



Week 3 Instructor Guidance

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[All Sections](#)

## CRJ 201: Introduction to Criminal Justice

### Week 3 Assignments:

Read Chapters 6 & 7 in *Introduction to Criminal Justice*

This week your reading will focus on the courts in particular, which is one component of the criminal justice system. Much like the criminal justice system as a whole, the components within it also have various sub-systems. This is the case with the courts. You will be expected to use this information and your own perspective in this week's Written Assignment and Discussions.

This week you will need to participate one discussion forum. Create an initial post by Day 3 that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the material. Respond to *at least* two peers by Day 7 of the week. Be sure to fully address the prompt in order to earn full points!

### Discussion

Prior to beginning work on this discussion, please complete the assigned readings in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 of the Wright (2012) text, and review the website, [About Federal Courts \(Links to an external site.\)](http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts) [Links to an external site.](http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts) (<http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts>). Be sure to support your descriptions with references to Wright's text and/or scholarly sources

The judiciary is an important part of the criminal justice system. After police arrest an individual, an extensive chain of events is set off in the American court system. As noted, Section 6.2 of Chapter 6 of the Wright (2012) text indicates that there are 51 separate court systems in the United States. The federal government operates one court system, referred to as the federal court system. Each of the 50 states operates a court system, referred to as state court systems. Both the federal courts and the state courts have three main levels: trial courts, appeals courts, and supreme courts. Note that Wright (2012) also includes a discussion of the term jurisdiction in Section 6.2 of Chapter 6.

Your instructor will assign you a section for this discussion. Respond to the prompts within your assigned group. For the fourth part (in each group) consider how knowledge of cultural sensitivity and diversity awareness could apply to positively influence a process or responsibility. Based on your assigned section, address the following:

- **Section 1 – Students whose last name begins with the letters A-I: State and Federal Trial Courts**
  - Describe processes for preliminary hearings and for the grand jury.
  - Describe the main responsibilities of state trial courts and federal trial courts.

- Interpret how at least one constitutional principle relevant to social and criminal justice relates to one of the above processes or responsibilities.
- Apply knowledge of cultural sensitivity and diversity awareness to at least one of the above processes or responsibilities.
- **Section 2 - Students whose last names begin with the letters J–Q: State and Federal Appeals Courts**
  - Describe processes for arraignment and for plea bargaining.
  - Describe the main responsibilities of state appeals courts and federal appeals courts.
  - Interpret how at least one constitutional principle relevant to social and criminal justice relates to one of the above processes or responsibilities.
  - Apply knowledge of cultural sensitivity and diversity awareness to at least one of the above processes or responsibilities.
- **Section 3 - Students whose last names begin with the letters R –Z: State Supreme Courts and the United States Supreme Court.**
  - Describe processes for jury selection and for the jury.
  - Describe the main responsibilities of state supreme courts and the United States Supreme Court.
  - Interpret how at least one constitutional principle relevant to social and criminal justice relates to one of the above processes or responsibilities.
  - Apply knowledge of cultural sensitivity and diversity awareness to at least one of the above processes or responsibilities.
- **All Students**
  - Briefly define the term jurisdiction as it relates to courts.

**Guided Response:** Your initial post should be at least 350 words in length. Support your claims with examples from the required material(s) and scholarly resources, and properly cite any references.

The **Scholarly, Peer Reviewed, and Other Credible Sources (Links to an external site.)** [Links to an external site.](https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf) (<https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf>) table offers additional guidance on appropriate source types. Respond to at least two of your peers' posts by Day 7. Your peer response posts must be in reply to the initial posts of peers from a section other than your own. Responses to your peers should be at least 150 words in length. Remember that this is a discussion. If a peer or your instructor asks you a question, it is your responsibility to respond. You are encouraged to post your required replies earlier in the week to promote more meaningful and interactive discourse in this discussion forum. Continue to monitor the discussion forum until 11:59 p.m. on Day 7 of the week, and respond with robust dialogue to anyone who replies to your initial post.

### **Week 3 Journal**

Prior to beginning work on this Journal element, please select a professional position within a criminal justice agency/organization or a juvenile justice agency/organization. Then, locate an agency/organization that employs individuals within that position. For this journal entry, you will briefly explore (in one to two pages) a professional position within a criminal justice agency/organization or a juvenile justice agency/organization in terms of duties and responsibilities. As noted below, you will need

to gather information from the agency/organization that you select in order to address the below elements. You will then need to address the following:

- Describe how employment criteria relates to individual tasks and to agency/organizational processes relevant to this position in approximately two paragraphs. For tasks, consider duties related to the professional position, and for processes, consider agency activities, purposes, or objectives.
- Describe how technology relates to at least one individual task and to at least one agency/organizational process relevant to this position in approximately one paragraph.
- Discuss a perspective on how this position may contribute to criminal justice objectives and your own professional goals in approximately one paragraph.

To complete the above elements, you will need to collect information. You may choose to collect your information through one or more of the following pathways:

- Communicate with a person in the Human Resources department of the agency or organization.
- Communicate with a professional who holds the position.
- Research and collect the information from an agency or organizational website.

Submit your journal through Waypoint.

### **Final Paper Preparation**

Prior to beginning work on this Annotated Bibliography, review the instructions for the **Final Paper** located in Week 5. Review the **Scholarly, Peer Reviewed, and Other Credible Sources (Links to an external site.)** **Links to an external site.**

(<https://content.bridgpointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303cccf/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf>) table; read the article Integrating Evidence-Based Practices Into Judicial Sentencing in the Wake of Realignment's Split Sentencing; and review the **About Federal Courts (Links to an external site.)** **Links to an external site.** (<http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts>) website to help find supplementary resources for the week.

The purpose of creating an **Annotated Bibliography (Links to an external site.)** **Links to an external site.** (<http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/annotated-bibliography>) is to provide a list of sources to assist you in your approach to the Final Project. The Ashford University Writing Center has created this **Annotated Bibliography Template** for use in this assignment. The listed sources should be scholarly and/or credible, and at least three of them need to meet scholarly source criteria and come from the JSTOR, Project MUSE, ProQuest, or EBSCOhost databases, which are all available through the Ashford University Library. The list should include the following information for each source:

- Name of the source including the complete bibliographic citation in proper APA format
- Summary of the source (at least one paragraph) including how this source will contribute to your paper

The Annotated Bibliography must include at least five relevant sources other than the textbook, three of which may be found in the Ashford University Library. Three of the required sources must be scholarly and the remaining two sources must be either scholarly or credible.

Consider using Q for your library research and to access writing supports, and tutoring services available to you. See the [Guide to Installing and Using Q \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/dd00f749-7449-469c-9bd3-1e6e269bd895/1/Guide%20to%20Installing%20and%20Using%20Q%20for%20Success.pdf) (<https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/dd00f749-7449-469c-9bd3-1e6e269bd895/1/Guide%20to%20Installing%20and%20Using%20Q%20for%20Success.pdf>) for more information.

*\*Note: To access the Ashford University Library directly, click on the Writing Center and Library links in your left navigation. Watch the [Database Search Tips \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](https://ashford.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Database+Search+Tips/0_vj8u97hi) ([https://ashford.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Database+Search+Tips/0\\_vj8u97hi](https://ashford.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Database+Search+Tips/0_vj8u97hi)) video for more and see [Searching the Ashford University Library](#) document for assignment-specific search tips.*

**The Annotated Bibliography.** For the annotated bibliography, you need to research sources that correspond to the three hypothetical cases included in the Final Project. Please visit the Academic Research section on your course home page (accessible through the Student Responsibilities and Policies tab on the left navigation toolbar) to review what types of materials are not acceptable for academic, university-level research. Because the Final Project includes three hypothetical cases, please find and organize your resources accordingly first by creating the Annotated Bibliography above, and then using the same APA citations in your APA references page that you will place at the end of your Final Paper in Week 5. To assist you with creating the Annotated Bibliography that will be relevant to the Final Paper, please follow these research parameters:

#### Two Sources for Case No. 1

- Case No. 1 includes the criminal justice issue of law enforcement communication in multilingual settings. In addition, this case considers applications for criminology. Note that Week 1 includes resources that address life course theory and other criminological theories that consider how criminology could address issues in criminal justice. Accordingly, please include the following:
  - Summarize one source relevant to the criminal justice issue of law enforcement communication in multilingual communities.
  - Summarize one source that provides insight on how criminology may apply to a program, practice, approach or policy relevant to a criminal justice issue in Case No. 1.

#### One Source for Case No. 2

- Case No. 2 addresses juror exclusion by race. Note that the recommended resources for this week include two sources that address this issue. Please include the following:
  - Summarize one source relevant to the criminal justice issue of juror exclusion by race in a criminal case.

#### One Source for Case No. 3

- Case No. 3 considers Eighth Amendment issues in correctional environments with respect to cell conditions. Please include the following:
  - Summarize one source relevant to the criminal justice issue of cell conditions within the context of Eighth Amendment considerations.

#### An Additional Source

- Please summarize one additional source that addresses a criminal justice issue relevant to an issue in one of the three cases. This will help you complete a part of the Final Paper that relates to critical perspectives.

The **Scholarly, Peer Reviewed, and Other Credible Sources** ([Links to an external site.](https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf))[Links to an external site.](https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf) (<https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf>) table offers additional guidance on appropriate source types. If you have questions about whether a specific source is appropriate for this assignment, please contact your instructor. Your instructor has the final say about the appropriateness of a specific source for a particular assignment. Cite your sources within the text of your outline and on the reference page. For information regarding APA, including samples and tutorials, visit the Ashford Writing Center, located within the Learning Resources tab on the left navigation toolbar, in your online course.

*\*Note: You are encouraged to integrate any feedback from your instructor and [upload the assignment to your ePortfolio](#).*

The Annotated Bibliography for the Final Paper assignment

- Must include the complete bibliographic citation in proper APA format for each source, formatted according to APA style as outlined in the **Ashford Writing Center** ([Links to an external site.](https://writingcenter.ashford.edu/))[Links to an external site.](https://writingcenter.ashford.edu/) (<https://writingcenter.ashford.edu/>), and include a summary of each source (at least one paragraph), including how this source will contribute to your paper.
- Must be formatted according to APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center's **APA Style** ([Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-style))[Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-style) (<http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-style>)
- Must include a separate title page with the following:
  - Title of Assignment
  - Student's name
  - Course name and number
  - Instructor's name
  - Date submitted

For further assistance with the formatting and the title page, refer to **APA Formatting for Word 2013** ([Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-formatting-word-2013))[Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-formatting-word-2013) (<http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-formatting-word-2013>) .

- Must utilize academic voice. See the **Academic Voice** ([Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/academic-voice))[Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/academic-voice) (<http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/academic-voice>) resource for additional guidance.
- Must include at least five relevant sources other than the textbook, three of which may be found in the Ashford University Library. Three of the required sources must be scholarly and the remaining two sources must be either scholarly or credible.
  - The **Scholarly, Peer Reviewed, and Other Credible Sources** ([Links to an external site.](https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf))[Links to an external site.](https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf) (<https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/e5359309-7d3c-4a21-a410-44d59303ccef/1/Scholarly%20Peer-Reviewed%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.pdf>) table offers additional guidance on

appropriate source types. If you have questions about whether a specific source is appropriate for this assignment, please contact your instructor. Your instructor has the final say about the appropriateness of a specific source for a particular assignment.

- Must document any information used from sources in APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center's [Citing Within Your Paper \(Links to an external site.\)](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/citing-within-your-paper) [Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/citing-within-your-paper) (<http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/citing-within-your-paper>)
- Must include a separate references page that is formatted according to APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center. See the [Formatting Your References List \(Links to an external site.\)](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/format-your-reference-list) [Links to an external site.](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/format-your-reference-list) (<http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/format-your-reference-list>) resource in the Ashford Writing Center for specifications.

Carefully review the [Grading Rubric \(Links to an external site.\)](http://ashford.waypointoutcomes.com/assessment/22397/preview) [Links to an external site.](http://ashford.waypointoutcomes.com/assessment/22397/preview) (<http://ashford.waypointoutcomes.com/assessment/22397/preview>) for the criteria that will be used to evaluate your assignment.

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## **The Courts**

As we have already discussed, the courts (or judiciary) are one component within the criminal justice system. The courts, for the most part, rely on law enforcement agencies to bring them offenders. So, the two must work together in order to accomplish their overall goal of enforcing the law. However, the courts have another primary mission, which is to ensure that the civil rights of citizens are not violated. They act as a watchdog over law enforcement. As with law enforcement, within the courts there are numerous different sub-systems, including various levels of courts. As with policing, these levels generally fall into one of three categories: federal, state, and local.

First we will briefly discuss an overview of how the court system works. For instance, the courts are generally divided into different levels, such as trial courts and appellate courts (Wright, 2012). Trial courts are the ones that hear cases and determine guilt. However, not all trial courts have juries or even trials. Some offenders plead guilty at their first appearance and they never receive a trial. This is not the case with all crimes though, such as murder, which generally requires a trial with a jury. In contrast to trial courts, appellate courts hear “appeals” (Wright, 2012, p. 160). A key distinguishing feature between these two courts is that trial courts are primarily concerned with the “facts” of a case; whereas, appellate courts are concerned with the legal standards of law (Wright, 2012, p. 160). This means that appellate courts do not determine guilt; rather, they attempt to ascertain whether or not the rule of law was followed and if a citizen’s rights were violated.

Another way the courts are divided is by jurisdiction. There are federal courts, State courts, and local courts. As with law enforcement jurisdiction, these courts also hear cases that are within their jurisdiction. For instance, a bank robbery is a federal crime, and would subsequently be heard in a federal court. The law enforcement agency bringing the offender to the court would most likely be the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In a like manner, local courts hear local cases. This type of court is what the majority of people are familiar with, since this is where you would go for a minor traffic violation or a misdemeanor crime where the local police intervened.

With regard to the federal system in particular, the courts are divided into districts. Within these districts there are circuit courts, magistrate courts, and appellate courts. The highest court in the land, the United States (U.S.) Supreme Court, is also a federal court, though it can hear cases from State and local cases also. The U.S. Supreme Court is actually an appellate court that makes determinations of whether or not the U.S. Constitution was violated by the law enforcement agency that brought the offender to the court. It is important to note, however, that an issue must be a federal Constitutional issue in order for the U.S. Supreme Court to hear it.

A primary reason the court system is in place is to ensure that individual citizens' rights are not violated; although, sadly enough, the overwhelming majority of cases never receive a trial. The reason for this is because most offenders make a "plea" to the court that circumvents a trial (Wright, 2012, p. 175). This practice is referred to as "plea bargaining" and generally involves offenders making a deal to receive a certain sentence if they plead guilty to a lesser crime (Wright, 2012, p. 175). There are mixed feelings on the practice of plea-bargaining, as some feel it undermines the criminal justice system, and others feel it makes the system more efficient. This is a question you should ask yourself as you are reading this week and try to make a determination as to where you stand on the issue.

Please review the below video that provides an overview of the judicial branch of the government in the United States. Be sure to note any questions you may have or issues that you can discuss in the discussion forums. Enjoy!

#### Interpreting the Constitution

From Title: *The Judicial Branch* (<https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=100753&xtid=39963>)

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Length: 01:10

#### References

Wright, J. (2012). *Introduction to Criminal Justice*. Cincinnati, OH: Bridgepoint Education.

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