

PELLISSIPPI STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
MASTER SYLLABUS

**CRIMINAL LAW**  
**LEGL 1360 (formerly LAW 2120)**

**Class Hours: 3.0**

**Credit Hours: 3.0**

**Laboratory Hours: 0.0**

**Date Revised: Fall 2015**

**Catalog Course Description:**

Survey of state and federal law of crimes and criminal procedure and the paralegal's role in criminal cases.

**Entry Level Standards:**

College-level competencies in reading and English are required.

**Prerequisites:**

LEGL 1300

**Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials:**

**Required Text:**

Bevans, Neal, *Criminal Law & Procedure for the Paralegal*, 2d Edition. (Delmar Learning, 2014) ISBN 13: 978-1133693581

**Recommended Sources:**

1. *Tennessee Rules of Criminal Procedure*
2. Shapiro & Ames, *Tennessee Criminal Procedure* (in library)

**Useful Websites:**

[www.fd.org](http://www.fd.org) (Office of Defender Services)  
[www.scotusblog.com](http://www.scotusblog.com) (Supreme Court blog)  
[www.supremecourt.gov](http://www.supremecourt.gov) (Supreme Court website)  
[www.tned.uscourts.gov](http://www.tned.uscourts.gov) (District Court website)  
[www.ussc.gov](http://www.ussc.gov) (U.S. Sentencing Commission)

**I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	1	Introduction to Criminal Law; paralegals in criminal law practice; foundations of criminal law; what constitutes a crime (.5 hour); the Criminal Trial: distinction between criminal law and civil law (.5 hour); participants: (defendants, police, judges, prosecutors, attorneys, clerks, paralegals, probation officers, other) (1 hour); federal v. state (.5 hour); common law v. statutory (.25 hour); ethical considerations (.5 hour)
2	2	Arrest, Search and Seizure: 4th Amendment (1 hour); arrest, probable cause (1 hour); warrants (1 hour)
3	3	Post Arrest and Grand Jury: initial appearance, preliminary hearing (1 hour);

		prosecutor's office, staff, perspective (1 hour); grand jury, indictment (.75 hour); paralegal's role (.25 hour)
4	4-5	Evidentiary Issues in Prosecution: admissibility, classifications of evidence (.5 hour); DNA, fingerprints, blood, polygraphs, voice testing (.5 hour); exclusionary rule, chain of custody (.5 hour); paralegal's role (.25 hour); Interrogation, Confessions, Miranda: rights and exceptions (.5 hour); profiling, custody, privilege (.75 hour)
5	6	Arrest and Discovery: procedure (1 hour); plea bargaining (1 hour); discovery (.5 hour); pretrial motions (.5 hour)
6	7	Principals, Accessories and Attempt: first degree, second degree (.5 hour); before the fact, after the fact (.5 hour); conspiracy (1 hour); solicitation (.5 hour); ethical considerations (.25 hour); paralegal's role (.25 hour)
7	8-9	Crimes Against the Person: components of a crime: mens rea, actus reus (.5 hour); proof, motive, degrees of murder (.75 hours); crimes that may also be torts (.25 hour); sex-related crimes (.5 hour); rape, sodomy, incest, etc. (1 hour)
8	10-11	Crimes Against Property: Burglary, theft, receiving stolen property, robbery, fraud, forgery (1.25 hours); paralegal's role (.25 hour); Crimes Against Public Order and Morality, and Health: pornography, prostitution, drug crimes, DUI, invasion of property, concealed weapons, jury tampering, terrorism, vagrancy, cruelty to animals (1.25 hours); ethical considerations (.25 hour)
9-10	12-13	Trial: Constitutional guarantees (2 hours); procedures (2 hours); To Kill a Mockingbird (2 hours)
11	14	Defenses: presumption of innocence, burden of proof (.5 hour); affirmative defenses (1 hour); alibi, self-defense, other defenses (.5 hour); insanity (.75 hour); paralegal's role (.25 hour)
12	15	Sentencing and Appeal: Constitution, guidelines, probation, parole, appeal (3 hours)
13		Mock hearings: Initial appearance (preliminary hearing and bond hearing) (3 hours)
14		Mock hearings: Sentencing hearing and Appellate argument (3 hours)
15		Final Examination

## II. Course Goals\*:

The course will:

- A. Expand student understanding of legal ethics. I, III, IV
- B. Develop awareness of basic legal principles when assisting an attorney within the area of criminal law. I, II, III, V
- C. Introduce students to the elements of various criminal offenses and defenses. I, II, III, IV, V
- D. Foster the ability of students to develop an adequate understanding of the procedures by which criminal litigation is conducted in the state and federal systems. III, V
- E. Enhance students' skills to prepare basic forms and documents used in the criminal

practice. I,II,III,IV,V

F. Enhance student understanding of legal terminology. I, II, III, IV

\*Roman numerals after course objectives reference goals of the Paralegal program.

### **III. Expected Student Learning Outcomes\*:**

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the basic legal principles involved in the criminal litigation process and the tasks that may be required of paralegals during each step. (B,C,D,E,F)
2. Identify and understand the elements of various criminal offenses and defenses. (C,D,F)
3. Understand the procedures by which criminal litigation is conducted in the state and federal systems. (B,D,E)
4. Prepare basic forms and documents used in the criminal practice. (B,C,D,E,F)
5. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of legal ethics. (A)

\* Capital letters after Expected Student Learning Outcomes reference the course goals listed above.

### **IV. Evaluation:**

A. Testing Procedures: 70%

Students are evaluated primarily on the basis of tests. The instructor will provide more details via a Supplementary Syllabus the first week of class.

B. Laboratory Expectations:

NA

C. Field Work: 20%

The instructor may assign various drafting exercises and conduct tours of courts.

D. Other Evaluation Methods: 10%

1. Class participation, group work, and homework will also comprise the final grade for the course. The instructor will provide full details the first week of class via a syllabus supplement.
2. All tests and papers will be graded for spelling and English usage in addition to content and format.
3. Any student encountering academic difficulty during the term is strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss options and solutions.

E. Grading Scale:

A 93-100

B+ 88- 92

B 83- 87

- C+ 78- 82
- C 73- 77
- D 65- 72
- F 64 and below

## V. Policies:

### A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses (excluding distance learning courses) must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. Individual departments/programs/disciplines, with the approval of the vice president of Academic Affairs, may have requirements that are more stringent. In very specific circumstances, an appeal of the policy may be addressed to the head of the department in which the course was taken. If further action is warranted, the appeal may be addressed to the vice president of Academic Affairs.

### B. Academic Dishonesty:

Academic misconduct committed either directly or indirectly by an individual or group is subject to disciplinary action. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to the following practices:

- Cheating, including but not limited to unauthorized assistance from material, people, or devices when taking a test, quiz, or examination; writing papers or reports; solving problems; or completing academic assignments.
- Plagiarism, including but not limited to paraphrasing, summarizing, or directly quoting published or unpublished work of another person, including online or computerized services, without proper documentation of the original source.
- Purchasing or otherwise obtaining prewritten essays, research papers, or materials prepared by another person or agency that sells term papers or other academic materials to be presented as one's own work.
- Taking an exam for another student.
- Providing others with information and/or answers regarding exams, quizzes, homework or other classroom assignments unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
- Any of the above occurring within the Web or distance learning environment.

Please see the Pellissippi State Policies and Procedures Manual, Policy 04:02:00 Academic/Classroom Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions for the complete policy.

### C. Accommodations for disabilities:

Students that need accommodations because of a disability, have emergency medical information to share, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated should inform the instructor immediately, privately after class or in her or his office. Students must present a current accommodation plan from a staff member in Disability Services (DS) in order to receive accommodations in this course. Disability Services may be contacted by sending email to [disabilityservices@pstcc.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@pstcc.edu), or by visiting Alexander 130. More information is available at <http://www.pstcc.edu/sswd/>

### D. Other Policies:

#### Computer Usage Guidelines:

College-owned or -operated computing resources are provided for use students of

Pellissippi State Community College. All students are responsible for the use of Pellissippi State's computing resources in an effective, efficient, ethical and lawful manner.