Law and Society (SO 430 01)

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Office Hours: Monday: 10:00am - 11:30am (on-line office hour, look under "Communicate")
Tuesday: 9:30am - 11:00am
Thursday: 8:00am - 11:00am
Friday: 10:00am - 11:30am

E-mail: Always use the Angel e-mail system for this class on the course home page. Address your e-mails to the "course faculty" if you are e-mailing me. Look carefully each time you enter the course to see if you have unread e-mail (see "What's new" on the bottom left of your screen).

Dept. of Sociology Website: http://www.una.edu/sociology. Check out the website to learn more about the department, the major, the faculty, our courses, careers, etc.

Course Description

This Law and Society Course is being taught as part of the Sociology Department’s Criminology Concentration. Using a set of conceptual sociological tools, the course will re-introduce you to the law and the legal institution and in so doing allow you to better understand the relationship between law and human behavior. The course will sharpen critical thinking skills and hopefully enhance your respect for the law and the legal institution while recognizing the extremely limiting nature of understanding "law entirely on its own terms" (Sutton, 2001, p.4).
We will be examining the face of legal systems across different cultures to more clearly understand what law is, what functions it performs in its capacity as an institution of social control and how it shapes and is shaped by social groups. More specifically, our learning objectives in this course are:

**Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will

- be able to express their understanding of major legal systems in place around the world
- be able to apply sociological paradigms and theories to explain the organization of law, the types of law, and lawmaking processes
- demonstrate their understanding of law as a mechanism of social control and social change
- understand the law in action as well as other method of dispute resolution relative to important demographic characteristics (e.g., race, gender, age, sexuality, and class groups)

**Course Text**


Additional readings as required (most will be posted to your Angel course website as pdf files).

**Student Responsibilities**

**Course Preparation**: I expect my students to be active participants in this class so you must read your assigned chapters, stay current with the notes, discussion forums and all assigned readings.

**Assignments**: Written assignments must be formatted using the APA style. A link has been provided for you in Angel under "Resources" and "Course Resources" to the UNA Center for Writing Excellence. A guide to the APA format can be found on the Center's website. Work that is inconsistent with the APA format and other expectations concerning content, basic instructions and professionalism of presentation will be returned to be resubmitted as late work at 80% maximum credit. Failure to submit assignments on time will result in a maximum 80% grade before grading begins. Late assignments must be submitted within 24 hours of the original due date. Late work will not be accepted after that point.
Three assignments will be posted to Angel (under "Lessons") with each counting 50 points. Students will submit completed work through Angel and the corresponding assignment dropbox under "Lessons".

Unless otherwise stated, assignments must be typed (use either an 11 or 12 point font, always use a top, left, right, and bottom margin of 1" and **double-space** the work), grammatically sound and paginated. Your work will be graded on the basis of content, grammar, adherence to the APA format, and conformance to standard expectations related to ethical writing. You must internally cite all your sources, avoid lengthy quotes, avoid plagiarism, and work independently of other students enrolled in this course. Your work will be returned immediately if the above expectations are not met.

Submit your written assignments through Angel assignment dropboxes under "Lessons" as an attached file.

You will find that almost every graded element of this course will be due on a specified date before 10:55pm. central time.

**Discussion Forums:** During the semester, for each chapter covered, I will be leading on-line discussion forums requiring your participation. Discussion forums can be found in Angel under "Communicate" and each forum will provide directions within my first posting. Your grade for discussion forums will be based on the quality of your postings, your overall engagement in the discussion (assessed by your postings to other students in the class as well as me and by your participation in the forum from beginning to end), and your total number of postings. Discussion forums will last approximately one week. **To give you an idea of how to use the discussion forum feature, I've set up a graded "ice-breaker" forum to begin the day classes start.**

**Exams:** Examination dates are noted on the tentative course itinerary (see below). My examinations for this course are based on multiple-choice and essay questions. Examinations 1 and 2 will count 100 points each and Examination 3, the comprehensive final, will count 150 points. It will be administered on Dec. 8th and will be available by 8:00am. To help in your exam preparation, study guides will be posted to Angel. All exams are timed with students generally having about one hour to open, complete and submit the exam. All exams are taken on-line using Angel.

**Make-up Policy:** Make-up quizzes and exams are given at the discretion of the instructor under extenuating circumstances, and requests for make-up quizzes and exams must be made by the student within three days of the scheduled quiz or exam date. Personal medically excused illnesses and death of an immediate family member are the only non-university approved reasons that will
Justify make-up quizzes or exams. All make-up requests must be accompanied by official written notice and make-up work must be completed on the date defined by the instructor. Instructors are not responsible for informing students of missed work.

**Learning Disabilities Policy:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University offers reasonable accommodations to students with eligible documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the population. It is the responsibility of the student to contact Developmental Services prior to the beginning of the semester to initiate the accommodation process and to notify instructors within the first three class meetings to develop an accommodation plan. Appropriate, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements, but no fundamental or substantial alteration of academic standards will be made. Students needing assistance should contact Developmental Services (RM. 111 in the GUC or 765-4214).

**Ethical Writing**

Any information drawn from works published by others must be appropriately cited within the written work and on the reference page/s (prepared in the APA format).

Direct quotes, longer than three lines of typed text in your paper, are to be indented an additional inch on the left and right margins and single-spaced. You must never string together one direct quote after another and you must never begin a quote and finish it one/two paragraph(s) or pages later. It is also unethical to block and move large volumes of text from websites to your own work without the proper citation. Students engaging in these activities are merely engaged in a typing exercise and this type of work will result in a zero.

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**Grading**

The standard 10-point grading scale (A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, and below 60%=F) is employed in this course. Course averages may be calculated at any point in the semester by adding together the total number of points you accumulate from all graded work and then dividing that sum by the total number of points that could possibly have been earned. For example, if a student made 8 out of 10 on a quiz and 85 out of 100 on an exam, the student's grade would be 93 out of 110 or 84.5%. You can check your grades using Angel by looking under "Reports".
Where do your course points come from?

1st. Examination = 100 pts.
2nd. Examination = 100 pts.
3rd. Examination = 150 pts. (Comprehensive)
3 Mandatory Assignments at 50 points each = 150 pts.
Discussion Forums = 1 Mandatory Forum for each Chapter at 10pts. each

Course Itinerary

Date and Event/Subject

8/25 - Classes begin
9/6 - Holiday
9/24 - EXAM 1 (tentative date)
10/22 - Fall Break
10/25 - Last day of "W" period
10/29 - EXAM 2 (tentative date)
11/24 - 28 - Holidays
11/29 - End of "WP/WF" Period. Last to day to completely withdraw
12/8 - FINAL EXAM (fixed date)
12/17 - Commencement

Final Comments

It is my goal to make this course worth your time and effort. Therefore, I will do all within my power to ensure that you learn and succeed. If you are concerned with any aspect of this course please contact me. You owe it to yourself to talk with me since I can only help you if I know there is a problem.