

Course Outline

Course: LAWS 3908E **Approaches to Legal Studies II**

Term: Winter 2019

Prerequisites: LAWS 2908 and third-year Honours standing

Class Time: Wednesdays 6:05pm - 8:55pm

Room: Please check on *Carleton Central* for current room location

Instructor: Stephen Tasson

Contact: **Office:** Loeb Building D599 (w/ T. Purvis)

Office Hours: TBA

Email: steve_tasson@carleton.ca

Calendar Description

Advanced approaches to interdisciplinary research and analysis in law and legal studies. Emphasis on the important role of theory. Approaches considered will vary by section, and may include theoretical, quantitative, qualitative, literary, or historical approaches. Honours students are strongly encouraged to take this course in the third year of their program.

Course Description

Methodological debates have been at the centre of attempts to define the field of legal studies, which is often characterized as “inter-disciplinary” or “multidisciplinary”. While this flexibility is valued by many in the field, critics have charged that these descriptors too often serve only to deflect from a lack of methodological clarity or rigour within the field.

The course explores different methodological approaches or “forms” employed by researchers working in the nebulous field of “legal studies” in order to evaluate the relative strengths and limitations of some select approaches. In particular we devote some time to discussing the importance of theoretically-informed and theoretically-oriented analysis in legal studies and highlight the relationship between select theoretical approaches and specific methods.

We explore more recent movements within legal studies (e.g. law and humanities) that challenge traditional legal and social science methodology, and also investigate relatively recent social and technological changes that provide new tools for social science researchers but also present new practical and ethical challenges.

Beyond investigating and discussing select methodological and disciplinary debates, the course also highlights the elements of good research design and provides students with an opportunity to develop a structured research project proposal.

Required Texts

There is no core text required to purchase for the course. All weekly required texts will be made available on CULearn.

Weekly Schedule

The schedule for weekly topics & required readings is available on CULearn. Note: **Reading Week** is February 18-22 so no class is scheduled for that week.

Course Evaluation

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

Research Project		
Proposal	15%	(due 11:30pm February 1 st)
Annotated Bibliography	20%	(due 11:30pm March 1 st)
Research “Outline”	25%	(due 11:30pm April 9 th)
Position Papers (3)	25%	(contingent, see below)
Course Participation	15%	(continuous)

NOTE: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Department and of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Department and the Dean.

Course Components

****You must complete ALL components of the course to receive a passing grade****

The Research Project

The Research Project is comprised of a number of smaller assignments/components including a: research proposal (approx. 3 pages), annotated bibliography (approx. 8 pages) and finally an “Outline”. The “Research Outline” assignment incorporates the work of the earlier assignments and, ideally, the feedback received on these assignments. **Each component of the Research Project is detailed in the assignments sheet available on CULearn.**

Position Papers (3)

These papers asks you to summarize, synthesize and critique (i.e. engage and take a position on) some of the material we investigate in the course. They provides you opportunities to discuss the readings that we investigate in the course and draw connections to some of the broader questions and themes (e.g. What is the value of clear method? What are the pitfalls of relying on certain “types” of data such as cases, official documents or reports, survey data, data gathered though interviews, “social media scraping” etc.?)

These papers will be **approx. 5 double-spaced pages** in length. The specific questions, length and rubric for evaluation will be outlined in the assignment sheet and will also be **discussed in more detail in class**. You have some choice in which topics/questions you choose and thus the deadline for these papers will depend in part on this choice. Again, we will discuss these in more detail in-class.

NOTE: “Outside” research (other than course texts) will not be required for these papers. They are about demonstrating engagement with the required course material.

Course Participation

It is vital that you attend class in order to succeed in this course. Participation in class is a key component of the course and your grade. **You are expected to contribute to class discussions and come prepared to participate in discussions and planned activities.** Note that we will also be discussing the research projects that you are working on as the term progresses and so you must also be prepared to discuss your research in class with your peers. Your participation mark is based not only on your basic attendance but your actual participation in the discussions and planned exercises.

Some General Guidelines on Assignments for This Course

(We will be discussing these requirements in more detail in lecture or the tutorial)

ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING and SUBMISSION

Any written work submitted in this course **must** be double-spaced, 12pt Times or Arial font with standard 1" margins. All assignments **must** include a title page that has, at minimum, your name and student number, the course code, and my name on it. Title pages, bibliographies and extensive footnotes are not counted in determining an assignment's page length. Assignments are to be submitted **using the links provided for this purpose on the CULearn page** for this course.

It is **your** responsibility to ensure that assignments are submitted in a *readable* format before the deadline. If you anticipate any issues (technological or otherwise) you should discuss this with me **ASAP in advance** of the deadline.

**Failure to format or submit your assignments as indicated
may result in them not being accepted**

EXTENSIONS & LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Every term I spend a great deal of my time dealing with extension requests and last-minute appeal for mercy just before deadlines (or, worse, weeks after deadlines). This is far from ideal.

Extensions (i.e. academic accommodation on deadlines) beyond the normal academic accommodations noted as part of *University Policy on Academic Accommodation* must normally:

- a. be supported by documentation (in the case of “sick notes”, include specific dates)
- b. be requested in advance of the deadline
- c. ideally be discussed “in person” during office hours or an appointment

Late assignments will normally be penalized **3% per day** that they are late (unless otherwise specified on the assignment instructions). Late assignments are to be submitted normally through **CULearn** unless otherwise noted. **Email is NOT considered an acceptable means of submission for assignments.**

BACKUP COPIES

Student must retain a **paper hard copy** of anything submitted for a grade in the class. This hard copy should be kept for at least 3 months following the end of the course in case there is any discrepancy in final grades. Students must be able to produce a copy of assignments immediately upon request.

CITATION, REFERENCING and PLAGARISM

Assignments in the course must be properly referenced/cited and include a bibliography of all sources used in the preparation of the assignment. We will discuss the citation style in some detail in class. My principle concerns with citation are clarity and consistency. **Failure to reference, mis-referencing or attempting to pass someone else’s ideas or work off as your own is plagiarism.** I take it very seriously and so should you. Plagiarism cases are handled by the Dean’s Office. Penalties can be very serious. Engaging in it is incredibly misguided. See Carleton’s *Academic Integrity Policy* (link above) for more information.

Academic Accommodations

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

Pregnancy obligation: Please contact 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: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Religious obligation: Please contact 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: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact **The Paul Menton Centre (PMC)** at 613-520-6608 or 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 as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC Website for their deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable) www.carleton.ca/pmc

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per **Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy**. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: <http://students.carleton.ca/course-outline>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the Internet. Plagiarism is a serious offence.

More information on the University's **Academic Integrity Policy** can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Departmental Policy

The *Department of Law and Legal Studies* operates in association with certain policies and procedures. Please review these documents to ensure that your practices meet our Department's expectations at: <http://www.carleton.ca/law/student-resources/department-policies/>
