Instructor: Ross Kleinstuber, Ph.D.
Office: 104-B Krebs
Office Hours: Mon. 5:30-5:55; Tues & Thurs. 11:00-12:20; Wed. 10-12*; Fri. by appt. only
*I will typically be on campus until 3:00 on Wednesdays, but I can only guarantee my presence until noon. If you would like to meet in the early afternoon on a Wednesday, just let me know.
Office Phone: 269-2989
Email: rkleins@pitt.edu

**NOTE** This course will utilize CourseWeb (https://courseweb.pitt.edu/) for announcements, assignments, additional readings, and other materials pertinent to the course. You are expected to be familiar with CourseWeb and to check it regularly. If you have any questions about using CourseWeb, please see me. You may also access CourseWeb by downloading the Blackboard app for your tablet or smart phone.


This book is also available as an e-reader at http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/4513503/9781412987547?__hdv=6.8

*Other readings will be assigned throughout the course and posted on CourseWeb; please check CourseWeb regularly.

Course Description
This course will introduce students to the sociological study of the law and legal institutions by examining the ways in which the law affects society and vice versa. The purpose of this course is to have students gain an understanding of how scholars have examined law-related phenomena and to increase the students’ awareness of how broader social and cultural contexts and issues influence the law and are, in turn, influenced by the law. Students will be expected to gain an appreciation of the law as a complex, dynamic, and culturally-contingent process that is part of the society in which it exists.

Course Objectives
1. To understand how society and social variables influence the making, interpretation, implementation, and character of the law.
2. To understand how the law and the way it is made, interpreted, and implemented, in turn, influences society and individual behavior.
3. To understand how popular conceptions of the law develop, how these conceptions differ from the actual content of the law, and how these conceptions influence individual behavior.
4. To comprehend the difference between “law on the books” and “law in action.”
5. To be able to analyze is who benefits from and is harmed by certain laws and changes in the law.

Course Expectations
Sociology and the law both deal with inherently controversial topics. To get a fuller understanding and appreciation for these issues, class attendance and participation are essential. Classes will be conducted using a combination of lecture and, when appropriate, class discussions. The purpose of this course is to think about and discuss legal issues from a sociological perspective and in a critical manner. In this sense, you will be challenged to support your opinions or beliefs with material from the text, the lectures, or any other appropriate source. You will be expected to participate and to interact with your classmates. As such, you will be expected to read and think about the assigned readings prior to the class for which they are assigned. I understand that this course is reading intensive, but if you do not do the readings prior to class, we will not be able to have effective class discussions, which will make the course more interesting and make learning easier and more fun. Because of the discussion-based nature of many classes, you are expected to attend class; many exam questions will come directly from class discussions.

Please remember, that you are expected to respect your classmates at all times. There are no wrong opinions (as long as they can be defended), so when someone else is speaking, you are expected to listen, to wait until he or she is done before responding, and to respond courteously, politely, and thoughtfully. Derogatory, racist, sexist, and other offensive or insulting remarks or comments will not be tolerated.

Course Grading
Your grade in this course will be based out of 550 points, broken down as follows:

3 Exams (100 points each): 300 points
Weekly Discussion Questions (5 points each): 50 points
2 Film Reviews (25 points each): 50 points
Article Review: 50 points
Policy/Law Suggestion: 100 points

Grades will be calculated based on total points accumulated as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>492.5-508.5</td>
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<td>C</td>
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Note on Disabilities
Students with disabilities who require special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications must notify the instructor and the Coordinator of Disability Services in writing no later than the second week in the term. Documentation of a disability may be needed to determine the appropriate accommodations or classroom modifications. For information or to schedule an evaluation-of-need appointment, call the Office of Health & Counseling Services in G10 Student Union, at (814) 269-7119.
**Academic Dishonesty**
Students are expected to be familiar with the University of Pittsburgh’s *Guidelines on Academic Integrity* ([http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic-integrity](http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic-integrity)) and abide by them. Academic dishonesty will **not** be tolerated. Anyone caught plagiarizing, cheating, or helping anyone do so will be referred to the appropriate university authorities and, at the very least, receive a 0 on the assignment. Additional penalties may apply depending on the nature of the incident.

The *Guidelines on Academic Integrity* forbid students from presenting “as one’s own, for academic evaluation, the ideas, representations, or words of another person or persons without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources.” Plagiarism is dishonest and illegal. Writers are indebted to authors from whom they borrow exact words, ideas, theories, opinions, statistics, illustrative material, or facts (beyond common knowledge). **Writers are also indebted if they summarize or paraphrase in their own words material from sources.** All quoted material requires the acknowledgement of the source by the use of quotation marks or indentation (if exact wording is incorporated). In addition, both directly quoted and summarized material must be acknowledged by use of a note or parenthetical citation that indicates the author and/or date of publication and page number or numbers. If the writer indents a quotation, it must be clearly set off from the body of the text and must be documented in the aforesaid manner. Students are permitted to use any professionally recognized citation style, but to verify the various documentation procedures, writers should consult the style sheet for the particular citation format they are using (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). (Note: Language of this paragraph was adapted from both the University of Pittsburgh’s *Guidelines on Academic Integrity* and the Indiana University of Pennsylvania’s *Academic Integrity Policy*.)

**Cell Phones**
You are expected to turn off your cell phones before coming to class. You can survive 80 minutes without your friends. I reserve the right to answer any cell phone that rings during class or to complete any text message I catch you typing during class. **Remember, you are expected to be respectful at all times. Interruptions during class, whether they are from cell phones or unnecessary conversations, are disrespectful. Failure to respect your classmates and the instructor may result in being asked to leave.**

**Exams and Make-up Exams**
There are three exams in this course. Each will cover only the material from the readings and class discussion that occurred since the previous exam. Exams are expected to be completed **in class** and may only be made up with documentation of an approved excused absence; please consult the university policy for more information. If you miss an exam due to either an emergency or an excused absence, you are expected to contact the instructor within 48 hours or as soon as reasonably possible. Barring extreme extenuating circumstances, failure to contact the instructor within 48 hours with an approved excuse and to schedule a make-up will result in a grade of 0 for the exam. Make-up exams will be given in a format to be determined by the instructor.

**Weekly Discussion Questions**
Each week, students will be assigned discussion questions that will form the basis of the class discussion. During their reading, students will be expected to attempt to answer these questions
to the best of their ability and to submit their answers on CourseWeb prior to the start of class. Discussion questions will be graded on a pass/fail basis (5 points for a pass and 0 points for a fail). To get a passing grade, the student need not get each question “correct.” Rather, he or she simply must demonstrate that he or she read the assigned material and made an honest attempt to answer the questions. NO LATE answers will be accepted. Please retain a copy of your answers to aid you in class discussion.

**Film Reviews**
The film reviews are an opportunity for you to voice your opinion about a film we watch in class and to connect the ideas in the film to material from the course. Although you are expected to answer the questions presented in the assignment, the most important part of the assignment is that you offer evidence to support and defend your position and that you anticipate and refute potential counter-arguments. Think of yourself as a lawyer who has to argue a certain position to a judge. You do not just say what you think, but you offer reasons for why you are right and reasons why the other lawyer is wrong. I will be reading all papers with a critical eye, so it is important that you clearly explain your positions and offer evidence to support them. You should be trying to convince me that you are right.

**YOUR GRADES ON THESE PAPERS WILL BE BASED ON YOUR ABILITY TO CLEARLY INDICATE YOUR POSITION, YOUR ABILITY TO DEFEND YOUR POSITION WITH SUPPORTING EVIDENCE, AND YOUR ABILITY TO ORGANIZE YOUR PAPER LOGICALLY AND COHERENTLY. Keep in mind that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to these questions.**

Details for these reviews will be made available on CourseWeb before the films are shown in class. The film reviews will each be graded out of 25 points.

**Article Review**
One of the goals of this course is for students to develop an appreciation of scholarly research in the field of sociolegal studies, to understand how they contribute to our knowledge, and to be able to understand their limitations. In order to do this you must select **ONE SCHOLARLY, PEER-REVIEWED** article related to the law, sociolegal studies, or the sociological study of the law. Details for this assignment will be posted on CourseWeb along with a sample of possible journals from which you might select your article. The assignment will be due in two parts: you must have your article approved by the instructor by **January 26**, and the paper will be due **February 9**. The article review will be worth 50 points.

**Policy/Law Suggestion**
As the overall purpose of this course is to have students come away with an understanding of how society and the law affect each other, you will be expected to make a law or policy recommendation. For this assignment, you need to do the following things:

1. Choose and clearly state a specific policy position (that is, what, specifically, do you think the law or policy should and should not do?).
2. Explain why this law is needed (that is, what is the problem or what is happening in society that would necessitate this law?).
3. Explain how this law is likely to alleviate the problem (that is, how can this law impact society?).
4. Use scholarly evidence to support your position in a well-organized essay. You are required to cite a minimum of four (4) scholarly sources (one of which may be the article you reviewed for the Article Review Assignment if you wish).

As with the film reviews, I will be reading your papers critically, so your goal should be to convince me that your policy is correct by clearly explaining your position and offering convincing supporting evidence. Assume you are making a presentation to the legislature for what law or policy they should enact (or overturn). In order to do this, you need to offer scholarly evidence that there is a problem that necessitates a law change, that your law is the proper change, and that alternative policies or positions would be less effective.

The law/policy suggestion is worth 100 points and will be due in three parts. You must have your topic approved by the instructor by February 16. By March 16, you must submit a thesis statement, a rough outline of your paper, and a list of the sources you plan to use. These do not need to be finalized at this point. It is solely to make sure you are making progress throughout the semester and that you are right the track so I can correct any errors before you incorporate them into your final paper and lose points. I suggest submitting these first steps as soon as you complete them because if you miss either of these first two deadlines, you will automatically receive a 0 for the assignment and because once you get approval, you can move on to the next step in your work. The final paper is due April 13.

**Paper Submission & Late Paper Policy**
All writing assignments MUST be submitted through CourseWeb. To submit a paper via CourseWeb, once you are in the page for this course, select “Assignments” on the left side. Once there, click on the heading of the assignment you are submitting, and this will take you to the submission portal. From the submission portal, you have the option of either uploading your paper (please use only .doc, .docx, or .pdf formats) or typing your paper in the box provided. Either method is acceptable. Once you have uploaded your file or entered your text, click “Submit,” review your submission, then click “OK.” If you do not click “OK,” the paper will not be submitted.

All papers will be due before the start of class on the due dates indicated. Students are expected to make every effort to submit papers on time. You are expected to begin your work early and back up your work. Considering all work will be handed in via the Internet, there are very few legitimate reasons for not completing assignments on time. If you know you will not be in class, you can still submit your paper through CourseWeb. Barring EXTREME extenuating circumstances or a documented excused absence, all late papers will lose one letter grade (2.5 points for the film reviews, 5 points for the article review, and 10 points for the law/policy suggestion) for each day or part of a day that they are late. In other words, papers submitted one minute late up to 24 hours late will lose 2.5 points; papers submitted 24 hours and 1 minute late up to 48 hours late will lose 5 points, and so on. No papers will be accepted more than FIVE days late (again, barring EXTREME extenuating circumstances).
Remember, you are expected to do YOUR OWN work on these reaction papers and to properly cite ALL sources you use. Plagiarizing papers by misrepresenting or passing off the ideas, words, formulas, or data of another as one’s own is UNACCEPTABLE and will be dealt with harshly. Please refer to the “Academic Honesty” section above.

**Course Schedule**

***Please note: This schedule and the assigned readings are both flexible and likely to change. Exact dates will be announced as the semester progresses. You will know the date of every exam at least one week in advance. Please check CourseWeb regularly for scheduling updates.***

**Part I: Foundations of Sociolegal Studies**

Section 1: Introduction to the Course; Defining and Studying Law
- Lippman, chapter 1 (exclude pp. 16-22)

Section 2: Theories of Law
- Lippman, chapter 2

Section 3: Legal Consciousness
- Merry, pp. 5-11
- Macaulay, “Images of Law in Everyday Life”
- Nielsen, “Situating Legal Consciousness”

EXAM 1: Probable Date February 2nd

**Part II: Society & Lawmaking**

Section 1: Voting & Legislation
- Lippman, pp. 97-106
- Beckett & Sasson, chapter 4
- Fleury-Steiner, et al., “Governing Through Crime as Commonsense Racism”

Section 2: Administrative Law & Regulations
- Lippman, pp. 106-113
- Thomas, et al., “BP’s Dismal Safety Record”
- Sinclair, pp. 112-117, 160-162

Section 3: Judges & Case Law
- Lippman, pp. 68-96
- Brace & Boyea, “Judicial Selection Methods and Capital Punishment in American States”
- *Dickerson v. United States*, pp. 443-444
EXAM 2: Probable Date March 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Part III: Law in Action

Section 1: Dispute Resolution
- FILM: *Hot Coffee* (to be shown after Exam 2)
- Lippman, chapter 6
- Haltom & McCann, pp. 77-80, 185-195
- Mencimer, “False Alarm”
- Vidmar & Hans, pp. 308-311, 314

Section 2: Social Control
- Lippman, pp. 303-329
- Shearing & Stenning, “Say ‘Cheese!’”
- Dunn & Kaplan, “The Ironies of Helping”
- Cover, “The Violence of Legal Acts”

Section 3: Culture & the Law
- Scheingold, pp. 59-64
- Glassner, chapter 2
- Beckett & Sasson, pp. 30-32
- FILM: *Bowling for Columbine*

Section 4: Mobilizing the Law & Inequality in the Law
- Lippman, pp. 413-438
- Delagado, et al., pp. 1-12
- Darrow, “Address to Prisoners in the Chicago Jail”

Section 5: Social Movements, Social Change, & the Law
- Lippman, chapter 10
- McEvoy, “The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911”

FINAL EXAM: April 20\textsuperscript{th}