

Pellissippi State Community College
Master Syllabus

LAW IN SOCIETY
LEGL 1310

Class Hours: 3.0

Credit Hours: 3.0

Laboratory Hours: 0.0

Date Revised: Fall 2016

Catalog Course Description:

An examination of law as a process through which social problems are addressed in the United States. Introduction to the Constitution and to its interpretation by the Supreme Court in case law. Exploration of actors affecting decisions of lawmakers, both legislative and administrative, and of law enforcement agencies.

Prerequisites:

None

Textbooks and Other Supplies:

Stephens, Otis H., Jr., John M. Scheb II, Glennon, Colin, *American Constitutional Law Volume II: Civil Rights and Liberties*, 6th Ed. (Cengage Learning, 2015)
ISBN: 9781285736921

I. WEEK/ASSIGNMENT:

Week	Chapter	Topic
1	Survey	Introduction to legal reasoning; case of the Speluncean explorers; assignment of Supreme Court Justice reports
2	1	Constitutional sources of civil rights and liberties – the framers; U. S. Constitution; federalism; <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> ; U. S. Supreme Court; selection process; caseload; decisions
3	8	Elections, representation, voting rights – Justice reports
4	5	The Constitution and criminal justice – crime and punishment: psychology and the legal system; search and seizure; exclusionary rule
5	5	The Constitution and criminal justice – insanity defense; Eyewitnesses, police, death penalty; consensual crimes
6	5	The Constitution and criminal justice – consensual crimes; And field trip
7	3 and 4	First Amendment, Speech and Religion - Freedom of Religion; Freedom of Speech; Freedom of Press and Assembly
8	Appendix A	Second Amendment and Gun Control
9	Chapter 6	Personal Autonomy and the Right to Privacy – Procreation, birth control, abortion, right to die
10		Privacy; Juvenile Offenders
11	Chapter 7	Equal protection and discrimination; Affirmative Action; Lawyers and Litigation; Juries; Jury Nullification

12	Chapter 2	Property rights and economic freedom; Glamour Law
13-14		Presentation of Research Papers
15		Review survey from first day of class

II. COURSE GOALS*:

The course will:

- A. Expand student understanding of legal ethics. I, III, IV
- B. Introduce students to the processes by which officials (judges, jurors, lawyers, law enforcement agents, etc.) reach legal decisions and explore the discretionary power officials wield in interpreting, applying, and enforcing the law. I, II, III
- C. Introduce students to how political, cultural and economic factors affect the way legal institutions function. II, III, IV
- D. Introduce to students how partisan politics, economics, social concerns, and public approval influence appointment of U. S. Supreme Court Justices. I, II, III, IV, V
- E. Guide students to an understanding of the adversary system of justice, exploring how social and economic factors affect outcomes in adversarial dispute resolution, and how the adversarial system shapes lawyering processes and legal ethics. I, II, III, IV
- F. Guide students to an understanding of the importance of analyzing credible authorities to reach conclusions based on facts rather than opinions. I,II,III,IV,V
- G. Explore basic constitutional principles which shape and limit legal processes. I, II, III, IV, V
- H. Enhance students' understanding of what "rights" are guaranteed to individuals by the U.S. Constitution and identify constitutional principles which protect autonomy and privacy. I, II, III, IV

*Roman numerals after course objectives reference goals of the Paralegal Studies program.

III. EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES*:

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of analyzing credible authorities to reach conclusions based on facts rather than opinions. (B,D,F)
2. Explain how political, cultural and economic factors affect the way legal institutions function. (B,C,D)
3. Understand basic Constitutional principles which shape and limit legal processes. (G,H)
4. Participate in teams to analyze various legal, social and ethical concerns that face today's society. (A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H)
5. Critique popularly-held notions about the structure and function of the American legal system. (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H)

*Capital letters after Expected Student Learning Outcomes reference the course goals listed above.

IV. EVALUATION:

A. Testing Procedures: 70%

Students are evaluated primarily on the basis of tests. The instructor will provide full details the first week of class via a syllabus supplement.

B. Laboratory Expectations: N/A

C. Field Work: 20%

Students are expected to attend a class tour of the Knox County Jail.

D. Other Evaluation Methods: 10%

1. Class participation, group work, and homework will also comprise the final grade for the course. The instructor will provide full details the first week of class via a supplementary syllabus.
2. All tests and papers will be graded for spelling and English usage in addition to content and format.
3. Any student encountering academic difficulty during the term is strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss options and solutions.

E. Grading Scale:

A	93-100
B+	88-92
B	83-87
C+	78-82
C	73-77
D	65-72
F	64 and below

V. POLICIES:

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses (excluding distance learning courses) must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. For the complete policy, please refer to the Academic Information in the online college catalog at [PSCC Catalog & Handbook](#).

B. Academic Dishonesty:

Academic misconduct committed either directly or indirectly by an individual or group is subject to disciplinary action. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to the following practices:

- Cheating, including but not limited to unauthorized assistance from material, people, or devices when taking a test, quiz, or examination; writing papers or reports; solving problems; or completing academic assignments.
- Plagiarism, including but not limited to paraphrasing, summarizing, or directly quoting published or unpublished work of another person, including online or computerized services, without proper documentation of the original source.
- Purchasing or otherwise obtaining prewritten essays, research papers, or materials prepared by another person or agency that sells term papers or other academic materials to be presented as one's own work.
- Taking an exam for another student.
- Providing others with information and/or answers regarding exams, quizzes, homework or other classroom assignments unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
- Any of the above occurring within the Web or distance learning environment.

Please see the Pellissippi State Policies and Procedures Manual, Policy 04:02:00 Academic/Classroom Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions for the complete policy.

C. Accommodations for Disabilities:

Students that need accommodations because of a disability, have emergency medical information to share, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated should inform the instructor immediately, privately after class or in her or his office. Students must present a current accommodation plan from a staff member in Disability Services (DS) in order to receive accommodations in this course. Disability Services may be contacted by sending email to disabilityservices@pstcc.edu, or by visiting Alexander 130. More information is available at [PSCC Disability Services](#).