

CJ 430.03W LAW AND SOCIETY
College of Criminal Justice
Sam Houston State University
SPRING 2008

Professor: Debra D. Moore, JD
Campus Office: CL 13
Office Phone: (936) 294-1695
Office Fax: (936) 294-1653
Email: ddm003@shsu.edu
Class Time: Thursdays 6:00 to 9:50 PM
Classroom: University Center Room 205
Office Hours: University Center – *THURSDAYS* 5:00 to 6:00 PM
Main Campus - Tuesday/Thursday 11:00 to 12:30 PM and
BY APPOINTMENT

REQUIRED TEXT:

Friedrichs, David O. (2006). *Law in Our Lives: An Introduction*. Second Edition, Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.

** Handouts may be distributed during any class. They are required reading.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

“Law is all over. Law is everywhere. Law is an enduring presence in our lives.” (Friedrichs) This course is designed to explore and examine the nature, functions, objectives and limitations of the law. A vast amount of time will be allotted to critically evaluate and discuss the theoretical and practical perspectives of law. The organization of law, the perspectives of lawmaking, and how law is utilized as a social change mechanism will be analyzed.

Attention will also be given to reviewing the legal profession and its connection with the rise and development of legal systems. Lastly, the course will take a look at how law can be researched to better our sociological understanding of law, society and social policy.

Class sessions will be conducted according to a lecture-discussion format. Students will actually lead certain discussions as directed by the professor. It is crucial that students come to class prepared having read the required material for the class and having completed any other tasks or assignments that are required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To gain a better understanding as to how law is conceptualized both by lawyers and sociologists.
- To critically evaluate the purpose of law as both a reactor to social change and how one can become an initiator of change.
- Gain a general understanding of the multifaceted aspects of the legal profession.
- The origins and models of law will be explored.
- Development a framework as to how predilections, prejudices and emotions influence the law.
- Determine the interdisciplinary affects of law, sociology, psychology and philosophy.
- Discover how law relates to justice, morality, and religion.
- Gain a better understanding of the key terms and concepts of the law

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

You will be evaluated throughout the semester on the following work:

- A. **Three Exams** (70%)
- B. **Two Special Projects** (20%)
- C. **Class Participation** (10%)

Exams:

Each exam will vary in length; however there will be no less than twenty (20) and no more than fifty (50) questions. The exams will be made up of multiple-choice, short answer questions and/or fill in the blank. At the professor's discretion, students MAY be allowed to use their OWN notes but the Textbook or a replica thereof may never be used. You MAY NOT use any electronic gadgets, including but not limited to your laptop, palm pilot, blackberry, etc. Exams are cumulative; however they will primarily cover the unit most recently completed in class.

Make-up Exams:

None! As a general rule, there will be **NO** make up exams. Students who are certain they have a “legitimate” excuse should set up a conference immediately following the missed exam bringing supporting documentation of their “legitimate” excuse.

One Written Project: (20%)

The Students will be divided into groups for the purposes of class discussion and participation.

In order to gain a general understanding of the multifaceted aspects of law and society, outside personal research and the observation of legal/societal proceedings will be required.

Legal: Know all pertinent information regarding the Justices of The United States Supreme Court and personally observe local legal proceedings. These proceedings are to include the following: 1) Traffic Court 2) Misdemeanor Trial/Proceeding 3) State Trial /Proceeding and 4) Federal Trial/Proceeding.

Social: Research the current political and prevalent positions of the following: 1) Immigration 2) Euthanasia/Assisted death suicide 3) Abortion 4) Racial/Gender/Sexual discrimination 5) Death Penalty. A minimum of 6-9 hours should be logged and signed by the student and an official i.e., Court official, librarian, minister, politician...

A series of ‘Mini-Writes’ will be required throughout this semester. You are to write a scholarly and comprehensive paper of your independent research and personal observations of issues discussed in class. The paper is designed to get the students to think about societal influences on the law and incorporate issues discussed in class. Your paper can also be comprised of all the ‘Mini-Writes’ submitted to the professor. Since this is a writing enhanced class, the paper should be **no more** than four (10) FULL pages, typed, and double-spaced. Additional directives will follow.

Alternatively, a group written project, with prior approval from the professor may be considered if it adequately represents the contribution of every member in the group. Each student must contribute to the overall project. A signature page consisting of all contributing students to the assignment must accompany the project.

All papers submitted for these assignments become the property of the professor and will not be returned. ***PAPERS TURNED IN AFTER THE DUE DATE WILL BE MARKED DOWN ONE (1) LETTER GRADE!***

One Oral Presentation: (10%)

Students are to present their written papers/projects to the class. In the alternative, upon approval by the professor, students may be given a topic to research and/or answer two (2)

discussion questions located at the end of one of the chapters in the text and write a comprehensive answer/response to the questions. Additional authorities should be cited to support and reject your position in response to the question. You will then present the question and your response to the class. The instructor will give additional written directives for the oral presentation project.

Class Participation:

This class requires that you assume an active role in the learning process. Everyone is expected to complete all reading assignments within the time frames set forth in the Class Schedule. Students will also be randomly selected to lead class discussions based on the reading assignments and current events. Sometimes you will be given a list of current event topics and/or questions to research and be prepared to present on the following class session. The professor will maintain a record of your participation.

The instructor will place students into groups and facilitate discussions on a variety of topics including current events and specific text topics. National publications are a great resource to stay on top of current issues. Students are encouraged to be open and honest regarding their perspectives of the subject matter. It is imperative that all students conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful to the opinions of others.

Video presentations will be shown. While the student is not expected to take down pages of notes while the video is playing, key issues and significant segments will be discussed. Exam questions will include video presentations.

Students can expect **Pop Quiz Exams**. Therefore, a scantron and pencil should be kept with you at all times. Guest Speakers and Field trips will be arranged. Students are asked to check BLACKBOARD frequently.

Grading Policy:

Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%
Exam III	20%
Written Project	20%
Class Participation	10%

Final grades will depend on an accumulation of all available points.

90 – 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
Below 60	F

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

You are required to be in class every TUESDAY AND THURSDAY as I will check attendance each class period. Class attendance requirements will be followed in accordance with Academic Policy Statement 800401. Please note, a “student shall not be penalized for three or fewer hours of absences when examination or other assigned class work have not been missed; however, a student **may be penalized for more than three hours of absences** at the discretion of the instructor.”

The professor would hope that all students in the College of Criminal Justice respect the College, the University at-large and timely report to class. Those students not in class are responsible for materials discussed during the missed session.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

<http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html1#dishonesty>

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion—the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials and misrepresentation of credentials and accomplishments as a member of the college.

DISABLED STUDENTS POLICY:

<http://www.shsu.edu/schedule/>

SERVICES FOR DISABLED STUDENTS:

<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html>

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY POLICY:

<http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/scholasticrequirements.html#holyday>

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Students are welcome to record any material presented during class lectures and/or discussions. This recorded material may not be transcribed or copied for distribution without first securing the written permission of the professor.

Laptop computers may be used in class for note-taking purposes, but WILL NOT be accessible during exams.

Any electronic telecommunications devices should be set to “silent” mode or turned off prior to the beginning of each class session. If you require the use of one of these devices, please inform the professor, and please leave the classroom prior to initiating use. Instant Messaging and/or Text Messaging should not be engaged in during class.

NO CELL PHONE TEXTING, AUDIBLE PAGERS, TOBACCO PRODUCTS OR FIREARMS ARE ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM. If you need to have a cell phone or pager for an emergency situation, let the professor know PRIOR to class.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

January 17, 2008	Course Introduction, Review of Text, Overview of Syllabus and Let’s Get Acquainted. Introduction of Chapter One
January 24, 2008	Chapter 1: Introduction The Critique of Law Current Issues before the Law Independent Research on the Supreme Court Justices of the United States of America
January 31, 2008	VIDEO PRESENTATION Group Discussion
February 7, 2008	Current Event Group Discussions – MINI-WRITE Special Guest: MS. MARILYN GAMBRELL– NO MORE VICTIMS and MR. DOUG DRETKE
February 14, 2008	Chapter 2 LAW: ITS MEANING AND LOGIC Group Discussion
February 21, 2008	Chapter 3: Law, Justice, and the Moral Order Group Discussion
February 28, 2008	Chapter 4: Jurisprudence and the Study of Law Study Guide Chapters 1-4

***** Exam I - Chapters 1-4 *****

March 6, 2008	Current Event Group Discussions (Topic to be announced) MINI-WRITE
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MARCH 10-15, 2008 SPRING RECESS!!!

March 20, 2008	<i>Chapter 5: The Law and Society Movement</i>
March 27, 2008	VIDEO PRESENTATION Mini-Write
April 3, 2008	Chapter 7: The Legal Profession Current Event Group Discussions (Topic to be announced) Library Assignment – MINI-WRITE
April 10, 2008	Chapter 8: LEGAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES: AN OVERVIEW Study Guide
April 17, 2008	*** Exam II - Chapters 5, 7, & 8 ***
April 24, 2008	<u>WRITTEN PAPERS ARE DUE</u> Chapter 9: <i>Legal Culture and Legal Behavior</i> Law as Product: The Making of Laws Law as Communication
May 1, 2007	Chapter 10: <i>Law in Flux: Law and Social Change</i> <u>Oral Projects</u>
May 8, 2008	<u>Oral Projects</u> Final Exam Review

**** FINAL EXAMINATION: Thursday, May 15, 2008 8-10PM ****