

PLSC 3325
Introduction to Law
Fall 2016

Professor: Pam Corley
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Office Phone: 214-768-2406
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 – 12:00, and by appointment
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This course is designed to provide the student with a background of the American legal system, covering such substantive areas of law as torts, contracts, property, and criminal law.

Student Learning Outcomes

History, Social and Behavioral Sciences (Depth)

Students will demonstrate an understanding of specific disciplinary or professional subject matter(s) by applying research outcomes or theory about how individuals, institutions, and/or cultures shape economic, political and social experiences.

Required Texts

Introduction to Law and the Legal System, by Frank A. Schubert, 11th ed. Houghton Mifflin (2015).

One L by Scott Turow.

Requirements

1. **Exams (75%)** There will be 2 exams worth 20% each. The final exam is worth 35%. The exams may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Make up examinations will be given only when the student has notified me prior to the scheduled exam, and upon my acceptance of the reason for the absence. A student who misses an examination without prior notification without a satisfactory reason will receive a grade of **zero** for that examination. I will only make exceptions under the most unusual of circumstances. If a make up examination is given, I retain the right to modify substantially both the content and the format of the exam.

2. **Legal Memo (15%)** Students are required to write an office memorandum analyzing a particular legal issue. More details regarding the assignment will be provided later in the semester. The legal memo is due on **11/15 at 9:30 AM. If it is turned in at 9:31 AM, it is LATE. Each 24 hour period it is late, one grade will be deducted (A**

to A-, A- to B+, etc.) I will not accept the legal memo if it is more than 3 days late. That means if you turn it in at 9:31 AM on 11/18, you will receive a zero. A hard copy of the legal memo must be turned in even if you e-mail the legal memo to me. If you do e-mail the legal memo, if you do not receive a confirmation e-mail from me that I have received it, I HAVE NOT RECEIVED IT.

3. **Book Review (10%)** Students are required to write a book review on *One L*. The paper should be between five and seven pages in length, double-spaced, typed with no more than one-inch margins and standard font type. Do not just summarize the content of the book. Write about how the book portrays law school, legal education, and **use extensive examples from the book, citing the appropriate page number from the book**. Also include your reaction to the book. The book review is due on 10/6 at 9:30 AM. If it is turned in at 9:31 AM, it is LATE. Each 24 hour period it is late, one grade will be deducted (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) I will not accept the book review if it is more than 3 days late. That means if you turn it in at 9:31 AM on 10/9, you will receive a zero. A hard copy of the book review must be turned in even if you e-mail the book review to me. If you do e-mail the book review, if you do not receive a confirmation e-mail from me that I have received it, I HAVE NOT RECEIVED IT.

4. **Attendance/Participation.** In light of the nature of the course material and the case-method approach to conducting this class, regular attendance and thoughtful participation are expected of each student throughout the semester. Each student is expected to have read assigned materials **prior** to class. Borderline grades will be determined by attendance/participation. If students are not participating, I will randomly call on students to answer questions.

Course Schedule

8/23	Introduction How to Read a Legal Opinion (Hand-Out)
8/25	“All About: Law School”
8/30	Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-51.
9/1	Chapter 3: Institutional Sources of American Law, pp. 89-107.
9/6	Chapter 3: Institutional Sources of American Law, pp. 107-122.
9/8	Chapter 4: The Judicial System, pp. 123-140.
9/13	Chapter 4: The Judicial System, pp. 140-153.
9/15	Chapter 5: Civil Procedure, pp. 154-172.
9/20	Chapter 5: Civil Procedure, pp. 172-187.

9/22	Exam 1
9/27	Chapter 6: Limitations in Obtaining Relief, pp. 188-203.
9/29	Chapter 6: Limitations in Obtaining Relief, pp. 203-223.
10/4	Chapter 7: Judicial Remedies, pp. 224-242.
10/6	Chapter 7: Judicial Remedies, pp. 242-253. Book Review Due*
10/11	No class: Fall Break
10/13	Chapter 11: Torts, pp. 404-417.
10/18	Chapter 11: Torts, pp. 417-430.
10/20	Chapter 11: Torts, pp. 430-447.
10/25	Exam 2
10/27	Chapter 9: Family Law, pp. 309-333.
11/1	Chapter 9: Family Law, pp. 333-361.
11/3	Chapter 10: Contracts, pp. 362-374.
11/8	Chapter 10: Contracts, pp. 374-389.
11/10	Chapter 10: Contracts, pp. 389-403.
11/15	Chapter 8: Criminal Law and Procedure, pp. 254-274. *Legal memo due
11/17	Chapter 8: Criminal Law and Procedure, pp. 274-292.
11/22	Chapter 8: Criminal Law and Procedure, pp. 292-308.
11/24	No class: Thanksgiving Holiday
11/29	Chapter 12: Property, pp. 448-451; 456-468.
12/1	Chapter 12: Property, pp. 468-489.
12/9	Final Exam: 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

***Assignment must be turned in by 9:30 AM on the due date. If it is turned in at 9:31, it is LATE. Each 24 hour period it is late, one grade will be deducted (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) I will not accept the book review or legal memo if it is more than 3 days late.**

Note: No variation on the computer/printer/hard drive catastrophe excuse will be accepted. You should keep adequate backups of all written work to prevent such a problem. Google Drive and Dropbox are both free and you can use either of them to store your work.

Additional Information

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS).

Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

Note: The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.