

## Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 1000 (Sections A & Q)
TERM:	Fall - Winter 2013/14
PREREQUISITES:	LAWS
CLASS:	Day & Time: Thursdays 2:35pm to 4:25pm Room: Please check Carleton Central for current room location
INSTRUCTOR: (CONTRACT)	Philip Alexander Steiner
CONTACT:	Office: B442 Loeb Building Office Hrs: TBD Email: Philip.Steiner@Carleton.ca

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You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The **Paul Menton Centre** for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course, we will explore how the law acts on individuals and groups, as well as how individual and groups affect the law. Students will be introduced to the critical legal studies approach to studying law and society, and have the opportunity to begin thinking through some critical questions about the law in their everyday lives.

This course is 'about' the law, not strictly 'on' the law. While we will explore many of the traditional questions of law – such as which laws apply in which situations, minimum and maximum sentences, precedents, types and roles of legal actors, and other issues related to the application of law by legal professionals; we also set ourselves wider objectives. The focus of this course is on understanding what the law is, how it has developed historically, how it is deployed in a multitude of social settings, as well as how it is perceived, enacted, challenged, and changed.

While we will explore certain core mechanics of the law in a Canadian context, we will focus on the ways in which the law is much more than a set of rules meant to regulate behavior, settle disputes, or punish wrongdoing. Law has a profound effect on our thinking and acting, it touches almost all dimensions of our lives, and helps shape the way we see, and even understand, the world around us. Law can both empower, and enslave. Law can help promote equality, or be used to formalize bigotry and discrimination. Law can help us achieve ideals of justice, or be used in profoundly unjust ways.

Together we will explore law as a pervasive social construction developed in particular historical contexts, consider the spaces between law's intended and unintended consequences, its possibilities and limits, as well as how law plays a pivotal part in almost all of the biggest social and cultural issues of our times.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Although every student is a little different, and will likely take different things away from this course, the following are a set of core learning outcomes that the course aims to provide to every student:

- An introduction to thinking critically about the law, and some foundational critical thinking skills that students can use and build on throughout their university experience.
- A basic understanding of the law in a Canadian context, including its historical origins, present day institutional organization, and some of its key agents and actors.
- An opportunity to practice and improve university level writing, in particular how to form and structure strong 'essay style' written responses.
- An opportunity to practice and improve oral communications, specifically participating in tutorial discussions and debates in ways that clearly communicate ideas, consider alternatives,

and engage with opposing viewpoints in a respectful manner.

- A new (or broadened) perspective on the law and society that will allow students to identify, question, and potentially challenge taken for granted elements of the social worlds in which they live, work, and study.

## **APPROACH & EXPECTATIONS**

This course will use a variety of settings and activities to achieve its learning outcomes, including: lectures, assigned readings from required texts, additional readings assigned in lecture, class discussions, quizzes, multi-media, written and collaborative work in tutorials, ongoing assignments, as well as a mid-term and a final examination. Students are expected to complete all assignments, and to:

- Attend all classes
- Read any required readings **before** class;
- Participate actively and thoughtfully in class discussions and group assignments (always treat others with respect);
- Make notes on class content and identify questions as they arise during the process of reading required texts;
- Keep all rough work (notes, drafts, etc.) until their final marks have been officially recorded and be able to supply this rough work if requested by the course instructor;
- Keep an electronic copy of any paper or written commentary that is submitted in this course. The instructor may verify any written work using anti-plagiarism software (e.g., Turnitin.com); and
- **Turn off all handheld electronic devices in class and refrain from using cell phones, and restrict the use of laptops to note taking or related activities - messenger, facebook, other social networking tools, games, or is not appropriate during class time.**

(Specials thanks to Dr. Marcia Oliver at Sir Wilfred Laurier University, Brantford Campus, for the use/structure of this section of the course outline)

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Students will require two texts, while these texts can potentially be borrowed from the library or shared, given the reading load, students are strongly advised to acquire their own copies. Texts are

available at the Carleton University book store:

Kazmierski, Dickson-Gilmore, Kuzmarov, Moore, Tasson (eds.) (2010). *Introduction to Legal Studies* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). North York: Captus Press.

Vago, Steven and Adie Nelson. (2009). *Law and Society* ( ). Toronto: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Second hand, good quality, books may also be available either online, or via local book resellers (like Haven Books – 43 Seneca Street, Ottawa). That said, students need to be certain they are purchasing the correct edition of each text – double check that you have the right edition.

## **SCHEDULE**

The list of weekly lecture topics, assigned readings, and tutorial themes (when appropriate) will be posted and updated online via **cuLearn**. While any changes to planned curriculum will be announced in class and tutorials, **students are responsible for checking the schedule on an ongoing basis to ensure they have the most up to date course information.**

## **EVALUATION**

**(All components must be completed in order to get a passing grade)**

Assignments	Value	Due Date
Informed Participation	10%	Ongoing
Reading Reflection I	10%	October 10th
Reading Reflection II	10%	November 14th
Mid Term Exam	20%	December
Term Paper	20%	March 6th
Final Exam	30%	April

### **Informed Participation [10%]**

In addition to lectures, students will be expected to attend weekly seminars, and be prepared to actively participate in discussions on the assigned readings and themes. Attendance, on its own, will not contribute to this requirement. Students must be prepared to critically engage with (think, consider, and have informed discussions about) the materials, ideas, and themes assigned each week.

As part of preparing for each week's seminar, students will be required to produce 2-3 discussion questions (no more than 200 words) based on the assigned materials each week. Tutorial leaders will collect these questions at the beginning of each tutorial. (Students are encouraged to bring both a printed copy to submit and an additional copy to use during tutorials)

Discussions questions must be typed, printed, and submitted in tutorial during the week for which they were written in order to count towards participation grades.

### **Reading Reflection I and II [2 x 10%]**

Students will be responsible for completing two reading reflections in the fall term. Each reading reflection will be 3-5 pages in length and focus on the assigned readings from one week. The reading reflections are short, summary focused writing exercises that aim to offer students a chance to receive early feedback on their writing, practice at using academic citation, and a chance to consider the arguments and themes from a small sub-set of course materials. Additional information will be provided in class.

### **Writing Assignment – Winter Term Paper [20%]**

This assignment represents the major writing component of the class. Students will be assigned 2-3 questions, and will select one on which to write an 8-10 page paper. While not a research paper (students will only draw on assigned course materials) the response will be organized in terms of a formal essay. The assignment will offer students an opportunity to apply the lessons learned in their earlier reading reflections, and draw on multiple assigned materials to address a given question related to some of the core themes discussed in the course. Additional information will be provided in class.

### **Mid Term [20%] and Final Examination [30%]**

Students will sit two formal examinations, scheduled (by the University not the Instructor) in the examination periods in December and April. Both examinations will be multiple choice format, with the December examination covering the materials from assigned readings, lectures, and tutorials of the fall term, and the April exam covering materials from both the Fall and the Winter terms. Exams will be made up of roughly 60 to 100 questions. Additional information will be provided closer to each exam period.

### **Academic Honesty, Citation, and Plagiarism**

All the work in the course is based on the assigned readings, and in class discussions. Students must employ full and proper citation standards to all assignments. No outside resources are required or permitted. **Improper citation, failure to provide citations, or use of outside material presented as one's own will result in a grade of zero on any given assignment.** In addition, any instances of perceived academic dishonesty will be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible under University regulations.

That said, students will be provided with all the tools and support necessary to master proper citation. Students do not need to worry about their current familiarity with citation rules – these will be reviewed in the seminars.