

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 3908A – Approaches to Legal Studies II
TERM:	FALL 2022
PREREQUISITES:	LAWS 2908 and third year Honours standing
CLASS:	Day & Time: Please check Carleton Central for current Class Schedule.
	Room: Note this is an “in person” section of the course so you must attend the class to have access to the lecture materials and to participate in discussions
INSTRUCTOR:	Stephen J. Tasson
CONTACT:	Office: Room D582 Loeb Building
	Office Hrs: Wednesday 10:30-12:30pm (in person) or by appointment (online through Zoom (Brightspace link))
	Telephone: None
	Email: steve.tasson@carleton.ca

CALENDAR COURSE 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 broad field of legal studies, which is often characterized as “interdisciplinary” or “transdisciplinary”. 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 and potentially undercut the value of research in the field.

The course explores different methodological approaches by (social science) researchers working in the nebulous field of “legal studies” in order to evaluate the relative strengths and limitations of some select approaches (we stick closely to well-established qualitative research methods e.g. interviews, ethnography, case studies, etc). We devote time to discussing the importance of theoretically-focused analysis in legal studies and highlight the relationship between select approaches to “law” and specific methods to “know the law”.

We explore more recent movements within legal studies (e.g. law and humanities) that challenge traditional legal and social science methodology, and also investigate how recent technological changes 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 central aim of the course is to develop student's understanding of the elements of good research design and provide students with an opportunity to develop a structured research project proposal of their own.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are **NO texts required** to purchase.

All the required texts and readings are **available on the course's Brightspace page**. One text we refer to frequently that you may purchase (though it is not required) is:

Luker, K. (2010). *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-glut*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

EVALUATION

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

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.

Research Project

Proposal (Draft)	15%	(due 11:30pm September 29th)
Annotated Bibliography	20%	(due 11:30pm November 4th)
Research Proposal & "Outline"	15%	(due 11:30pm December 9th)
Response Papers (2)	30%	(due 11:30pm October 21st & 2 nd deadline is TBD)
Course Participation	20%	(continuous)

COMPONENTS

The Research Project **(15+20+15= 50%)**

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 a final "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 on the assignment sheets available on Brightspace in advance of the deadlines.** The aim of this core component is to design and develop the framework of a formal research proposal in legal studies. This may be useful for those that are considering undertaking sustained research in the future (e.g. an honours research paper).

“Response Papers” (15+15 = 30%)

These short papers ask you to summarize and respond to selected material we investigate in the course. They provide you opportunities to discuss the readings that we investigate in the course and engage with some of the reader questions and themes in the course (i.e. What is the value of an established methodology? What are the pitfalls of relying on certain “types” of data in legal studies research (i.e. official documents or reports, survey data, data gathered through interviews, “social media scraping”, what ethical responsibilities do we owe research subjects, etc.?)

These papers will be **approx. 4 double-spaced pages** in length. The specific questions, length and rubric for evaluation will 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 partly depend on this choice. Again, we will discuss these in more detail in-class.

Course Participation (20%)

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. If you don’t think you can regularly attend class then this is not the class for you!

SCHEDULE

The complete **Required Reading and Lecture Topics schedule** is available on **Brightspace (our online portal)**. If you have any questions or concerns about these topics or readings, please let me know via email. Please also note these other important term dates:

Fall 2022 Sessional Dates and University Closures	
<i>Please find a full list of important academic dates on the calendar website: https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/</i>	
September 7, 2022	Fall term begins.
September 20, 2022	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in fall and fall/winter courses.
October 10, 2022	Statutory holiday. University closed.
October 24-28, 2022	Fall break, no classes.

November 25, 2022	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in fall term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official December final examination period (see examination regulations)
December 9, 2022	Fall term ends.
	Last day of fall classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule (fall and fall/winter courses only).
	Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for full and late fall courses.
December 10-22, 2022	Final examinations in fall courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

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:
<https://carleton.ca/law/current-students/>

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/>

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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

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, [click here](#).

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 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).

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: [: https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services](https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services)

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: <https://students.carleton.ca/services/accommodation/>

COVID Update

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you must follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Carleton has paused the [COVID-19 Mask Policy](#), but continues to strongly recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. It may become necessary to quickly reinstate the mask requirement if pandemic circumstances were to change.

Vaccines: Further, while proof of vaccination is no longer required as of May 1 to attend campus or in-person activity, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible, and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

OTHER COURSE SPECIFIC POLICIES

(Please ask if there is any confusion or concern with any course-related policies!)

ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING and SUBMISSION

Unless otherwise specified, any written work submitted in this course must be double-spaced, formatted to 12pt Times New Roman or Arial font with standard margins. Assignments normally must include your name and student number and the course code in the document's header. Title pages, bibliographies and extensive footnotes are not usually counted in determining an assignment's word count or page length.

Assignments are normally submitted using the links provided for this specific purpose on the Brightspace page for this course. **It is your responsibility to ensure that assignments are submitted in a readable file format (usually .doc or .pdf formats) *before the deadline***. If the assignment is unreadable it will not be considered submitted. If you anticipate any issues (technological or otherwise) you should discuss this with your TA or with me ASAP in *advance of the deadline*.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS & EXTENSIONS POLICY

It is important to stay on top of course work and to communicate with me early if you anticipate issues completing work on time. Deadlines are important (for me) because I plan my time around when assignments come due and when I have time to mark and provide feedback on them. Because the assignments come fairly frequently, if you get behind on them, then they can begin to "run into" each other and this can **become very overwhelming very fast**.

If you are struggling with this, then please let me know EARLY! I **understand** everyone has competing commitments and responsibilities! Some of these priorities may supersede this course and

NOTE: A late paper/assignment will normally be penalized 5% per day (e.g. a paper marked as a 70% that was 1 day late would receive a grade 65%) (unless otherwise specified on the assignment instructions). Late assignments must be submitted normally through Brightspace unless you are otherwise directed.

Email is NOT considered an acceptable means of submission for any assignment

Late assignment may not be graded and "returned" along normal timelines and the quantity of feedback you receive may be affected.

necessitate that some assignments be submitted late. This is **why there is a policy for late submissions!!!**

Extension requests

Extension requests must normally be communicated to me

- a) **in advance of the assignment deadline** and
- b) ideally **“in-person”** (e.g. office hours).

Frantic email requests on the eve of a deadline are unlikely to receive a favorable reply.

In extraordinary cases where a requested extension lasts longer than 7 days (e.g. in the case of prolonged medical or other issues), students will normally be required to provide additional information to justify the extension (usually up to a maximum of 14 days). **EARLY COMMUNICATION REGARDING LATES/EXTENSIONS IS VITAL!**

BACKUP COPIES

Student must retain a “backup” copy of anything submitted for a grade in the class. This copy should be kept until a final grade is received in the class. Students must be able to produce a copy of assignments upon request.

REFERENCING & PLAGIARISM (Part II)

Assignments in the course must be properly referenced and include a bibliography of all sources used in the preparation of the assignment (unless directed otherwise). We will discuss citation styles in some detail in class. I understand that, to this point, students have had varying degrees of experience with citation and referencing in their academic work. Regardless, the expectation is that you have a basic ability to reference and cite other’s work used in preparing your own assignments. As highlighted above, failure to reference properly or attempting to pass someone else’s ideas or work off as your own constitutes plagiarism. Both the university and I take it very seriously and so should you. Plagiarism can lead to penalties that are very serious. **Recklessly or purposefully engaging in it is incredibly misguided.** If you are struggling or unsure about how best to use sources in preparing your work in the course, it is far better to contact me and talk to me about resources to help!