Introduction to American Law
Course Number: LAW 100

3-5 Credits
Law 100 A -Tuesday & Thursday; 3:30-4:50 pm
Location: William H. Gates Hall, Room 138

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
Instructor: Theodore Myhre
Office: William H. Gates Hall, Room 338
Phone: (206) 685-7914
Email: tmyhre@uw.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Purpose: The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to fundamental concepts in the American legal system. It is designed to provide undergraduate students entering the University with an understanding of law and its relevance in government, industry and society.

Content: This course focuses primarily on three aspects of the American legal system. We will examine the structure of the American legal system and how laws are made. We will survey key doctrinal areas of the law in order to understand fundamental legal concepts, and explore how the law functions and evolves over time, including legal issues and decision-making related to statutory and/or common law.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand how laws are made through the judiciary, legislation, or administrative processes.
- Utilize sources of law.
- Recognize the jurisdictional effects of federalism and dual sovereignty.
- Develop a working knowledge of key concepts from the main doctrinal areas of law.
- Learn about the effects of precedent and judicial interpretation.
- Analyze some of the arguments and counter-arguments arising in key cases related to the main doctrinal areas we explore.
- Understand the various decision-making processes for resolving disputes related to statutes, regulations, or common law.

REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS


GRADING

Attendance In order to receive credit for this course, you must comply with the American Bar Association standards. If you miss more than 20% of the classes, you
cannot receive credit. Any absences short of that amount are subject to faculty discretion as to their effect.

**Participation:** This course requires full participation in order to receive credit. Participation includes individual assignments, small group exercises, large group exercises, presentations, or other exercises or assignments, and engagement during class discussions. Participation counts for up to 10% of your final grade in the lecture course.

**Exams:** The grade for the 3 credit lecture course is based on a midterm (35%) and a final examination (55%) The midterm will cover materials up to its date. The final will be cumulative and cover materials from the whole course.

Students electing the 5 credit option for either the Honors or FIG section will be required to attend the discussion sections or seminars, participate actively and complete the assignments (see Honors and FIG Section on their respective Canvas pages). The Honors section, FIG section, and the Masters in Jurisprudence seminar will include your grade from this course and combine it with your work in the other course for an integrated final grade. Please see their syllabus for further details.

Both the Midterm and Final will be administered electronically using the CANVAS Course Website

**Grading Scale:** Grades will be issued on a 4.0 system.

**ACADEMIC POLICIES**

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to perform academic work in compliance with the academic honesty policies of the University of Washington (discussed in Regulation 6-802, “Procedures and Authorized University Actions in Cases of Student Academic Dishonesty”) and the University of Washington School of Law Honor Code (discussed in Chapter 2, “Academic Dishonesty”). Any student work submitted in this course must be your own.

**Access and Accommodations:** Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to: mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 011 Mary Gates Hall or 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability@uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.
**Religious Accommodations:** Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW’s policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/).

**CHANGES TO SYLLABUS**

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus. Students will be notified of changes in writing either electronically or through the course webpage. Students are responsible for being aware of and complying with any such changes.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT (to be completed before class)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Course Structure of the American Legal System and Sources of Law</strong></td>
<td>Pages xxi-xxii; Chapter 1; pp.3-7&lt;br&gt;The Queen v Dudley Decision (Please read for discussion in our first class)&lt;br&gt;<a href="https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/">The Queen v Dudley.docx</a></td>
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<td>09/26</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Law</strong>&lt;br&gt;PowerPoint: <a href="https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/">01-01-PP 2019 Introduction to Law.pptx</a></td>
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| Tuesday    | **Structure of Government and How Laws Are Created and Enforced**<br>Class PowerPoint for Civics: | Art 1-3 of Constitution (Appendix B); Amendments to Constitution (Appendix B); Map of Circuits (Appendix C)<br>[Chapter 1; pp 8-38](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/) | 10/01
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 10/08</td>
<td>Constitutional Law, Part I Due Process and Equal Protection Class PowerPoint for Constitutional Law, Parts I and II: See Revised PowerPoint below.</td>
<td>Chapter 2 (pp. 39-67)</td>
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<td>Thursday 10/10</td>
<td>Constitutional Law, Part II Privacy, Individual Rights, Freedom of Religion, Class PowerPoint:</td>
<td>Chapter 2 (pp. 67-96) Interesting Side-Reading:</td>
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<td>Tuesday 10/15</td>
<td>Constitutional Law, Part III Free Speech See PowerPoint Above.</td>
<td>Review readings above.</td>
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| Thursday 10/17 | Contract Law  
Class PowerPoint for Contracts:  
A curious case example: [http://law.justia.com/cases/california/court-of-appeal/3d/192/551.htm](http://law.justia.com/cases/california/court-of-appeal/3d/192/551.htm) | Chapter 6 (pp. 229--258)  
Practice Midterm (Professor Myhre to discuss in class on Thursday and open the practice questions after class on Thursday for students to take)  
**Practice Questions are found under the "Quizzes" tab on CANVAS.**  
Follow the Instructions for the Practice test. We will discuss the practice questions and answers at the beginning of our next class. |
| Tuesday 10/22 and Thursday 10/24 | Tort Law & Product Liability: Intentional Torts  
Class PowerPoint for Torts: | Chapter 7 (pp. 259-294)  
**Midterm:** It is an online multiple-choice midterm accessed through the "Quizzes" tab on CANVAS. It is a timed exam, so once you begin, then you must finish it within the allotted time. **It will be opened on CANVAS at 6:20 pm on Friday, October 25, 2019. The midterm exam must be completed and submitted before 6:20 pm on Monday, October 28, 2019.** |
| Tuesday 10/29 and Thursday 10/31 | Torts Continued: Negligence  
See above. | See above. |
| Tuesday 11/05 | Property Law Part I  
Class PowerPoint for Property: | Chapter 8 (pp. 295-328) |
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 11/07</td>
<td>Property Law Part II: Current Issues</td>
<td>Class PowerPoint for Property:</td>
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<td>Tuesday 11/12</td>
<td>Criminal Law &amp; Procedure: Basic Principles, Due Process, The Presumption of Innocence and Burden of Proof, Search and Seizure, Indictment and Arrest</td>
<td>Chapter 4 (pp. 139-188)</td>
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<td>Thursday 11/14</td>
<td>The Role of the Jury in Criminal Cases; Criminal Prosecution and Trial; Defenses; Sentencing and Punishment</td>
<td>See prior reading assignments. Chapter 4 (pp. 139-188)</td>
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<td>Tuesday 11/19</td>
<td>Marriage and the Family, Reproductive Rights and Surrogate Parents</td>
<td>Chapter 11 (pp. 407-448)</td>
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<td>Class PowerPoint:</td>
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<td>Thursday 11/21</td>
<td>Reproductive and Parental Rights Continued</td>
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<td>Tuesday 11/26</td>
<td>Civil Procedure</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (pp. 97-138)</td>
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<td>Thursday 11/28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday--No Class</td>
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<td>Tuesday 12/03</td>
<td>Administrative Law Class PowerPoint:</td>
<td>Chapter 12 (pp. 449--488)</td>
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<td>Course Evaluations Opening Soon</td>
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| Thursday 12/05 | Critical Perspectives on the Law: Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality Critiques  
Placing the American Legal System into Context: Big Picture Debates and Next Steps  
Class PowerPoint: IN-CLASS REVIEW FOR FINAL |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                | These materials are suggested, not required. The ideas in them are presented as dense academic information. But if you watch and read the suggested pages, it will provide helpful food for thought.  
Wealth Inequality in America [https://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/jury/unconscious-bias](https://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/jury/unconscious-bias)  
The Next Phase Post-Obergefell LGBT Rights....pdf  
Cheryl I. Harris - Whiteness as Property edited.pdf  
Feminist Legal Theory and Lawmaking in the Legal Profession.pdf  
Seielstad, Unwritten Laws and Customs, Local Legal Cultures, and Clinical Legal Education, 6 Clinical L. Rev. 127 (1999), pp. 127-165  
**Extra Credit Essay:** Please submit before Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 6:20 pm. Submit your work electronically via CANVAS on the assignments page.  
Link to [EXTRA CREDIT FOR FINAL](#)  

**EXTRA CREDIT ESSAY.** The extra credit essay assignment opens at 6:20 pm on Thursday, December 5, 2019. Submissions will close at 6:20 pm on Thursday, December 12, 2019. In order to get the extra credit, you must have completed and submitted the extra credit before the close of the exam time at 6:20 pm on Thursday, December 12, 2019.
FINAL EXAM--Electronic Test on CANVAS. Opens at 9:00 am, Tuesday, December 10, 2019. Submissions will close at 6:20 pm on Thursday, December 12, 2019. It is an approximately 3-hour, timed-exam consisting of multiple-choice questions. Once you start the exam, you must finish it within the allocated time. But **you must have completed the exam and submitted it before the close of the exam time at 6:20 pm on Thursday, December 12, 2019.**