
Law & Society

About the Course

Students tend to think about the law as an objective set of rules that binds society together and creates social order. In this course, we approach laws as subjective social constructs that contain both promises and limitations for solving social problems. We consider key questions including: What is law? What is justice? How does the law impact everyday life? How can law create social change? How can law make social problems worse? By addressing these questions, you will have opportunities to practice critical thinking and formal reasoning skills such as identifying assumptions underlying perceived realities, making visible the invisible forces that shape our everyday lives, and crafting coherent, thoughtful arguments about how we might begin to solve some of the most pressing social problems in contemporary U.S. society.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Identify and explain assumptions we make about the relationship between law and society.
2. Compare and contrast arguments about how the law affects everyday life.
3. Develop and present an original, evidence-based argument about the role of the law in solving contemporary social problems.
4. Present information and lead a discussion on course material.

Course Structure

This course includes in-person classes and some Canvas content. The Canvas course site includes the syllabus, slides, assignment instructions and files, and important announcements. You can access Canvas at <http://canvas.weber.edu>. When prompted, log in using your Wildcat name and password. If you have

Textbook

Calvita, Kitty. 2016. *Invitation to Law & Society* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Important Dates

September, 12, 2019

Critical analysis project brief 1

October 24, 2019

Exam 1

November 5, 2019

Critical analysis project brief 2

December 3, 2019

Critical analysis project brief 3

December 5 and 12, 2019

Critical analysis presentation forums

December 12 2019, 11:30pm

All revisions for all assignments due

technical difficulties at any point during the semester, please direct your questions to WSU's Information Technology help desk at (801) 626-7777 or csupport@weber.edu.

The course consists of two parts that focus on critically analyzing law in everyday life and the promises and limitations of the law for bringing about social change. I have carefully designed each unit to guide you toward achieving the course objectives. Each lecture and assignment has a specific purpose, and I promise that the assignments are never just “busy work.” If you ever find yourself working on an assignment without understanding its purpose, please contact me so I can clarify. Similarly, if you are ever unsure about what I am looking for in a specific assignment, please let me know.

The assignments throughout the course consist of reading journals, in-class workshops, one exam, and an oral and written critical analysis project. Depending on which grade you are aiming for in the course, you may choose which assignments to complete. Consistent with the amount of work required for undergraduate level courses, **I suggest that you plan to spend about 6 hours per week outside of class studying and working on this course.** The amount of time may vary from week to week and will depend on your prior knowledge in the subject and your academic skills.

I am always available during office hours to provide additional help. If you are stuck or struggling with the course material or a particular assignment, ask for help right away!

Course Policies

Classroom Etiquette

My classrooms are safe spaces for everyone (students and myself) to be treated with respect and dignity. I expect every person in the class to honor differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Questions and comments by others should be treated with civility at all times. In responding to your peers, is only appropriate to address the substance of their arguments; I won't tolerate any personal attacks. Also, it is inappropriate to expect a student to explain or defend the views or positions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or political group with which they may be associated. If you prefer an alternate name or gender pronoun, please advise me of your preference and I'll happily honor your request. If at any time, you feel personally attacked or otherwise uncomfortable in the class, please let me know so that I can rectify the situation. In addition to completing course requirements, you are responsible for:

- Coming to class on time and remaining active and attentive until the last minute of class.
- Disconnecting from your electronic devices during class.
- Catching up if you miss a class. Please obtain and review notes from one of your peers and then visit me in office hours. I won't provide private lectures to those who miss class.
- Asking questions during class discussion. If you are confused, speak up! If your question is not answered in class, please see me during office hours or email me.

Behavior that disrupts the learning environment may be cause for discipline under the student code.

Email

I'll make every attempt to respond to emails within one business day.

Grade Appeals

If you wish to submit your work for a second evaluation, please prepare a detailed written statement explaining why particular sections of your assignment warrant re-evaluation. For exams, your appeal must specifically reference particular parts of the exam and explain how/why you believe your answer warranted more points. For other assignments, your appeal must specifically reference the criteria that I said you did not meet and explain how/why you believe your assignment met that criteria. Your appeal must be submitted within one week of the date that assignments or exams are returned in class.

Make-up Exams

For most assignments in this course, you may choose to use a token to make up the work (see details on using tokens below). I don't allow make-up exams except in documented cases of family death or serious illness. I must receive notification that you'll need to make up the work by 9:00am on the day of the exam, and verification of your reason for being absent no later than 9:00am the day after the exam is due.

Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that requires assistance, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) (Student Services Bldg, Rm. 181; 801-626-6413; <http://www.weber.edu/ssd>) as soon as possible. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats upon request.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty may result in your suspension from the university. As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is "the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person's or group's ideas or work." Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course. WSU subscribes to Turnitin.com, an electronic service that verifies the originality of student work. Enrollment in this course requires you to submit some of your assignments to Turnitin. Documents submitted to Turnitin are retained, anonymously, in the company's databases.

Core Beliefs

According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to "[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs."

Emergency Closures

If for any reason the university is forced to close for an extended period of time, we'll conduct our class via Canvas. In the event of a closure, I'll post lecture material and practice problems before our regular class times and you'll be expected to login to Canvas on a regular basis to keep up with coursework. Code Purple is a good way to receive alerts about campus closures, and I encourage you to sign up for it at <http://www.weber.edu/codepurple/>.

Grade Calculation

I'll evaluate your performance in this course based on adult-learning theory, which says that adults learn better in self-directed, flexible, and challenging environments. This gives you the opportunity to choose which grade to pursue in the course based on your personal learning objectives. Each grade includes a set of assignments to complete to earn that grade. I'll grade all assignments except exams as complete or incomplete based on requirements clearly delineated in assignment instructions and grading rubrics. Complete assignments will count toward your final grade. Research has shown that this kind of grading system provides a more fun and rigorous learning environment than traditional grading systems.

The list below explains the tasks to complete to earn specific grades in this class. Assignments may include varying levels of mastery depending on the grade you choose. These will be delineated in assignment instructions and grading rubrics. To calculate your grade at any point during the semester, compare your completed assignments to the lists below. Additionally, you can determine your grade by referencing the supplementary grade grid that I'll hand out during the first week of class.

- Students who choose to earn an A in this class will demonstrate exemplary mastery of course material by achieving all learning outcomes. To do so, score at least 90% on the syllabus quiz, complete all 7 reading journal entries, actively participate in all in-class workshops, score at least 80% on the exam, and complete the A-level critical analysis project.
 - To earn an A- in the course, complete all of the requirements for an A with the exception of completing the B-level critical analysis project. Then, use 5 tokens to bump your grade from a B+ to an A-.
- Students who choose to earn a B in this class will demonstrate good mastery of the course material by nearly achieving all learning outcomes. To do so, score at least 80% on the syllabus quiz, complete 6 reading journal entries, actively participate in 5 out of 6 in-class workshops, score at least 75% on the exam, and complete the B-level critical analysis project.
 - To earn a B+ in the course, complete all of the B-level requirements and use 5 tokens to bump your grade from a B to a B+. Alternatively, you may choose to complete all of the requirements for an A with the exception of completing the B-level critical analysis project instead of the A-level project.
 - To earn a B- in the course, complete all of the requirements for a B with the exception of completing the C-level critical analysis project instead of the B-level project. Then, use 5 tokens to bump your grade from a C+ to a B-.
- Students who choose to earn a C in this class will demonstrate decent mastery of some of the course material by somewhat achieving all learning outcomes. To do so, score at least 75% on the syllabus

quiz, complete 5 reading journal entries, actively participate in 4 out of 6 in-class workshops, score at least 70% on the exam, and complete the C-level critical analysis project.

- To earn a C+ in the course, complete all of the C-level requirements and use 5 tokens to bump your grade from a C to a C+. Alternatively, you may choose to complete all of the requirements for a B with the exception of completing the C-level critical analysis project instead of the B-level project.
- To earn a C- in the course, complete all of the requirements for a C with the exception of completing the almost C-level critical analysis project. Then, use 5 tokens to bump your grade from a D+ to a C-.
- Students who choose to earn a D in this class will demonstrate minimal mastery of some of the course material by beginning to achieve a few of the learning outcomes. To do so, score at least 65% on the syllabus quiz, complete at least 3 reading journal entries, actively participate in at least 3 in-class workshops, and score at least 60% on the exam.
 - To earn a D+ in the course, complete all of the D-level requirements and use 5 tokens to bump your grade from a D to a D+. Alternatively, you may choose to complete all of the requirements for a C with the exception of completing the almost C-level critical analysis project.
 - To earn a D- in the course, complete three of the four requirements for a D and then use 5 tokens to bump your grade from an E to a D-.
- Students who choose to earn an E in this class will fail to meet the minimum requirements for a D-.

Tokens

You'll begin the course with three virtual tokens that you can use to make the course more flexible for you. You can exchange a token to:

- Drop a missing reading journal entry.
- Make up for lack of participation in a missed in-class workshop.
- Earn up to half of the points deducted on an exam by completing a reflective essay about your exam study strategies and exam answers (see the essay requirements on Canvas).
- Revise an incomplete assignment by the revision deadline specified in class.
- Receive a 24-hour extension on any critical analysis project assignment except presentations.

During the semester, you may earn additional tokens by doing any of the following. For the essays, see the requirements and rubric on Canvas. You can earn as many tokens as you wish and, unless otherwise noted below, you can complete token assignments as many times as you'd like. You can earn a token by:

- Actively participating in three class periods other than the in-class workshops. If I draw your index card in a class period and you're clearly invested in the conversation and can begin to answer my question, then I'll mark that as active participation in that class period. On critical analysis presentation days, I'll mark active participation when you ask and answer questions from your peers during the session.

- Sending me an email that includes today's date, a detailed explanation of the grade you believe you are on track to earn (include assignments you still need to complete and those you need to revise), and what grade you are aiming to earn by the end of the semester. (This may be repeated twice during the semester at least two weeks apart, for a total of two extra tokens.)
- Attending office hours to ask substantive questions about course material and/or assignments. (While you can earn up to three tokens with this activity, I encourage you to attend office hours as often as you'd like.)
- Posting a question for which the answer cannot be found in the syllabus to a help discussion board on Canvas. Questions can pertain to the course in general, course material, and/or specific assignments.
- Posting an accurate answer to a peer's question on a help discussion board on Canvas.
- Finding an error or typo in the course materials I create (e.g., slides, handouts, quizzes, exams, homework assignments, etc). (This may be repeated twice during the semester for a total of two extra tokens.)
- Attending an event on campus or in the community that relates to our course and writing a 250-word essay reflecting on that event.
- Earning at least 85% on an exam.

You'll lose one token for each instance of the following:

- Violating classroom etiquette policies
- Minor academic dishonesty

How to Pace your Work in this Course

One key to success in this course is working consistently on course material from week to week. Research shows that a series of small-stakes assignments throughout the semester improves student learning outcomes. Accordingly, this course requires active student participation and deadlines throughout the semester. **To succeed, I encourage you to work on this course a little bit every day.** During your time working on the course, you can complete reading quizzes to enhance your understanding of the reading, ask or answer questions on the Canvas discussion boards, study the Powerpoint slides from previous lectures, draft parts of your critical analysis project, complete one of the extra token activities, and/or revise incomplete assignments.

Assignment Details

Reading Journals

The assigned readings in this course form the foundation of your learning experience. To help you study and learn the material and make the most effective use of our classroom time, you'll complete reading journals throughout the semester. I'll provide a template for your journal entries on Canvas. Each entry will consist of an ungraded first draft and a graded second draft. The first draft gives you an opportunity to see where you are with the material and ask questions about it before discussing it in class. You'll receive credit for completing the first draft as long as you submit it by the start of class

on the due date. The second draft will allow you to revise your original responses and answer some of your questions from the first draft. The second draft will be complete when it is turned in by 11:30pm on the due date and demonstrates sound academic effort by 1) answering every question with some thought put into each answer, 2) answering all questions in your own words without plagiophrasing or plagiarism, 3) substantially revising the first draft based on what you've learned in class and through further study of the material, and 4) meeting the minimum length requirements indicated in the template. You may revise and resubmit your second draft as many times as you'd like without using a token until the 11:30pm deadline. I encourage you to begin your journal entries early and revise them as needed until the deadline so you can assess improvements in your learning as you delve further into the course material.

In-class Workshops

One of the best ways to learn course material is to work with it over and over again on different days. In-class workshops provide you with structured opportunities to practice using what you have learned in a given unit of the course, progress on your critical analysis project, and improve your performance on assignments and exams. An integral part of these sessions will be working with your peers to complete the activities in the session. You'll receive credit for participating in a workshop when you submit assigned work before the sessions starts, show up on time, stay for the duration of the session, and actively work with your group to complete the assigned activities.

Exam

The exam in this course gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of material from the first unit of the course while also making progress on your critical analysis project. It consists of true/false, multiple-choice, and short answer questions. The exam will be via ChiTester and must be taken at a WSU testing center of your choice (<http://www.weber.edu/testingcenter/>). I structure exams to mitigate testing anxieties, which means that exams are untimed. Also, on the day of the exam, you may choose to bring a one-page, handwritten 8½ x 11" piece of paper on which you can write (front and back) any definitions, examples, or ideas you wish. If you decide to use such a cue sheet, you'll turn it in with your exam.

Critical Analysis Projects

The critical analysis project is your chance to apply and analyze information from the two major units of the course to make an original, evidence-based argument about the role of the law in solving contemporary social problems. The project consists of oral and written components, including informal conversations in class, short briefs throughout the semester, and a final presentation and report. You'll develop your argument using a case study of a contemporary social problem by first identifying a New York Times "Fixes" column (<https://www.nytimes.com/column/fixes>) that advocates changes in laws or policies to solve a social problem. You'll apply course material to that column to analyze how we as a society talk about and perceive the role of law in solving social problems. Then, you'll develop and present your original, evidence-based argument about the role of law in solving the problem addressed in the column you've chosen. Each of the written and oral

assignments along the way will help you progress on your project. Assignment instructions and further details will be posted on Canvas.

Tentative Course Schedule

The schedule of topics, required readings, and assignments listed below may change during the semester. I will announce any major changes in class and on Canvas. Note that the symbols in the assignments column indicate the type of assignment:

-  Denotes reading journal entries
-  Denotes mini-assignments
-  Denotes critical analysis project assignments

Date	Guiding question and Required readings	Assignments
Introduction to and preparation for the course		
Tues, Aug. 27	<i>What is this course about?</i> (No readings)	None
Thurs, Aug. 29	<i>Why study law and society?</i> Calavita, ch. 1	 Syllabus quiz due by 11:30pm
Part 1: Law in everyday life		
<i>How does the organization of society contribute to the types of laws and vice versa?</i>		
Tues, Sept. 3	Calavita, pp. 11-23	 Reading journal 1 first draft due by start of class
Thurs, Sept. 5	Calavita, pp. 23-30	 Reading journal 1 second draft due Friday by 11:30pm
Tues, Sept. 10	<i>In-class workshop 1</i> How to disagree: http://tinyurl.com/zxtqe6m Watch one video from the Canvas module on racial inequality. Read one article from the Canvas module on racial inequality.	Bring to class your notes on something you learned, something that surprised you, and a question you still have related to each of the assigned readings and video.
Thurs, Sept. 12	<i>In-class workshop 2</i> New York Times Fixes: https://www.nytimes.com/column/fixes	 Critical analysis project brief 1 due by the start of class
<i>How do we define law and justice?</i>		
Tues, Sept. 17	Calavita, pp. 30-36 Canvas: Lippman, pp. 6-11	 Reading journal 2 first draft due by start of class
Thurs, Sept. 19	Martin Luther King, Jr. 1963. Letter from a Birmingham Jail. https://tinyurl.com/je2l2rg (Focus on pp. 7-11 of the letter, pp. 8-12 of the PDF file).	 Reading journal 2 second draft due Friday by 11:30pm

Date	Guiding question and Required readings	Assignments
	Podcast: "For Sale, By Owner," Hidden Brain. (https://www.npr.org/2019/02/27/698563807/for-sale-by-owner-the-psychology-of-repugnant-transactions)	
<i>How do people learn about the law?</i>		
Tues, Sept. 24	Calavita, ch. 3	 Reading journal 3 first draft due by the start of class
Thurs, Sept. 26	How to find a journal article: https://tinyurl.com/yaqkw4f8 Canvas: "How do I read all this course material?" Macaulay, Stewart. 1987. "Images of Law in Everyday Life: The Lessons of School, Entertainment and Spectator Sports." <i>Law & Society Review</i> 21: 185-218.	
Tues, Oct. 1	Calavita, ch. 3	 Reading journal 3 second draft due Wednesday by 11:30pm
Thurs, Oct. 3	<i>In-class workshop 3</i> Canvas: Critical analysis project instructions	
<i>How do people of different racial and ethnic groups experience the law?</i>		
Tues, Oct. 8; Thurs, Oct. 10	Calavita, ch. 4	 Reading journal 4 first draft due by the start of class on Tuesday
Tues, Oct. 15	Crenshaw, Kimberle. "The Urgency of Intersectionality." https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality/transcript . (19 minutes) Spencer, K. B., Charbonneau, A. K., and Glaser, J. (2016). "Implicit Bias and Policing." <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i> , 10: 50–63.	 Reading journal 4 second draft due by 11:30pm on Wednesday
Exam I		
Thurs, Oct. 17	<i>No Class</i> Canvas: Exam study guide	
Tues, Oct. 22	<i>Exam review</i> Canvas: Exam study guide	

Date	Guiding question and Required readings	Assignments
Thurs, Oct. 24	Exam 1	
Tues, Oct. 29	In-class workshop 4 Canvas: Critical analysis project instructions	Bring your exam answers to class
Part 2: Law and Social Problems		
<i>How and why does law on the books differ from law in action?</i>		
Thurs, Oct. 31; Tues, Nov. 5	Calavita, ch. 6	 Reading journal 5 first draft due by the start of class on Thursday  Reading journal 5 second draft due by 11:30pm on Wednesday
Thurs, Nov. 7	In-class workshop 5	 Critical analysis project brief 2 due by the start of class
<i>How and under what conditions can laws bring about social change?</i>		
Tues, Nov. 12	Calavita, pp. 135-153	 Reading journal 6 first draft due by the start of class
Thurs, Nov. 14	<i>American Society of Criminology annual meeting—No class</i>	
Tues, Nov. 19	Calavita, pp. 153-170	 Reading journal 6 second draft due by 11:30pm Wednesday
Thurs, Nov. 21; Tues, Nov. 26	Calavita, ch. 8 & 9	 Reading journal 7 first draft due by the start of class on Thursday  Reading journal 7 second draft due by 11:30pm on Wednesday
Thurs, Nov. 28	<i>Thanksgiving Break—No Class</i>	
What is the role of the law in solving contemporary social problems?		
Tues, Dec. 3	In-class workshop 6	 Critical analysis project brief 3 due by the start of class
Thurs, Dec. 5 (12:00-1:15); Thurs, Dec. 12 (12:30-2:20)	Critical analysis presentation forums	
Thurs, Dec. 12	All revisions due by 11:30pm	