

INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL STUDIES

SYLLABUS – LEGL 310.Z.OL – Online Course

Summer 2019

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Required Text: *Introduction to the Law 5th Ed.*, by Hames and Ekern, Prentice Hall (2015)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the structure and function of the American legal system. Major areas of substantive law are introduced to students. An overview of both the civil and criminal procedure is also provided. Legal vocabulary and the process of legal analysis are emphasized.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students majoring in LEGL STUDIES will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify the appropriate legal procedures applicable to a variety of civil and criminal controversies;
2. Research and analyze the relationships among case facts, statutory law, case law, and constitutional principles involved in specific legal controversies;
3. Advocate, in both written and oral communication, for a particular party in a legal controversy;
4. Evaluate, in reference to both the historically contingent legal culture and the more transcendent principles of natural law, the arguments offered by competing sides in legal controversies.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

When students complete this class they should:

1. Understand the structure and function of the American legal system
2. Understand and be able to utilize legal terminology
3. Be able to analyze a basic factual problem in light of statutory or case law
4. Develop a basic understanding of major areas of substantive law
5. Know how to read and brief a case
6. Know how to perform basic legal research and writing

IV. TOPICS COVERED IN CLASS

1. The U.S. Legal System
2. The Courts and Legal Personnel
3. Finding the Law
4. Legal Analysis and Writing
5. Constitutional Law



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6. Tort Law
7. Family Law
8. Wills, Trusts, & Probate
9. Contracts
10. Business Organizations
11. Rules of Evidence
12. Trial Procedure

IV. STUDENT ASSESSMENT

We will have a quiz after every two chapters. We will have a midterm and a final in this course. We will also have writing assignments throughout the semester. The standard grading scale will be used.

V. DISABILITIES

Please inform the instructor of any documented developmental, mental, or physical disabilities as soon as possible. Arrangements will be made to assist students who need it. It is the **student's responsibility** to ask for assistance or adaptation of assignments. Please give the instructor plenty of advanced notice before changes need to be made.

VI. DISCIPLINARY POLICY/CLASS ATTENDANCE

I expect everyone to be respectful to one another during class and in your online responses.

VII. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a serious breach of ethics and will not be tolerated in the classroom. If you intend to pass off another's work as your own, expect to face serious consequences.

The MLA Handbook* has defined plagiarism as follows:

1. Using another person's ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person.
2. Passing off another person's ideas, information, or expressions as your own to get a better grade or some other advantage.

In short, to plagiarize is to use someone else's work as your own, without crediting or citing the source. Direct word-for-word copying is permissible if the material appears in quotation marks and if the source is cited. Rephrasing and summarizing is permissible if the source is cited.

The instructor reserves the right to fail any student involved in plagiarism. Instructor also reserves the right to amend the syllabus as necessary.