

University of Denver, The Women's College
LAS 2010 Introduction to Sociolegal Concepts
Summer Quarter 2008

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Office Hours: By appointment only. Please e-mail.

Prerequisites: LAS 2000 Introduction to Law and Society

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sociolegal Concepts is the study of how nation-states control society and how society influences and shapes political, cultural and economic structures. This course examines existing power structures from an international comparative perspective, and will focus on nation-states and their respective political, economic, and societal power structures. How society is controlled is much more complex than a one-way, static relationship where government controls or dictates societal behavior. With that said, this course will specifically examine two key sociolegal concepts: equality and power. The course will review how the U.S., Canada, China and Latin America approach governing through a sociolegal perspective. Students will examine equality and power in these various sociolegal systems and compare each systems strengths and weaknesses.

II. COURSE COMPONENTS

- A. Class Attendance and Participation
- B. Quiz
- C. Analytic Papers (2)
- D. Presentation

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. Further Develop Critical Thinking Skills As You Apply Sociolegal Concepts to Modern Problems.
- B. Compare Key Global Systems from a Sociolegal Lens.
- C. Understand the Construction of Two Sociolegal Concepts: Power and Equality.
- D. Demonstrate Proficiency in Discussing and Understanding Sociolegal Concepts.

IV. OVERALL CLASS GRADING

- A. You may accrue a total of 100 points.
- B. Class participation, preparation, and attendance including arriving on time to class consist of 5% of your overall grade.
- C. There will be one quiz worth 15% of your overall grade.
- D. Paper #1 is worth 30% and is 5-7 pages in length.
- E. Ten minute presentation on any topic-- 15% of overall grade.
- F. Final papers are worth 35% of overall grade and are 6-8 pages.

V. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Class attendance and class participation are mandatory. Only emergencies due to circumstances beyond your control are considered excused absences, and/or observed religious holidays provided the student gave advanced, written notice to the instructor.

VI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Women's College fully endorses the University of Denver's Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Academic dishonesty – including plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of data and research – is in violation of the code and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course. As student members of a community committed to academic integrity and honesty, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the DU Honor Code and its procedures (www.du.edu/honorcode).

VII. ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact the instructor immediately to discuss their needs. Failure to notify the instructor immediately may hinder the College's ability to accommodate accordingly. The instructor will also provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Students with learning disabilities must also notify the instructor immediately so that accommodations can be provided.

VIII. OBSERVATION OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students wishing to observe a religious holiday not celebrated on the academic calendar may do so provided advanced written notice is given the instructor during the first two weeks of the quarter. With advanced, written notice, the absence will be considered an excused absence.

IX. CRITERIA FOR GRADING ANALYTIC PAPERS

- A. Grammar and quality of academic sources used
- B. Incorporation of class concepts/material
- C. Original ideas or critiques
- D. Discuss practical, real-world application and/or implications
- E. "Tightness" of discussion; good presentation and construction of ideas/analysis
- F. You must include citations within the body of the paper and a reference page at the end of the paper.

X. CRITERIA FOR GRADING PRESENTATIONS

You will choose to present on either Class Five *or* Class Six. The purpose of your presentation is an opportunity for you to receive feedback from the instructor and your classmates to help you further develop ideas for the analytic paper. Your presentation and the question/answer session will be 15-20 minutes in length. You must include a handout. You will be graded on cohesiveness, clarity, timeliness, understanding of the material, and your presentation handout.

XI. ACCESSING YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

A. ACCESSING PENROSE ELECTRONIC RESERVES:

1. Go to the Penrose Library web site (<http://www.penlib.du.edu>) and in the “Finding What You Need” box, click on COURSE RESERVES.
2. Click on SEARCH ELECTRONIC RESERVES
3. Click on the tab labeled “Course Reserve Pages by Department,” highlight “Law and Society” in the drop down box, and click “view.”
4. Click on any of the three instructor’s highlighted course numbers – LAS 2010.
5. Enter the course password – sociolegal – (it is case sensitive) and click “accept.”
6. Click on the article title and then on the highlighted file name at the bottom of the box that appears. Use Acrobat* tools to rotate the article, make it larger, etc. You will need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your computer in order to open the files. You will be prompted to download Adobe if you do not already have it install – just follow the directions.

B. WEBCENTRAL/BLACKBOARD/EMAIL: You will be responsible for checking course announcements and e-mail for announcements and links weekly. Course materials may also be posted in the course documents folder.

XII. PAPER DESCRIPTION

You may choose to discuss one of the countries analyzed in class from a power-equality perspective, or you may choose a related topic concerning power and equality. I encourage you to discuss your paper topics with me in advance. You should incorporate the sociolegal concepts (at least 2) discussed in classes 1-3. Avoid sweeping generalizations and commentary; instead, analyze your paper based upon the supporting evidence you’ve collected/chosen. Analysis is different from commentary. ☺ Select at least 3 *academic* sources, all of which can be assigned readings from this class. Academic sources do not include information pulled from advocacy organization’s web sites, Wikipedia, etc. Books, journal articles and online databases are considered *academic*. Visit <http://library.du.edu/FindIt/EResources/index.cfm> for online databases.

XIII. ASSIGNMENTS

CLASS ONE: EXAMINING SOCIOLEGAL CONCEPTS

Readings: (1) Brian Z. Tamanaha, An Analytical Map of the Concept of Law, Ch. 4, pgs. 91-128.
(2) Brian Z. Tamanaha, A Social Theory of Law by Comparison to Legal Positivism, pgs. 129-152.

CLASS TWO: UNDERSTANDING TWO SOCIOLEGAL CONCEPTS FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: POWER AND EQUALITY

Readings: (1) Jan Pakulski, Ch. 4 Inequality of Power: Max Weber and the Elite Theorists, pgs. 58-71.
(2) Jan Pakulski, Ch. 9, Globislation and Inequality, pgs. 157-181.

(3) Klaus A. Ziegert, A Sociologist's View, Ch. 3, pgs. 60-85.

Optional Readings:

(1) Austin Sarat, Enthographies of Law, Eve Darian-Smith, Ch 29 ,546-568

(2) Austin Sarat, Economic Globalization and the Law, Francis Snyder, Ch 33, 624-640

CLASS THREE: POWER VERSUS EQUALITY

Readings: (1) Evelyn Kallen, Social Inequality & Social Injustice: A Human Rights Perspective, Ch. 2 The Social Construction of Inequality, pgs. 31-55.

(2) Evelyn Kallen, Ch. 3 Prejudice and Discrimination: Building Blocks for Social Inequality, pgs. 56-73.

(3) John Baker, The Philosophy and Politics of Equality of Condition, Ch. 1, pgs.13-32.

Assignment: Quiz—Sociolegal Concepts (includes material assigned for class three)

Optional Reading: (1) Austin Sarrat, ...Law is all Over: Power, Resistance and the Welfare Poor, pgs. 343-379.

CLASS FOUR: THE UNITED STATES' MARKET STATE & JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

Readings: (1) Ed. Lewis D. Solomon, Ch. 4 Judeo-Christian Tradition and Selected Virtues, pgs. 31-42.

(2) Isaac Balbus, Commodity Form and Legal Form: An Essay on the Relative Autonomy of the Law, pgs. 571-587.

(3) John R. Sutton Law/Society: Origins, Interactions, and Change
Ch. 5: The Problem of Law in an Activist State, pgs. 133-160.

Assignment Due: (a) Paper #1: Summarize/discuss material covered in classes 1-3.

(b) select topic for final paper.

CLASS FIVE: THE WELFARE STATE: CANADA

Readings: (1) Campeau, Georges, Developing a Canadian System, Ch. 3, pgs. 31-55.

(2) Campeau, Georges, From EI On, Ch. 9, pgs. 148-166.

Note: You can access this book electronically from Penrose catalog.

CLASS SIX: A STRATEGY FOR POWER: CHINA

Reading: (1) Zhemin Wang, Developing Rule of Law in China, pgs. 1-4.

(2) Thomas Lum, Ch. 3, Keeping Chinese Society under Control: Comparisons with the Soviet Union, 59-78. (3) Hand-out: Historical Reflections on Grassroots Political Reform in China.

Optional Reading: (1) Xiaoquin Guo, Ch. 2, Chinese Communist Party and Bureaucratic Elite in Post-Mao Reform, pgs. 19-56.

(2) Albert Chen, Rational Law, Economic Development and China, Social and Legal Studies 97-117.

Assignment Due: Presentations: present on the topic of your final paper.

**CLASS SEVEN: POST-AUTHORITATIVE STATES: LATIN AMERICA'S
POLITICAL ARMIES AS A SOURCE OF POWER AND INEQUALITY**

Reading: (1) Kees Koonings, Political Armies, Security Forces and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America, pgs.124-146.

FINAL OVERVIEW/CRITIQUE OF POWER & EQUALITY.

Reading: (2) Alessandro Pinzani, It's the Power, Stupid! On the Unmentioned Precondition of Social Justice, pgs. 171-197.

Assignment Due: (a) Final Paper Due by Midnight—send via email; (b) Presentations: present on the topic of your final paper.