

PARL 101: Syllabus

Introduction to Law

Fall 2009

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Office Hours: 1:00 to 2:30, T/R

Lecture: Social Services Bldg. (SSB) Room 253

Time: T/R, 11:30 am to 12:45 pm

Catalog Description

This course introduces the student to legal processes in a democratic society. In addition, the course is designed to develop skills for conducting basic legal analysis.

Course Objectives

- Achieve working knowledge of basic legal vocabulary in the civil and criminal justice systems.
- Achieve working knowledge of basic legal analysis tools and application.
- Achieve general understanding of the organization of federal and state court systems, limitations on recourse to courts to resolve disputes and limitations on courts to fashion remedies.
- Obtain general understanding of concepts in the some of the following areas of substantive law and procedure: family law, contracts, torts, criminal and administrative law.

Required Text:

Katherine A. Currier & Thomas E. Eimermann, The Study of Law: A Critical Thinking Approach (current).

New York Times Online, <http://www.nytimes.com> [Free Registration is required for access.]

Course Requirements:

- You are expected to read the assigned text **in advance of the class** for which material is assigned below.
- You are also expected to complete all of the written assignments indicated by the **next class meeting date** as identified below. Late assignments **will not be accepted** unless you have made arrangements with Professor Kelley prior to the day on which the assignment is due.
- You are required to take three examinations in this course.
- You are expected to participate in class.
- You are required to monitor the course Blackboard site at least twice every week in preparation for class. Announcements regarding any necessary changes in schedule or assignments will be posted there.
- You are required to read the New York Times Online for significant national developments in the law, and to be prepared to discuss these in class and on line.

Grading:

Exams:	60%
Assignments:	40%

Each exam is worth 20% of your total grade in this course.

Each assignment is worth 10% of the total grade in this course.

This course is graded based on the A-F grading criteria identified in the UAA Catalog.

Please Note: There will be no extra credit opportunities provided in this course. By the time the first exam is graded, you will know 60% of the total grade you can possibly earn in the course. You can make an informed decision about remaining in the course at that point.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Date	Assignment	Topic
8/25	None Register with the NY Times Online, get familiar with its layout.	Course Introduction “Law Talk” Assignment 1 goes live – see Blackboard site.
8/27	Text: pp. 1-14. NYTimes Online – Look for an example of how law and justice relate to one another.	The Relationship between Law & Justice: First Principles
9/1	Text: pp. 15 – 19.	Legal Philosophy,

	NYTimes Online	“Jurisprudence”. Confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice.
9/3	NY Times Online Assignment 1 is due.	An examination of AO 2009-64.
9/8	NY Times Online	No Class
9/10	NY Times Online	The “Rule of Law” in a Democratic Society Assignment 2 begins.
9/15	Text: pp. 20 – 22 pp. 601 – 603 NY Times Online	USA: Sources of Law Overview Relationship between Law and Government
9/17	Text: pp. 601 – 603 NY Times Online	Constitutional Law
9/22	NY Times Online Assignment 2 is due.	Government’s Roadmap – including “Federalism”
9/24	Text: 603 – 604 NY Times Online Blackboard Materials: Rights in Action – <i>Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Dept. of Health</i> , 505 U.S. 833 (1992).	Liberty Preserved: The Bill of Rights

9/29	Text: pp. 22-25; Add Statutes / Legislation	Statutory Law End of Life issues on the statutory front
10/1	Text: pp. 25 – 29 NY Times Online Blackboard Course Materials: <i>Washington v. Glucksberg</i> , 521 U.S. 702 (1997). Print and bring case to class.	Common Law
10/6	NY Times Online Online Review Session to prepare for exam.	EXAM 1
10/8	Text: pp. 31 – 49 NY Times Online Online review session to process exam results.	Civil Justice & Criminal Justice through Courts
10/13	Text: pp. 51 – 70 NY Times Online Blackboard Blog: Trial Courts in Action, Individual Blog Entry and Comment This is Written Assignment 3.	Structure of Court Systems, Federal and State. Explanation of Assignment 3, due 10/27.
10/15	Text: pp. 71 – 93 NY Times Online	Litigation: The Adversary System

10/20	Text: pp. 71 – 93 NY Times Online	Civil Procedure
10/22	Text: pp. 578 – 590 NY Times Online	Criminal Procedure A subset of constitutional law.
10/27	Text: pp. 93 – 118 NY Times Online	Trials & Appeals Process and Integration
10/29	NY Times Online	Review / Schedule Adj.
11/3	NY Times Online	EXAM 2
11/5	Text: pp. 157 – 210 NY Times Online	Analyzing Cases: Reading the Law as developed through courts.
11/10	NY Times Online Briefing Cases Material in text. Blackboard: Course Materials: read <i>Mitchell v. Heinrichs</i> , 307 P.3d 210 (Ak. 2002). Bring your copy of the case to class on this day.	The “Dead Dog” Case Exercise in Briefing a Case
11/12	Text: pp. 295 – 316 NY Times Online	Tort Law: Building on the “Dead Dog” Case Civil Wrongs. Theory of Tort

11/17	Text: pp. 316 – 325 NY Times Online Assignment 3 is due. Submit written case brief for <i>Mitchell v. Heinrichs</i> , via Blackboard Assignments feature.	Negligence: Duties Owed
11/19	Text: pp. 325 – 340 NY Times Online You are responsible for the materials on defenses, though these are not likely to be discussed in class.	Negligence: Proximate Cause
11/24	Text: pp. 347—351 NY Times Online	Strict Liability
11/26	NY Times Online	No Class, Thanksgiving
12/1	Text: Read the entire chapter on Criminal Law and Procedure NY Times Online	Substantive Criminal Law
12/3	NY Times Online	Movie: Inside the Jury Room – applicable to final exam (fair warning)
12/8		[Reserved]
12/10	NY Times Online	

BLACKBOARD SITE:

The URL for the portal to Blackboard is:

<http://technology.uaa.alaska.edu/blackboard/> . If you haven't been on Blackboard (Bb) previously, spend some time taking the brief tutorial explaining how to sign in. This information is located under the pull-down menu named "Student Resources" on the Blackboard homepage. In addition, there are normally Blackboard trainings offered at the start of the semester. These are also listed on the Blackboard homepage. **Do this early in the semester, or you will get left behind!**

System problems have been known to occur. When the system is down, system administrators normally post that fact on the main Blackboard login page. Your questions or comments about the system should be directed to the IT Services' Help Desk at 786-4646. Please, don't call Prof. Kelley – she cannot fix it!

There are four written assignments in this course. In combination, they represent 40% of your grade. These assignments are designed to demonstrate your ability to effectively read and analyze court decisions, or demonstrate your ability to think critically about the role of courts in our democratic society. Details about these assignments will appear within the Blog Entry introducing the topic, or on the Assignments page, and will be also announced on the Announcements page in Blackboard. There are also tips on Blackboard's Assignments page to help you understand my expectations of you on all assignments. Read this first before attempting any assignment.

You will receive a private message grading your comments to the assignments that are posted to the Blackboard site. However, bear in mind that your ungraded work will be read by your colleagues; this is

the norm in the law. Collaboration often sharpens our thinking and our prose.

The fourth written assignment must be submitted by you through Blackboard's Assignments feature. **I will not accept assignments submitted via email, digital drop box, Bb messaging or other means unless expressly authorized.** This guarantees that I receive your assignment in typed form, and that there is no dispute that you've gotten your assignment in on time. It prevents your assignment from being mislaid. It also assures that you will receive, via email attachment, your homework as corrected from Prof. Kelley with her remarks typewritten. You'll be able to read them rather than trying to interpret her illegible penmanship.

Suggestions for Student Success

- Attendance is strongly encouraged in this class. Legal terminology can be like a foreign language, and your instructor "speaks law". You'll begin to understand the language sooner if you immerse yourself in it.
- Form study groups. These help, particularly when exams near.
- **Get Prompt Feedback:** This is more an admonishment for Prof. Kelley than it is something for you to do. She can be slow in returning work, though she does so with meticulous corrections. She is **committed** to returning work more promptly and needs your help in doing that. Her objective: work returned with fulsome comments within one week. What can you do? **Nag** if the work doesn't show up in your inbox by class time. It's a fair bargain.

- Use a legal dictionary. These are readily available, through the bookstore, at the library, or online. When you encounter a new term, do not simply gloss over it. Learn it so you can apply it. Terminology is heavily tested on exams. See objective Number One.
- Use University Resources to your advantage. Take Blackboard training if you cannot fully use Blackboard for blogs or discussion boards (there's always one open) or submitting assignments. Use the services of the Learning Resource Center if you need help with your writing skills prior to submitting a written assignment in this class.
- Reach for relevancy. You encounter the law, directly and indirectly, every day. Look for examples of what we discuss in class in the context of your life: mass media, encounters with rule makers, etc. Every class, we'll set aside up to 20 minutes to discuss relevancy – and one of your best sources on a national front is the “Newspaper of Record”, *The New York Times*. Don't overlook the *Anchorage Daily News*. There are trials scheduled in state and federal courts during the semester that should rivet our attention and instruct us about legal process at the same time.
- If you ultimately decide to stop attending the course and taking exams, **please withdraw** so that you do not earn an “F” by default.

Lecture Hall Protocols

- Turn off all cell phones, pagers, or other beeping, ringing, singing, or atonal devices. At most, put the device on “silent” or “vibrate”.
Do not take or place calls during a lecture.
- If you must arrive late, find a seat nearest the door.

- If you must leave early, sit near the door when you arrive.
- Don't disrupt the lecture, which starts and ends promptly.
- Professor Kelley does not give legal advice to students.
- Be respectful of your colleagues as we engage in this learning enterprise.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is a basic principle that requires that you take credit only for ideas and efforts that are your own. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are defined as the submission of materials in assignments, exams, or other academic work which is based on sources prohibited by the faculty member.

In this course, your writing assignments are **individual efforts**. You are required to read and analyze select cases, and then to summarize those cases in a prescribed format **in your own words**. Changing a few words from the text of the court's decision is a form of plagiarism. Changing a few words from the text of a classmate's submission is also plagiarism. If you submit an assignment that is plagiarized, it will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. If you take the time to read and understand the cases, you should be able to put the analysis in your own words. If you do not understand the limits of what plagiarism is and what is not, see Professor Kelley for additional instructions.

Cheating on exams will result in a grade of zero for that exam.

Campus Safety

We care about your safety on campus. While relatively safe, our campus is NOT a sanctuary from crime, and accidents occur no matter how hard we try to prevent them. You are encouraged to be responsible for your own safety, and to bring safety concerns to the attention of UAA faculty or staff, or to contact Campus Police at 876-1120 when you observe an unsafe environment. For your own safety, please also take the time to locate the nearest exit and emergency telephone when you are in campus buildings.

Finally

This syllabus is a kind of implied contract between Prof. Kelley and you. She intends to deliver what is promised here, based on the expectation that you will do the same by meeting her requirements. However, every class has its unique features and pace based on student population. Therefore, Prof. Kelley reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus in her discretion, in the best interests of student success. Such changes will be posted on Blackboard at the first available opportunity to provide you with adequate notice. Suggestions for changes from students are welcome, and will be considered. Decisions regarding implementation of such changes, however, rest with Professor Kelley.