

# PSCI G130: LAW IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

| Item   | Value   |
|--|---|
| Curriculum Committee Approval Date                                     | 12/03/2019  |
| Top Code   | 220700 - Political Science  |
| Units  | 3 Total Units   |
| Hours  | 54 Total Hours (Lecture Hours 54)   |
| Total Outside of Class Hours   | 0   |
| Course Credit Status   | Credit: Degree Applicable (D)   |
| Material Fee   | No  |
| Basic Skills   | Not Basic Skills (N)  |
| Repeatable   | No  |
| Grading Policy   | Standard Letter (S),<br>• Pass/No Pass (B)  |
| Local General Education (GE)   | • GWC Soc, Pol, Econ (GD)   |
| California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)            | • Cal-GETC 4 Social & Behavioral Sciences (4)<br>• Cal-GETC 4H Political Science (4H) |
| Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)           | • IGETC 4 Social&Behavioral Sci (4)<br>• IGETC 4H Political Science (4H)              |
| California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE-Breadth) | • CSU D8 Political Science (D8)   |

## Course Description

This course provides an overview of the American legal system including its development, structure, and history. The course will review the legal and judicial process in the United States; explain legal sources, research, and reasoning; and introduce the various areas of law. ADVISORY: College-level reading, writing and critical thinking skills. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC. C-ID: LPPS 110. C-ID: LPPS 110.

## Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Course Outcomes
2. Explain the role of the judicial branch in federal and state governments.
3. Demonstrate basic legal research methods using traditional materials or online materials.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the course content and present their work effectively.

## Course Objectives

- 1. Describe the structure of the federal and state court systems.
- 2. Examine how American law impacts many other areas of American life.
- 3. Apply skills necessary to read and brief court case(s).
- 4. Evaluate current political issues in lieu of past and current judicial decisions.

- 5. Explain the process a case takes from initial filing through the appellate proceedings.
- 6. Analyze selected court cases using traditional methods of legal reasoning.
- 7. Analyze whether a state action is constitutional, according to existing precedent.

## Lecture Content

Introduction to Law in American Society History and governmental structure Constitutional history Independence from colonial rule and efforts to achieve union The Articles of Confederation The Constitutional Convention Ratification of the Bill of Rights Concerns that were not resolved The governmental structure provided for in the 1789 Constitution The separate branches of the federal government The system of checks and balances The federalist system State governments powers Changes in federalism: The growth of federal power The impact of governmental structure on the legal system Equality and civil rights – constitutional provisions Individual rights protected by the Constitution Rights to equal protection of the laws Substantive due process rights First Amendment freedoms Additional enumerated and implied rights Concerns with infringement Justice and the law: theoretical and practical applications Social justice Criminal justice Civil justice Juvenile justice Alternative justice Concerns with equal distribution of justice. The legal profession Roles in the legal profession Lawyers Paralegals Judges Legal education and admission to the bar Minorities and women in the legal profession Principles of legal ethics Concerns with the regulation of practice Legal methodology Sources of law and their hierarchy Common law Statutory law Administrative law i >The form and general nature of case law The legal reasoning process in case law Legal research techniques and the form of legal argument Process of law from filing through appellate proceedings The adversary system and jury trials The characteristics and rationale of the adversary system Juries The adversary jury trial and the lawyers role in it Evidence law Concerns with the adversary system General areas of law Civil law Criminal law Family law Contracts Real and intellectual property law Employment Immigration i

## Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture (02)
- DE Live Online Lecture (02S)
- DE Online Lecture (02X)

## Instructional Techniques

Lectures utilizing new technology, Interactive Discussions,

## Reading Assignments

Complete reading assignments in the assigned required text(s). Complete required online reading assignments from a variety of scholarly websites and journals. Complete reading of lectures (if applicable).

## Writing Assignments

College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will summarize, analyze and brief court cases. College-level written essays or other written projects analyzing academic material relating to American law. College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will apply precedent to instant cases. College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will utilize course content, appropriate investigative methods and technologies to examine key political and/or legal issues. Written or oral presentation,

discussion and/or debate of their findings and their own interpretation of factual information.

### **Out-of-class Assignments**

Primary research including attendance at scholarly lectures. Participation in discussions, presentations, debates. Secondary research within scholarly journals, books, articles and online resources/databases.

### **Demonstration of Critical Thinking**

Students will demonstrate critical thinking, reading and writing skills through analysis, synthesis and evaluation of the American legal systems structure and processes.

### **Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration**

College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will summarize, analyze and brief court cases. College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will analyze academic material relating to American law. College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will apply precedent to instant cases. College-level written essays or other written projects in which students will utilize course content, appropriate investigative methods and technologies to examine key political and/or legal issues. Written or oral presentation, discussion and/or debate of their findings and their own interpretation of factual information.

### **Eligible Disciplines**

Law: J.D. or LL.B NOTE: Courses in aspects of law for application to a particular discipline may be classified, for minimum qualifications purposes in the discipline of the application. Masters degree required. Political science: Masters degree in political science, government, or international relations OR bachelors degree in any of the above AND masters degree in economics, history, public administration, social science, sociology, any ethnic studies, J.D., or LL.B. OR the equivalent. Masters degree required.

### **Textbooks Resources**

1. Required Abadinsky, Howard. Law, Courts, and Justice in America, ed. Waveland Press, Inc, 2019 2. Required Schubert, Frank August. Introduction to Law and the Legal System, ed. Cengage, 2018 3. Required Hames, Joanne B. and Yvonne Ekern. Introduction to Law, ed. Pearson Publishing, 2015 4. Required Harris, Phillip. Introduction to Law, ed. Cambridge, 2019