

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 3908 A – Methodological Approaches in Legal Studies 2
TERM:	Fall 2025
PREREQUISITES:	LAWS 2908 and third-year Honours standing. Honours students are strongly encouraged to take this course in the third year of their program.
CLASS:	Day & Time: Monday, 11:35am – 2:25pm In-person weekly lecture Room: Please check Carleton Central for current Class Schedule
INSTRUCTOR:	Sylva Sheridan, PhD (ABD), MA, BA (Hon).
CONTACT:	Office Hrs: Monday; 3:00-4:00pm. Office: LA (Loeb) D581 Telephone: NA Email: sylvasheridan@cunet.carleton.ca – Emails are responded to within 48 hours. If after 48 hours, you have not received a response from me, please re-send your email. Emails are responded to Monday – Friday between 8am – 4pm. If you email me on the weekend, you can expect a response by Monday or Tuesday the following week.
BRIGHTSPACE:	https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/370946 .

CALENDAR COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced approaches to interdisciplinary research and analysis in law and legal studies. Methodological approaches considered will vary by section and may include theoretical, quantitative, qualitative, literary or historical approaches.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course, along with LAWS 2908, provide foundational knowledge in developing research skills that support your university journey. In LAWS 2908, you would have explored the McGill Legal Citation Guide and demonstrated capacity and familiarity with jurisprudence, government

documents and secondary sources.

In LAWS 3908, we will take your knowledge base gained from 2908 and build on it. We will spend time discussing theoretical approaches and how to incorporate theory into a research design. We will spend several weeks on the parts of a standard research design including:

- Abstracts
- Theories
- Literature Reviews
- Methodology (Qualitative + Quantitative)
- Ethics
- Findings + Discussion

PRECLUSIONS

No preclusions

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should demonstrate capacity and familiarity with the following:

- Conceptualize a strong literature review to support your central argument/thesis
- Demonstrate capacity with integrating theory to ground your arguments
- Develop a research plan to support your research interest

REQUIRED TEXTS

You do not need to purchase any texts for this course. All required readings and materials will be uploaded to Brightspace or available online.

Though **not required**, I highly recommend that students purchase *The McGill Guide* (10th Edition). This text outlines the fundamental principles of legal citation. It is an essential reference text for anyone conducting research concerning legal issues. You will use it as a guide for other courses in the Department of Law and Legal Studies. It is available for purchase for approximately \$115.00 through the bookstore and online. The library has offered an overview of the guidelines, which can be found here: <https://library.carleton.ca/guides/help/uniform-legal-citation-style-mcgill-guide>.

EVALUATION

This course is demanding and intensive. It will require considerable ongoing attention each week. We understand that this course requires a significant amount of work for you. However, this course is foundational to your Law program. It is designed to provide you with the opportunity to develop research skills and understanding that will serve you well in other law courses. There are four pieces of evaluation for LAWS 3908A.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Assignment	Due Date	Worth	Explanation
Attendance and Participation	Ongoing	20%	Students are expected to come to class prepared and critically engage with the readings. This course will run as both lecture and seminar. As an upper-year undergraduate student, you possess a level of critical thinking that will support classroom engagement.
Theory Assignment	October 6 at 11:59pm	20%	Students will prepare a short (3-4 page) paper responding to a prompt from one of the weeks 2-4 readings. I will provide three prompts, and you will respond to one . More information will be provided on the Brightspace Course Page
Annotated Bibliography	November 3 at 11:59pm	20%	Students will prepare an annotated bibliography of 10 sources. This will form the <u>literature review</u> section of your research design. I will provide extensive feedback. More information will be provided on the Brightspace Course Page.
Research Design	December 5 at 11:59pm	40%	<p>Students will propose a research design on any topic you wish. You may, however, wish to align the research design with your research interest. We will be discussing the following areas that are part of your research project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract • Literature Review • Ethics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Part of the project will be to complete the TCPS:CORE 2022 Training. • Theory • Methodology • Discussion <p>More information will be provided on the Brightspace Course Page.</p>

Failure to complete **ANY** of the evaluation elements will be considered an administrative fail and will result in a grade of 'F'. This also includes attendance. If you attend no classes this term, you will not pass. All assignments must be **12-point font, Times New Roman or 11-point Arial and double-spaced**.

LATE PENALTIES AND REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS

Penalties for Late Submissions:

It is expected that students will plan accordingly and endeavor to meet those deadlines. For information about requesting short-term or long-term extensions, deferrals for final exams, or academic consideration due to illness, injury, or other extraordinary circumstances, please visit the Academic Consideration Policy page and complete the relevant forms as required. All requests must be submitted to the instructor before the assignment due date or, in the case of exam deferrals, directly to the Registrar's Office. Full details and instructions can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-consideration-policy/>.

Students may submit the paper late, and their grade will be reduced by a late penalty that will accrue at a rate of 2 marks for each day punctuating the deadline and their submission of the paper via Brightspace. The granting of extensions is at the discretion of the instructor (not the TA), who will confirm whether an extension is approved and its duration.

To request an extension, please **email the course instructor (not the teaching assistant (TA)) before the assignment's due date. Again, late assignments will automatically receive a grade of 0 unless an extension has been requested and granted before the deadline.**

Extension requests sent by students **after an assignment's due date will not be granted unless justified by extraordinary circumstances (e.g., medical or familial emergency)**, in which case students are required to email the course instructor and, additionally, to complete the **Academic Consideration for Coursework form**.

Extensions for longer than 7 days will not be granted unless justified by extraordinary circumstances (e.g., medical or familial emergency). In those extraordinary cases for which extensions lasting longer than 7 days are granted, students may be required to fill a **Long Term Academic Considerations for Coursework Form** and email supporting documentation to academicconsideration@cunet.carleton.ca.

For more information regarding academic consideration for short-term incapacitation (illness, injury, or extraordinary circumstances beyond a student's control), please visit the following link: <https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/#academic-consideration-for-short-term-incapacitation>

Final Grade Approval

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval 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 Dean.

SCHEDULE**Week 1: September 8 | Syllabus + Introduction to the Course + Assignment Overview****Required Reading:**

- Course Syllabus
- Assignment Overview

Week 2: September 15 | Theory I: Legal Positivism**Required Reading:**

- H.L.A. Hart, "Positivism and the Separation of Law and Morals" (1958) 71:4 Harvard Law Review 593.

Week 3: September 22 | Theory II: Natural Law Philosophy**Required Reading:**

- Lon Fuller, "Positivism and Fidelity to Law: A Reply to Professor Hart" (1958) 71:4 Harvard Law Review 630.

Week 4: September 29 | Theory III: Historical Trauma Theory + Necropolitics**Required Reading:**

- Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, "The return to the sacred path: Healing the historical trauma and historical trauma unresolved grief response among the Lakota through a psychoeducational group intervention" (1998) 68:3 Smith College Studies in Social Work 287.
- Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics" (2003) 15:1 Public Culture.

Week 5: October 6 | Research Design I – Ethics**Required Reading:**

- Collaborative Indigenous Learning Bundle – Ethics of Research With Indigenous Peoples.

Required TASK → I recommend doing this over the next two weeks.

- Complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 (Course on Research Ethics)
 - <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome>.
- Save the certificate and include it with your research design – it counts for 5% of the research design project.
 - If you **choose** not to complete this training, and do not include the certificate with your research design, **the maximum grade you can get on the research design is 35/40.**

October 13: Thanksgiving || No Class**October 20 – 24: Reading Week || No Class****Week 6: October 27 | Research Design II – Annotated Bibliographies / Literature Reviews****Required Reading:**

- Lawrence A. Machi & Brenda T. McEvoy, “The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success” in *Sage Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks: Corwin, 2024).
- Linda Tuhiwai Smith, “Research through Imperial Eyes” in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic & Professional, 2021) at 49.

Week 7: November 3 | Research Design III – Abstracts + Thesis**Required Reading:**

- There are five abstracts posted on Brightspace from Carleton Law and Legal Studies MA Theses + PhD Dissertations. Please review them and be prepared to discuss them in class.

Week 8: November 10 | Research Design IV – Methodology (Qualitative)**Required Reading:**

- Jane Mills & Melanie Birks, *Sage Research Methods, “Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide” Sage Research Methods: Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide* by Jane Mills & Melanie Birks (eds.) (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2017).
- Marianne LeGREGO, “Discourse Analysis” by Jane Mills & Melanie Birks (eds.) in *Sage Research Methods: Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2017).
- Alison Stewart, “Case Study” by Janet Mills, Melanie Birks & Allison Stewart (eds.) in *Sage Research Methods: Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2017).

Week 9: November 17 | Research Design V – Methodology (Quantitative)**Required Reading:**

- Howard Wainer, “Conversations About Three Things” in *Sage Quantitative Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011).
- Christopher Peterson, “Minimally Sufficient Research” in *Sage Quantitative Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011).

- Hamed Taherdoost, "What Is the Best Response Scale for Survey and Questionnaire Design; Review of Different Lengths of Ratings Scale / Attitude Scale / Likert Scale" (2019) 8:1 International Journal of Academic Research in Management 1.

Week 10: November 24 | Research Design VI – Discussion on Findings**Readings/Materials:**

Lisa Given, The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods.

- Codes and Coding
- Debriefing
- Findings
- Peer Review

Week 11: December 1 | Open Office Hours on Research Design

This class will give you the opportunity to ask questions about the research design. I encourage you to come to class with a draft copy of your research design.

Week 12: December 5 | Research Design Due

Please submit your paper on Brightspace by 11:59pm.

POLICY ON PERMISSIBILITY OF SUBMITTING SAME WORK MORE THAN ONCE, PERMISSIBILITY OF GROUP OR COLLABORATIVE WORK, AND PERMISSIBILITY OF USING GENERATIVE AI

Use of Previously Submitted Papers:

Submitting previously evaluated work, in whole or in part, is not permitted, and you will receive a zero.

Generative AI Tools (e.g. ChatGPT):

Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor in a particular course, either generally or for a specific assignment, any use of generative AI tools to produce assessed content is a violation of academic integrity standards.

Group Work:

The use of group work is not permitted. Students must individually submit their own work.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This 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, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and

- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

STATEMENT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

- <https://wellness.carleton.ca/get-help-now/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

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

Pregnancy and Family-Status Related Accommodations

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 about the accommodation policy, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities \(EIC\)](#) website.

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, please go to: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/discrimination-harassment/religious-spiritual-observances/>.

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. You can find the Paul Menton Centre online at: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

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 where 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>

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. Read more here: <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>.

For more information on academic accommodation, please visit:
<https://students.carleton.ca/services/accommodation/>.

Academic Consideration for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances

Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfill the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The University supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically. Medical and/or other extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are beyond a student's control, have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations, and could not have reasonably been prevented.

Students must contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible, and normally no later than 24 hours after the submission deadline for course deliverables. If not satisfied with the instructor's decision, students can conduct an "informal appeal" to the Chair of the department within three (3) working days of an instructor's decision. We have created a webform specifically for appeals to the Chair, which can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/law/application-for-review-of-refusal-to-provide-academic-consideration/>. *Note: This form only applies to LAWS courses and is not the same as a formal appeal of grade.* More information about the academic consideration can be found [here](#).

Fall 2025 Sessional Dates and University Closures	
<i>Please find a full list of important academic dates on the calendar website:</i> https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/	
September 3, 2025	Fall term begins.
September 16, 2025	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) for fall, and fall/winter courses.
September 30, 2025	Last day to withdraw from fall term and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment (financial withdrawal).
October 13, 2025	Statutory holiday. University closed.
October 20-24, 2025	Fall break. No classes.
November 15, 2025	Last day for academic withdrawal from fall courses.
	Last day to request formal exam accommodations for fall, and fall/winter examinations to the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities.
November 24, 2025	Last day for summative tests or examinations or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade in the fall or fall/winter before the official examination period.
December 5, 2025	Fall term ends.
	Last day of fall term classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule.
	Last day for take home examinations to be assigned.
December 6-7, 2025	No classes or examinations take place.
December 8-20, 2025	Final examinations in fall term courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held.
December 20, 2025	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
December 24, 2025 – January 2, 2025	University closed.