**Porter Early College High School**

**Career and Technology Education Room: G-104**

**Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security Conference: 2:00pm – 2:40pm**

**Instructor: Mr. Benjamin M. Muraida Phone#: (956) 698-1726**

**Email: bmmuraida@bisd.us**

**Website: https://porterlawmuraida.weebly.com/**

**Court Systems & Practices**

**Course Syllabus**

**Textbooks and Resources: Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Texas Penal Code, Texas Traffic Code, Texas Family Code, Texas Education Code, Texas Education Agency, Texas CTE Resource Center, and ICEV website.**

**Course Description:** Court Systems and Practices is an overview of the federal and state court systems. The course identifies the roles of judicial officers and the trial processes from pretrial to sentencing and examines the types and rules of evidence. Emphasis is placed on constitutional laws for criminal procedures such as search and seizure, stop and frisk, and interrogation. The course will be conducted using several teaching methods such as lecture, reading, computer lab research, audiovisual presentations, guest speakers, and **class participation.**

**Course Objectives and Units of Study**

1. **Unit 1: Professional Standards and Employability Skills:** Students will explore and discuss employability skills, professional standards, and the importance of working toward personal/team goals every day in small groups and/or as a class. Students will learn and demonstrate employability skills standards such as attendance, on-time arrival, meeting deadlines, and ethical use of technology in this unit and throughout the course. Students will also discuss resources available through CTSO or other extracurricular organization(s) to further develop leadership, teamwork, and interpersonal skills.
2. **Unit 2: The U.S. Legal System:** This is a very comprehensive study of the United States legal system. Students will learn and examine the history, structure and function at all levels of the court systems. Students will also learn and discuss how jurisdiction impacts criminal charges and trial proceedings, distinguish between constitutional law, case law, statutory law, and administrative law, identify the differences in processing a misdemeanor and felony case, and examine and discuss the relationship of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights upon the court system. In brief presentations, reports, and/or classroom activities, students will compare and contrast the state court system and the federal court system, explain and interpret the purposes of law regarding criminal acts and behaviors, describe and interpret the impact of the grand jury process on court proceedings regarding criminal scenarios, and describe the impact of public opinion and the legislature on the U.S. court system.
3. **Unit 3: Roles and Responsibilities of Courtroom Work Groups:** In this unit students will gain an understanding of the various professionals working in the court system as well as their roles and responsibilities. Students will research and explain the roles of professionals such as the police, prosecutor, judge, victim advocates, and criminal defense attorney in the criminal process, examine the roles and importance of members of the courtroom such as the jury, bailiff, and court reporter, and analyze the impact of the victim and the defendant upon the courtroom process. In brief presentations, reports, role plays, and/or other classroom activities, students will share their findings and discuss the dynamics of assembly line justice and discretion found in court proceedings.
4. **Unit 4: Courtroom Communication Skills:** Students in this unit will learn and demonstrate communication and writing skills specific to success in the courtroom, including evaluating body language and gesture, tone, inflection during testimony. Students will apply and demonstrate interpersonal communication skills as well as writing skills to formulate effective field note taking and report writing in a real or simulated court setting.
5. **Unit 5: Pre-Trial, Trial, Adjudication, and Appellate Stages**: In this unit, students will examine the steps by which a criminal charge is processed through pretrial, trial, adjudication, and the appellate stages. Students will evaluate a simulated criminal case and identify the trial process from pretrial to sentencing, including explaining making a decision to charge and pretrial court proceedings.

In unit culminating activities, students will conduct a mock trial, demonstrating their understanding of the criminal trial procedure process. Following the trial, in brief presentations, reports, and/or classroom activities, students will distinguish between direct and circumstantial evidence and burden of proof for federal and state courts, and explore the impact of pleas and plea bargaining on the trial proceedings.

1. **Unit 6: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights:** The Constitution and Bill of Rights are the basis for our criminal trial process. In this unit, students will learn and explain the structure and provisions of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights and how they impact the criminal trial process. Students will participate in class discussions, activities, research, and/or role playing scenarios to learn and explain the impact of the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth amendments on the criminal justice system, analyze the exclusionary rule and the fruit of the poisonous tree doctrine to determine if evidence obtained in an illegal search scenario is admissible in court, analyze the effect of landmark cases such as Miranda v. Arizona, Weeks v. United States, Mapp v. Ohio, Douglas v. California, and Escobedo v. Illinois on individuals entering the criminal justice system, and explain the impact of the Fifth and Sixth amendments on the criminal trial process.

In a course culminating activity, students will demonstrate and apply the police responsibilities under the Fourth Amendment regarding search and seizure in a simulated arrest scenario. Students will determine if the search initiated in the scenario is proper under the provisions of the Fourth Amendment and describe the due process rights of a criminal suspect in the trial and sentencing process.

**Grading Policy**: There will be a minimum of one (1) major examination and/or project and three (3) minor assessments every three (3) week progress. There will be a minimum of three (3) major examinations and/or projects, in addition to five (5) minor assessments per 6-week marking period. Major assignments will account for 60% of the student’s grade while the minor assessment account for 40%. There will be a comprehensive exam at the end of each semester and that grade will be a stand-alone grade.

**Late Work Policy:** Late work will receive 10 points off of the total score for every day that the assignment is not received after the assigned due date. Assignments that are more than 5 days late will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made. Teacher will give verbal reminders daily.

**Make-up Work Policy**: Students, who have an excused or unexcused absence, will not be refused an opportunity to make up work if he/she is absent. The student will be given the same number of days to make up the work and turn in their work as the number of days he/she was absent.

Students who are absent on an announced test day will be expected to take a test upon return. If any student has been absent the day prior to an announced assessment and if nothing new has been covered, the student will be expected to complete or turn in assessment at the regularly scheduled time.

Any student who does not appear for a prearranged make up test or does not meet his prearranged due date for other work may receive a zero (0) on that test, work, or retesting.

Any student missing work due to participation in extracurricular activities must make prior arrangements with the teacher for work that will be missed prior to the absence.

**Testing / Re-Teaching / Re-Testing:** The teacher and student will work together to schedule a retest within (5) school days after learning of the failing grade, except under extenuating circumstance determined by the principal. No retests are available for students who received a “0” for academic dishonesty. The student may raise his/her score to a maximum of 70 on the test upon mastery of the retest. As **per BISD policy there are no retests on research papers, major projects, benchmarks, or semester exams.**

**Classroom Rules and Expectations**

1. School district policy will be strictly adhered to with regards to absences, no credit of classes, and dress code. It is the students’ responsibility to keep track of their absences and file any appropriate appeals.
2. No students shall leave the classroom without the appropriate pass used by the teacher.
3. **Use of cellular devices are not permitted to be used in the classroom unless teacher allows usage for classwork. You will need a district issued Chrome Book or Laptop.**
4. Eating and drinking is not permitted in the classroom.
5. There are four basic rules for classroom success that will be followed in the course of instruction:
6. **Be on time 2. Be prepared 3. Respect others opinions 4. Obey all school rules listed in the Student’s Code of Conduct**

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the following document from the course Instructor, Mr. Benjamin Muraida, from classroom G-104:

* **Court Systems and Practices Course Syllabus**

(Student - Print Name) (Parent – Print Name)

(Signature) (Signature)

(Date) (Date)