

POLS 220 INTRODUCTION TO LAW

Spring Quarter 2010

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Course Information

Course Outcomes

Objectives – At the end of this course, you should have the ability to:

- Apply an analytical process to the core legal topics
- Research and demonstrate effective legal analysis (Issue, Analysis, Rule and Conclusion) on cases or legal problems
- Apply a preventive approach to potential legal problems
- Identify an ethical issue and differentiate between ethical and unethical behavior
- Develop a cohesive argument for a legal topic in writing and in oral presentation
- Demonstrate familiarity with the court process
- Demonstrate a knowledgeable consumer's understanding of legal services
- Identify legal process and policy objectives

How Outcomes will be met

Reading Assignments – Reading Assignments must be completed prior to the relevant class. You must be prepared to discuss the entire reading assignment in class. I may call on random individuals to answer questions related to the reading assignment.

Budgeting Your Time—The Social Science Division shares the expectations of the campus at large that students should plan on spending at minimum three hours outside of class for every hour in class. This class is one hour long per class, which would mean you should plan to spend at minimum three hours outside of class for one class. Students who have been away from the academic environment for an extended period of time, new to college settings, or international students should take note as this amount of time may be different than you might have expected. Preparation time may include reading (and re-



reading!) textbooks, being part of a study group, completing chapter questions and assignments, outlining the class, creating index cards, or using other method of preparing for exams, etc.

Keys to Success in this Course – Throughout the course, I will share my suggestions for succeeding in this course. You can take note now that reading and re-reading the assigned materials will help enhance your understanding as will reviewing your class notes. Procrastination in this class, and in the legal profession, can be deadly and is not advised. If you experience overwhelm, disorganization, procrastination, or other difficulties in studying for this course, let me know – there are many tools to combat these problems, and I am here to help you succeed!

Grading

To receive a passing grade in this course, students must complete all of the assignments and exams. Students must submit the assignments on the due dates. The instructor will grade each student individually on a possible total score of 300 points, which is structured as follows:

1. **Exams (200 points):** These two tests will be a combination of true/false, short answers, multiple choice, and essays. The exams are based on all of the assigned reading material regardless of whether or not we discuss the material in class. Tests may also cover handouts, material presented in class including but not limited to, lectures, videos, and guest lecturers. There will be no makeup exams.
 - a. Midterm 1 (50 points)
 - b. Midterm 2 (50 points)
 - c. Final Exam (100 points)
2. **Weekly “Legal Issues in the News” Assignment (100 points)** – Each week as set forth below, you will submit a law-related news story that you find interesting and a brief (one to two paragraphs) summary of the legal issue being addressed. These will be due at the beginning of each Wednesday class. You may be called upon to discuss the article in the front of the class. Each legal news should contain: Your name, the brief summary of the legal issue, whether the law at issue is state or Federal (if you can tell), and what level of law is involved (Constitution, Federal statute, Federal case law, state statute, state case law, regulation, ordinance, etc.). Please also provide at least 2 sentences of your opinion re: the article – does it help you learn more about the legal system, does it seem fair, does it raise questions for you (if so, list them!). We will spend 10 minutes discussing articles on Wednesdays.
3. **Class Participation & Attendance:** is required and expected. Since this course will focus on both mastering the relevant facts and developing the analytic and advocacy skills



needed to use what you know, one cannot fulfill the course requirements without attending and participating in the class discussions and presentations. In addition to the above-referenced grading criteria, I do take into account the degree and quality of your class participation when determining the final grades. Thus, class participation can only help your grade and it is highly recommended. Also, the course exams will test both familiarity with the assigned readings and topics covered exclusively in class I will take attendance at every class. If you cannot attend class due to an emergent situation, e-mail or call me *in advance*.

Books and Materials Required

Legal Foundations, Carper, West, Berman. The instructor recommends a legal dictionary but it is not required.

Classroom Learning Atmosphere

Instructor's Expectation

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with legal problems and issues that occur in our society in general. This course will provide students with a general understanding of the law and how it relates to business and our society. The course materials emphasize legal processes rather than substantive rules of law. We will attempt to cover the nature, development, and operation of law. Students will learn how the courts analyze disputes using legal reasoning and case analysis. We will also explore specific areas of law, such as, contracts, torts, constitutional law, and criminal procedure. Although this course is not limited to laws applicable to business transactions, much of this course is business related and students gain a better understanding of the interaction between law and business.

Due to the time limitations, it will be difficult to explore the various principles in-depth. Students should not expect to acquire the knowledge, skills, or experience needed to solve practical legal problems. By the end of this course, however, students should have a better understanding of how our complex legal system functions and how that system relates to business and society.

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 Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

<http://bellevuecollege.edu/about/goals/inclusion.asp>

Division Statements

The social sciences are often seen as occupying a position between the natural sciences and the humanities and to overlap with both types of disciplines. While the natural sciences concern processes that occur in nature and they attempt to discover the universal laws that govern these processes, the humanities deal with human activities that they seek to understand and from which they attempt to derive meanings. Are the social sciences more akin to the natural sciences or to the humanities? This is an issue that divides social scientists and is reflected in the diversity of approaches represented in social science courses.

Preventing Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty occurring when students use information or material from outside sources and do not properly cite those sources. This is grounds for disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism occurs if:

- a. You do not cite quotations and/or attribute borrowed ideas.
- b. You fail to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks.
- c. You do not write summaries and paraphrases in his/her own words and/or doesn't document his/her source.
- d. You turn in work created by another person.
- e. You submit or use your own prior work for a current or past course, or work from one current course in another course *without express permission* from your professors. This may also be considered academic dishonesty.
- f. Consequences: If it is determined that you have plagiarized or engaged in other forms of academic dishonesty, you will likely fail the assignment and possibly the course, despite points earned through other work. Acts of academic dishonesty are reviewed for disciplinary action.

Information about Bellevue College's copyright guidelines can be found at:

<http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/links/copyright.html>

A good resource for Plagiarism is the Writing Lab: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/Plagiarism.html>

Student Code

“Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Vice President of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Vice President of Student Services.” The Student Code, Policy 2050, in its entirety is located at:

http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050_Student_Code.asp

Bellevue College E-mail and access to MyBC

All students registered for classes at Bellevue College are entitled to a network and e-mail account. Your student network account can be used to access your student e-mail, log in to computers in labs and classrooms, connect to the BC wireless network and log in to MyBC. To create your account, go to: <https://bellevuecollege.edu/sam> .

BC offers a wide variety of computer and learning labs to enhance learning and student success. Find current campus locations for all student labs by visiting the [Computing Services website](#).

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

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 us 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 our reception desk at 425.564.2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. . . Please visit our website for application information into our program and other helpful links at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc

Public Safety

The Bellevue College (BC) Public Safety Department's well trained and courteous non-commissioned staff provides 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. The Public Safety website is your one-stop resource for campus emergency preparedness information, campus closure announcements and critical information in the event of an emergency. Public Safety is located in K100 and on the web at: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/publicsafety/>

Final Exam Schedule

The Final will be on Friday, 6/18/10 at 9:30 a.m. See this link for the official final schedule:
<http://bellevuecollege.edu/classes/exams>

Academic Calendar

The Bellevue College Academic Calendar is separated into two calendars. They provide information

about holidays, closures and important enrollment dates such as the finals schedule.

- Enrollment Calendar - <http://bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/calendar/deadlines/>. On this calendar you will find admissions and registration dates and important dates for withdrawing and receiving tuition refunds.
- College Calendar - <http://bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/calendar/holidays/0910.asp>. This calendar gives you the year at a glance and includes college holidays, scheduled closures, quarter end and start dates, and final exam dates.

Course Calendar

Week 1 (4/5)

Class Introduction and Overview.

Chapter 1. Introduction to Law. pp. 1-42

Chapter 3. The Court System. pp. 97-142

Week 2 (4/12)

Chapter 3. The Court System continued. pp. 97-142

Video

Week 3 (4/19)

No class on 10/5

Chapter 2. Our Constitution. pp. 47-90

Week 4 (4/26)

Chapter 4. The Attorney-Client Relationship. pp. 147-193

Midterm 1 4/29

Week 5 (5/3)

Chapter 6. Criminal Procedure Handout.

Video/Guest Lecture

Week 6. (5/10)

Chapter 9. Family Law. pp. 417-468

Week 7 (5/17)

Chapter 11. Renters and Landlords. pp. 522-557

Week 8 (5/24)

Chapter 10. Owning and Operating Motor Vehicles. pp. 475-518

Week 9 (5/31)

No class on 5/31

Midterm 2 on 5/27

Video/Guest Lecture

Week 10 (6/7)

Chapter 14. Wills, Trusts and Probate. pp. 676-716

Week 11 (6/14)

Chapter 13. Home Ownership. pp.563-613

Final Exam on 6/18

Expansion

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: Since lawyers deal with just about every aspect of the social world, it is important that this class discuss and examine provocative and controversial material. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Keeping in mind that, when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, and you may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please note, however, that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, feel free to speak with me about it right away.

EXPLORE THE LMC! The Library Media Center is at your fingertips! I *strongly* encourage you to visit the LMC at least once a week, but you can also access it via the web. Talk to a Reference Librarian at the Library (D-126), by calling (425) 564-6161, or by email: reference@bellevuecollege.edu.

- **Main Library Media Center:** <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/>
- **For the LMC online catalog:** <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/catalogs.html>
- **For article databases:** <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/periodicals.html>
- **Legal research tutorial** <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/ba200/>

For all of your written work: Submit proofread work **only**. Work not proofread will be returned *once* for a rewrite, expected to be handed in within 48 hours. If you need help with your writing, please make use of the following student support services:

- Academic Success Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/academicsuccess/>
- Academic Tutoring Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/tutoring/>
- TRiO Student Support Services: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/TRiO/>
- Writing Lab @ BCC: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/>