

POLITICAL SCIENCE 220—Introduction to Law

Fall Quarter 2014

Hours and Location:

Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30 p.m. - 2:20 p.m.

L 220

Office hours by appointment

Instructor:

Nicholas Price (Please call me Nick!)

J.D., Harvard Law School

B.A., University of Washington, Seattle

Member, Washington State Bar Association

The instructor is a lawyer licensed to practice in Washington State, but neither the course, nor lectures, nor anything else related to the course constitutes legal advice. *This course only presents an overview of American law and does not provide adequate tools for you to appropriately analyze real-world legal situations. Lawyers spend their entire careers focusing on the material we'll survey during single course sessions.* Individuals should therefore seek the advice of licensed and qualified legal counsel and enter into an attorney-client relationship when seeking legal advice.

Mandatory Coursebook:

Introduction to Law 5th Ed., by Hames and Ekern, Prentice Hall

Course Description:

This course provides an overview of the American legal system. The course will also introduce students to the analytic approaches lawyers utilize; lawyering requires more than mere rule memorization. Lawyers must often apply new laws to unique situations where no clear answer exists.

Students will be responsible for the assigned reading, attending class, in-class exercises, journaling, weekly quizzes, tests, and writing assignments, as described below. Each class period will briefly review the assigned reading and prior material, but will primarily focus on the *application* of those legal concepts to real-world situations; it is therefore crucial that students attend class and complete the reading *prior* to attending class.

All updates to this course will be posted on Canvas—you are responsible for regularly checking this course's Canvas page!

Course Goals:

After completing this class, you should be able to:

- Understand the structure and function of the American legal system
- Understand and be able to use legal terminology
- Be able to analyze a basic factual problem in light of statutory or case law
- Be able to explain basic court procedures used in civil and criminal cases
- Develop a basic understanding of major areas of substantive law
- Know how to read and brief a case
- Know how to read and analyze a statute

E-Mail Etiquette*:

Please *only message me on Canvas*--I set aside time specifically to respond to Canvas messages. Messaging me on Canvas will ensure the quickest possible response. If Canvas isn't working, please email me at Nicholas.Price@BellevueCollege.Edu.

You should use professional-grade, typo-free writing when drafting electronic messages. Your attention to detail reflects your professionalism; I don't take typos personally, I just want to prepare you for the real world. You should also employ the below email conventions.

Please include in Canvas message subject lines: 1) an identification of both the class; and 2) the matter (example: "POLS 220—Week 3 Quiz; NOT "question"). Most professionals receive dozens—*if not hundreds*—of e-mails daily. The subject line provides an opportunity to summarize your request and allows the reader to appropriately triage your question.

Also, if you do not receive a reply from me within 48 hours (longer on weekends/holidays), it could mean that, for whatever reason, I did not receive your message. If I do not respond, please feel free to send me another message to ensure that I've received your message.

You are responsible for confirming receipt of any message. Consequences for any glitches resulting from not following these or any other instructions are your responsibility--you are training for a college-educated career and should act as if every responsibility is your own.

Grades will be awarded as follows:

GRADE	POINTS	PERCENTAGE
A	4.0	92-100
A-	3.7	90-91

B+	3.3	88-89
B	3.0	82-87
B-	2.7	80-81
C+	2.3	78-79
C	2.0	72-77
C-	1.7	70-71
D+	1.3	68-69
D	1.0	62-67
F	0.0	BELOW 62

Academic Integrity:

If you choose to cheat, steal, or plagiarize, then you will receive a zero for the assignment. You might also receive a failing grade for the course.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying answers on exams, glancing at nearby exams, turning in assignments or papers that have been used in other classes, and giving or receiving help during an exam. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, purchasing or selling notes, assignments, or examination materials.

Stealing includes, but is not limited to, using the text, notes, exams, library books or other personal property of others without their permission.

Plagiarism is presenting the words, ideas, and/or work of others as your own. It includes, but is not limited to, using other's papers as one's own and including parts of published works without giving credit where credit is due.

Late Policy:

All assignments are due on the dates specified below unless you are notified otherwise. Late assignments receive zero points.

If you are experiencing difficulties comprehending or completing the material, are experiencing personal hardship, or otherwise need to make any other arrangements, please contact me as soon as possible. *In order for me to grant an exception to the standard grading policies, you must e-mail me BEFORE the due date of the particular assignment with documentation of an excuse (e.g., a doctor's note, etc.).*

Affirmation of Inclusion:

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination. We value our different backgrounds at BC, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

Code of Honor:

By being a student in this course you acknowledge that you are a part of a learning community at Bellevue College that is committed to the highest academic standards. As a part of this community, you pledge to uphold the fundamental standards of honesty, respect, and integrity, and accept the responsibility to encourage others to adhere to these standards.

Accommodations:

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment, and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact DRC as soon as possible.

If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc., please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

The DRC office is located in B 132 or you can call at 425-564-2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Application information and other helpful links are available at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc.

Public Safety:

The Bellevue College Public Safety services provide personal safety, security, crime prevention, preliminary investigations, and other services to the campus community, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Their phone number is 425-564-2400. Public Safety is located in K100 and on the web at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/publicsafety/> for campus emergency preparedness information, campus closure announcements, and critical information in the event of an emergency.

Assignments and Grade Weight:

In-class journaling, exercises, and participation—5%. Class attendance is mandatory. We will complete in-class journaling and group exercises in addition to lecture. Additionally, I will reward students who regularly participate. You can earn full participation points by completing in-class

assignments, and asking thoughtful questions or making insightful comments, whether in class, during office hours, or in your emails.

Weekly reading and quizzes—20%. Weekly quizzes will cover the prior week's material and are NOT cumulative. The first quiz will not be given until the second week of class. You should read all the assigned reading and focus on **bolded terms** to be successful on your quizzes. Quizzes will be conducted on Canvas and *must be taken before or on the assigned dates*.

Legal Activity Memo—10%. Students will attend court, a political event, or a law-making session and will draft a two-page summary of the event and its specific relationship to American law. Details will be discussed during class and posted on Canvas. DUE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19.

2-page legal memo. Version 1—5%; Final Version—10%. Students will complete a 2-page legal memo describing the background of a case to a non-legal audience, and then argue why the outcome was fair or unfair. The memo must describe an abundance of complex legal information and arguments; the assignment therefore exercises written clarity and brevity. Details will be discussed during class and on the Canvas pages. Version 1 DUE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26. Final Version DUE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9.

Students are encouraged to utilize the [Writing Lab](#) resources.

4-6 page course-end project—25%. Students will complete a 4-6 page essay detailing a political or legal issue that confronts a certain political community, such as environmentalists, tax reformers, etc. The project is designed to introduce students to the legal problems they might eventually confront as active citizens, and will force students to contemplate available mechanisms for social change. Details will be discussed during class and on the Canvas pages. DUE WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26.

Students are encouraged to utilize the [Writing Lab](#) resources.

Course-end final—25%. Details will be discussed during class. The final exam will be proctored from 11:30 a.m.-1:20 p.m. in L 220 on Tuesday, December 9.

* These e-mail etiquette policies are borrowed in part from Dr. Michael S. Brown.

Course Schedule

Unless otherwise specified, the reading assignments are from *Introduction to Law 5th Ed.*, by Hames and Ekern, Prentice Hall. *You are responsible for reading the entire chapter prior to each class.* You are also responsible for reading, viewing, and listening to other short content regarding current events that relate to our upcoming week's reading—links will be posted on Sunday evenings.

Tuesday, September 23

- Discuss syllabus, class logistics, and complete overview of the entire course

Thursday, September 25

- Read: Chapter 1—Introduction to Law

Tuesday, September 30

- Read: Chapter 2—The U.S. Legal System

Thursday, October 2

- Read: Chapter 3—The Courts and Legal Personnel

Sunday, October 5

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 1—Introduction to Law; Chapter 2—The U.S. Legal System; Chapter 3—The Courts and Legal Personnel

Tuesday, October 7 (No lecture—please attend a legal or political event as discussed above)

- Read: Chapter 12—Civil Procedure Before Trial

Thursday, October 9 (No lecture—please attend a legal or political event as discussed above)

- Read: Chapter 16—Evidence

Sunday, October 12

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 12—Civil Procedure Before Trial; Chapter 16—Evidence

Tuesday, October 14

- Read: Chapter 17—The Trial

Thursday, October 16

- Read: Chapter 6—Constitutional Law

Sunday, October 19

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 17—The Trial; Chapter 6—Constitutional Law

- ***Legal Activity Memo DUE***

Tuesday, October 21

- Read: Chapter 7—Tort Law

Thursday, October 23

- Read: Chapter 10—Property Law

Sunday, October 26

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 7—Tort Law; Chapter 10—Property Law
- ***2-Page Legal Memo Version 1 DUE***

Tuesday, October 28

- Read: Chapter 10—Contract Law

Thursday, October 30

- Read: Chapter 13—Alternative Dispute Resolution

Sunday, November 2

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 10—Contract Law; Chapter 13—Alternative Dispute Resolution

Tuesday, November 4

- Read: Chapter 9—Wills, Trusts, and Probate

Thursday, November 6

- Read: Chapter 8—Family Law

Sunday, November 9

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 9—Wills, Trusts, and Probate; Chapter 8—Family Law
- ***2-Page Legal Memo Final Version DUE***

Tuesday, November 11 (No Class)

- Happy Veteran's Day—Thank you to those who have served our country!

Thursday, November 13

- Complete peer and instructor review of outlines for Course-End Project during class; **please bring an outline of your Course-End Project to class today.**

Tuesday, November 18

- Read: Chapter 11—The Business Environment: Agency, Employment

Thursday, November 20

- Read: Chapter 11—Business Organizations, and Bankruptcy Laws

Sunday, November 23

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 11—The Business Environment: Agency, Employment; Chapter 11—Business Organizations, and Bankruptcy Laws

Tuesday, November 25

- Read: Chapter 14—Criminal Law: Substantive Laws

Wednesday, November 26

- ***Course-End Project DUE***

Thursday, November 27

- Happy Thanksgiving!

Tuesday, December 2

- Chapter 15—Criminal Law: Procedure

Wednesday, December 3

- Canvas Quizzes: Chapter 14—Criminal Law: Substantive Laws; Chapter 15—Criminal Law: Procedure

Thursday, December 4

- Review for Final Exam. ***Please come prepared to ask questions from your exam study guide***

Tuesday, December 9

- ****Final Exam**** from 11:30 a.m.-1:20 p.m. in L 220