



BAKER COLLEGE

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

CRJ2710 Introduction to Courts
3 Semester Credit Hours

Student Learning Outcomes and Enabling Objectives

1. Articulate the structure and functionality of the U.S. Judicial System.
 - a. Describe the hierarchical structure of the judicial system in their jurisdiction, including trial and appellate courts.
 - b. Explain the roles and responsibilities of key actors (the courtroom workgroup) within the court system, such as judges, attorneys, bailiffs, court clerks and probation/parole officers.

2. Explain the legal procedures and processes for a civil and criminal case.
 - a. Outline the stages of a typical civil and criminal court case, from filing a complaint to final judgment or verdict.
 - b. Explain the process of “voir dire” and the reasons why a jurist cannot serve on a jury.
 - c. Explain the rules for recusal for both a judge and attorney.
 - d. Demonstrate knowledge of essential legal terminology relevant to court proceedings.
 - e. Discuss the rights of an adult and a juvenile accused of a crime in the U.S. and the origin of these rights.

3. Explain the concept of legal principles and processes and their role in the administration of justice.
 - a. Apply foundational legal principles, such as due process, “stare decisis”, “mens rea” and “actus reus” to real-world court cases.
 - b. Discuss the significance of landmark court decisions and their impact of their precedents on the development of the legal system.
 - c. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of legal arguments presented in real-world court cases.
 - d. Explain the controversy surrounding Three Strikes Laws, mandatory sentencing and waivers to adult court for juvenile cases.

4. Explore how judges and their ethical-decision making in the legal profession affect those on trial and society as a whole.
 - a. Explore the possible conflicts of interest of judges, especially those whose campaigns are financed by, and/or they receive gifts from people with agendas.
 - b. Discuss the broader societal implications of court decisions and their influence on society.
 - c. Examine the role of courts in safeguarding individual rights and upholding the rule of law.
 - d. Discuss how ethics and the recusal process plays a part in the administration of justice, as it pertains to attorneys and judges.

5. Discuss the impact of cultural, diversity, social standing, and politics on court proceedings.
 - a. Explain how cultural norms and values play in shaping the behavior of participants in court proceedings.
 - b. Explore how cultural diversity affects the composition of juries and their decision-making processes in court cases.
 - c. Discuss the impact of politics on the functioning of the court system.
 - d. Explain how the cultural background of a defendant or plaintiff influences their experience within the legal system.

Big Ideas and Essential Questions

Big Ideas

- Structure of US Judicial System
- Civil and Criminal Case Processes
- Rule of Law, legal precedents and ethics
- Elected vs appointed judges
- Impact of defendant's culture and politics on outcomes

Essential Questions

1. How does the structure of the courtroom workgroup help with the administration of equal justice for all citizens?
2. How do the processes of both a civil and criminal trial protect the rights of the accused?
3. Why do legal precedents, principles and laws relate to fair trials and sentencing?
4. How is the ethical integrity of courts maintained and threatened?
5. How do social standing and political affiliations impact court proceedings?

These SLOs are approved for experiential credit.

Effective: Fall 2024