI, including summarizing, paraphrasing, or editing such material, will be considered a violation of Academic Integrity. For additional information, please refer to the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism portions of the Gould Student Handbook and the USC Student Handbook.

Course Evaluations

You will have an opportunity to complete a course evaluation at the end of the course. I would greatly appreciate you completing an evaluation because I value your feedback and will use it to improve the course.

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be emailed to the Student Affairs office, and to ensure anonymity where possible, the Student Affairs office will communicate with faculty as needed. For classroom accommodations, the student can work directly with faculty to determine how best to implement the modification. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu. You can also contact Student Affairs for more information about accommodations in the law school (studentcare@law.usc.edu).

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework
Class 1 8/30/24	Intro; Purposes of Punishment	Pages 1-11; 15-27
Class 2 9/6/24	Elements of a Crime; Burdens of Proof; Actus Reus	Pages 31-41
Class 3 9/13/24	Mens Rea; Strict Liability	Pages 41-53; 66-73
Class 4 9/20/24	Theft Crimes; Crimes of Property; Status Crimes	Pages 411-437
Class 5	Mistake; Ignorance; Causation	Pages 58-63; 75-81; 177-190

9/27/24		
Class 6 10/4/24	Homicide; Manslaughter; Involuntary Manslaughter	Pages 101-114; 119-125; 131-134
No Class 10/11/24	Fall Recess	
No Class 10/18/24	Makeup class TBD	Review past readings
Class 7 10/25/18	Second-Degree Murder; Felony Murder Doctrine; Misdemeanor Manslaughter	Pages 136-139; 141-153; 155-156
Class 8 11/1/24	Homicide Review; Death Penalty; Rape	Pages 161-171; 85-97
Class 9 11/5/24 (Tues)	Attempt; Accomplice Liability	Pages 195-222; 227-248
Class 10 11/8/24	Conspiracy; Defenses to Conspiracy	Pages 267-295
Class 11 11/15/24	Intro to Defenses; MPC; Defense of Another; Defense of Property; Necessity	Pages 303-347
Class 12 11/22/24	Defenses Continued; Excuses; Duress; Intoxication; Insanity	Pages 347-410
TBD	Review Session	Review past readings
No Class 11/23/18	Thanksgiving Break	N/A

Support Systems

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.