OVERVIEW OF AMERICAN LAW
De Anza College – Social Science Division
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Spring Quarter 2009
Para/Admj/Poli 095.61 - 4 Units

CLASSES: Wednesdays, 6:20 – 10:00 pm, L22

OFFICE HOURS: 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm Wednesday; and 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm Fridays (beginning May 22, 2009) in Room L13. Also - appointments by arrangement as needed.

TEXTBOOKS: Introduction to the American Legal System, 8th Ed., by Enika Schulze and Susan Patterson; Pearson/Prentice Hall; REQUIRED.

In our Defense: The Bill of Rights in Action, Ellen Alderman & Caroline Kennedy; paperback; REQUIRED.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Overview of the American judicial system, and several major substantive areas of American Law, including torts, criminal, constitutional and contract law.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: To describe the components of the judicial system using appropriate legal terminology; explain the steps involved in the judicial process; describe the major legal concepts in the substantive areas of law explored, using the appropriate legal terminology; and learn/demonstrate the ability to read, interpret and brief case law and statutory law.

GRADING POLICY: The final grade is the cumulative number of percentage points each student achieves on the following exams and assignments, given the percentage weight as indicated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Briefs</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Various dates – see pg. 4 of this Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5/13/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6/24/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Grading scale:
- 100–93 = A
- 92-90 = A-
- 89-87 = B+
- 86-83 = B
- 82-80 = B-
- 79-76 = C+
- 75-71= C
- 70-67 = D+
- 66-62 = D
- 61-60 = D-
- 59-0 = F

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED, AND THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is required. Class participation is encouraged. Class participation and attendance will be factored into the student’s final grade. A sign-in sheet will be provided at every class session and each student is required to sign in at every class.
Drop Policy: If a student is present the first day of class and thereafter wishes to drop the course, the student must take responsibility for completing all paperwork. Instructor will not take care of this for the student. However, **instructor reserves the right to drop any student who misses 2 classes without contacting the instructor or fails to turn in 2 consecutive assignments.** There is no guarantee however, that the instructor will exercise this right to drop a student. If the student wishes to be sure that he is dropped from the class without penalty then it is up to the student to take all necessary steps. **Failure to do so may result in the student receiving an “F” grade in the class.**

**POINTS TO REMEMBER:**

**Dropping the Class:** Students who drop the class or stop attending MUST process the appropriate form(s) through the Admissions and Records office in order to avoid receiving an “F” in the class. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm the last day to drop the class and have the proper paperwork timely completed and submitted.

**Cheating Policy:** Cheating and/or plagiarism will be considered student misconduct. All quotes, sentences and other material obtained through other resources, book, case law, statute, internet, etc. must be properly identified and cited. If a student presents any plagiarized work as their own, they will be immediately dropped from the class. Additionally, if a student is caught cheating in any other way, they will be immediately dropped from the class. Further discipline may occur.

**Recording and Notes:** Audio recording of the lectures is generally allowed, however, students may not duplicate the recordings or duplicate and sell notes or records of the lecture(s). If a student is found to have duplicated and/or sold notes and lectures, they will be immediately dropped from the class and further discipline may occur.

**Reasonable Accommodations:** Please contact the college’s administration regarding any documented disabilities that require reasonable accommodations.

**Cell Phones and Pagers:** Cell phones, blackberries and other electronic devices must be turned off or on silent mode during the class.

**Classroom Conduct:** Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Everyone is expected to treat each other with respect therefore rude and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
### “Overview of American Law” SYLLABUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction to class and the legal system</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 3 (pgs. 64-69)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Legal Research; Case Briefing &amp; Torts&lt;br&gt;<em>Discuss “In Our Defense” Assignment</em></td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 3 (pgs. 29-40)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Torts continued</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Criminal Law</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Criminal Law continued&lt;br&gt;“In Our Defense” Assignment Pt. 1 DUE</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>MID-TERM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Criminal Law continued (if needed); Constitutional Law&lt;br&gt;&amp; The Federal Court System</td>
<td>Chapters 2, 6 &amp; Appendix A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Constitutional Law &amp; The Federal Court System, cont.&lt;br&gt;“In Our Defense” Assignment Pt. 2 DUE</td>
<td>Chapter 6 &amp; Appendix A</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Constitutional Law &amp; The Federal Court System, cont.</td>
<td>Chapter 6 &amp; Appendix A</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Contract Law</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (pgs. 43-48)</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Contract Law, cont., catch-up and/or review&lt;br&gt;“In Our Defense” Assignment Pt. 3 DUE</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (pgs. 43-48)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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*Instructor reserves the right to change these dates and the order of presentation.*
ASSIGNMENT

All assignments must be typeritten, and include your name and page numbers (if multiple pages). If the assignment consists of multiple pages or includes copies/attachments, all pages must be stapled together, or bound. You may email your completed assignments, but they MUST be in PDF format.

You are to read the book *In our Defense: The Bill of Rights in Action*, by Ellen Alderman & Caroline Kennedy. You will discover as you read the book, that it tells the tale of a case (or cases) which has shaped and/or is illustrative of certain rights enumerated in the Bill of Rights, which appends the United States Constitution. These stories details real life applications of our Bill of Rights, as well as the history behind them. THIS ASSIGNMENT IS WORTH 30% OF YOUR TOTAL GRADE.

Throughout the quarter, you are to prepare modified “case briefs” on each of the following cases, discussed within the book:

*Missouri Knights of the Ku Klux Klan v. Kansas City*
*United States v. The Progressive*
*Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association*
*Hobson v. Wilson*
*Quilici v. Morton Grove*
*Engblom v. Carey*
*McSurely v. McClellan*
*Green v. United States*
*Baltimore City Department of Social Services v. Bouknight*
*Fuentes v. Shevin*
*Poletown Neighborhood Council v. Detroit*
*Machetti v. Linahan*
*Coy v. Iowa*
*In re Myron Farber*
*United States v. Cronic*
*Tison v. Arizona*

Each “modified case brief” should be on its own, separate page, and include the name of the case as a heading. Next you should have a section entitled “Facts”, followed by a paragraph or two in which you summarize the facts of the case. This means, explain what happened that resulted in this case being brought in the first place. The next section should be entitled “Issue”, wherein you should discuss the specific problem that a court was asked to decide. Finally, your last section should be entitled “Holding”, where you discuss who won the case and what the court said about why they made the decision that they made. Each case brief should be one page, or less, typewritten.

This assignment is to be completed in 3 parts as follows:

**Part 1** Read Pages 1-114; turn in briefs for the cases discussed therein. **DUE: 5/6/09**

**Part 2** Read Pages 115-208; turn in briefs for the cases discussed therein. **DUE: 5/27/09**

**Part 3** Read Pages 209-End; turn in briefs for the cases discussed therein. **DUE: 6/17/09**