



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2260B/001
Sociology of Law
Winter 2017
Thursday 9:30-12:30 PM

Location: SSC2028

Instructor: Professor Brenda Kobayashi

Office Hours: by appointment – usually after class

Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5332

Email: bkobaya@uwo.ca

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to the sociological study of law and the Canadian legal system. This course will explore the relationship between law and ideology with reference to how the law operates as a method of social control, as a challenge to/or reinforcement of concentrations of power, and as a facilitator of social change. Students will be introduced to a range of sociological theories and research all of which will help to develop a deeper understanding of the law and its ideological underpinnings.

Prerequisite(s):

1.0 from: Sociology 1020, 1021E, 1025A/B, 1026F/G, 1027A/B

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Antirequisite(s)

The former Sociology 260F/G

Learning Outcomes:

By critically analyzing the law and drawing on different theoretical perspectives students can seek to examine/answer such questions as: what is the nature of the relationship between law and society? What is the purpose of law? Why are some activities and relationships regulated through law while others not others? Whose interests does the law represent? Can the law affect social change? How or can the law address social inequality?

Required Text(s):

Vago, S. 2014. “Law and Society” (4th ed.). Pearsons

Additional Required Readings will be posted on OWL, handed out in class, and/or placed on reserve at Weldon Library.

Method of Evaluation:

Midterm Examination: worth 35% (in-class exam)

Assignment: worth 20%

Cumulative Final Exam: worth 45% (during final exam period)

Evaluation Breakdown:

Assignment Additional information will be provided during the first week's class.

Midterm Examination This is an in-class, written examination based on all materials presented in lectures, seminars, and readings. The exam may consist of a mixture of multiple-choice, fill in the blank questions, and short answer questions. The first exam is a closed book exam. No electronic devices will be permitted during the examination. The first test **is worth 35%** of your final course mark.

N.B. Makeup exams will be in **essay format only**.

Final Examination: (held during the Final Exam Period – TBA): There will be a three-hour final (**cumulative**) examination based on all materials presented in lectures, seminars, and readings during both the first and second half of the semester. The exam may consist of a mixture of multiple-choice, fill in the blank, and short and long answer essay questions. The final examination is a closed book exam and no electronic devices will be permitted during the examination. The final examination is **worth 45%** of your final course mark.

N.B. To ensure the fair treatment of all students, so that no one individual receives any consideration or special treatment as a result of verbal complaints (e.g., arbitrary bumping up of grades) that is not equally received by others, there are no make-up assignments for poor test scores.

N.B. Makeup exams will be in essay format only.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Exam Re-evaluation

Any review of assignments and examinations should be done within two weeks of the mark being released. Students who wish to seek a re-evaluation of grades must justify to me, in detail and in writing, exactly why they feel that a mark is not justified. Such a request should be based on reasons that are rooted in the specific course content and keeping in mind my expectations for the class. The assignment or exam will be regarded in its entirety, not simply the questions or portion the student believes were scored improperly. Note, in the course of remarking an assignment or exam, the instructor may discover errors or defects that were not originally detected on the paper or exam and as a result, it is possible that a student's revised mark may go down, rather than up. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the mark both upwards and downwards. The revised mark stands.

Grade Guidelines:

The Department of Sociology guidelines require a particular course grade distribution. For 2200 level courses, the number of A's is not to exceed the number of B's, and class averages are expected to fall in the range of 66-70%.

Due to concerns surrounding grade inflation, final grades in this course will be centered on a mean of no higher than 70% (as per the Department guidelines). This means that your final course grade depends on your ranking relative to the other students and I reserve the right to take corrective measures to ensure against grade inflation.

How to Contact Me:

If you have a question or would like to discuss course content, please see me before or after class, or during office hours. Outside of class and/or office hours, email is my preferred method of contact.

Please note that I do not discuss matters of grades, course content (e.g., definitions of concepts, differences between theoretical perspectives, etc.) or matters of special accommodation by email. I require that email correspondence be saved to such items as arranging a meeting during my office hours and/or for discussing information that is **not** posted on the course outline. I also do **not** answer questions regarding information that is posted on the course outline (e.g., quiz/exam dates, required readings, exam information, etc.) and/or any material or announcements that are discussed in class.

Email should be professionally prepared, spell- and grammar-checked, and not written in “text message” format. All communications must be written from your UWO account. The subject heading must read the course title and section. Sign the email with your fully name and student number. You can expect a response within 24-48 hours, excluding weekends.

How to get important information:

Your first sources of information are the course syllabus and OWL. It is expected that you will check OWL regularly to ensure that you are kept up to date on new and revised course content. It is student’s responsibility to ensure that you are kept up-to-date on course content and announcements.

Grades (except the final exam and year-end mark) will be posted to OWL as they become available. Due to privacy regulations, I do not provide grades or discuss issues regarding grades via email. If you wish to discuss your grade(s) please contact or speak with me to set up an appointment, during office hours.

Important Policies

Lecture Notes and Missed Class

I do not post or handout my lecture notes. I will post PowerPoint slides on Owl, in advance of each class; however, these slides are intended only to aid in note-taking. They are not complete notes and are not a substitute for attending lectures. It is a student’s responsibility, to create the full complement of notes from each class.

Class attendance is critical to getting the most of this course. While readings and class lectures fit together, some material will only be covered in class. Students are responsible for everything that occurs during class time, including discussions, handouts, videos, guest speakers, etc.

If you miss class, are late or leave early, it is your responsibility to catch up on anything and everything that occurs during class (e.g. arrange with a classmate to exchange lecture notes, discussions, handouts, videos, guest speakers, class announcements, etc.). It is a good idea to ‘buddy up’ with a classmate, in order to exchange notes, if you must miss a class, are late or leave early, as I do not post or handout lectures notes.

Classroom Conduct

This class will conduct itself on the principles of academic and intellectual freedom, and mutual respect. Vigorous debate is encouraged, as are discussions about sensitive, difficult, and/or challenging issues, but this kind of discourse is possible only in the context of mutual respect. Please respect your classmates and your instructor during lecture and discussion periods. Racist, sexist, or other derisive comments (intentional or otherwise) will not be tolerated.

During class, students are expected to behave like adults and professionals by being attentive, engaged, and respectful of the entire class. Under no circumstances, should students be engaging in private conversations, text messaging, checking phone messages, or using a cell phone in some other way. Nor should students be using their laptop for any other reason (e.g., Facebook, tweet, games, movies, etc.) other than note-taking. Sleeping, reading newspapers, books, working on class assignments, or any other activities that is not related to the course lecture is not permitted. Students who engage in any of the above or similar behavior's will be asked to leave the classroom for the duration of the class and may return to the class, after they have conferred with the instructor.

Tape recordings of the lectures without an academic accommodation along with the permission of the instructor and the rest of the class is **not** permitted.

Missed Exams and Late Assignments

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only.

If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with the Academic Counseling office at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict to the Academic Counseling office (not the Instructor). If approved, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam.

If you miss an exam date or the due date for an assignment due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide notification of and documentation for the reasons for your circumstances to your Academic Counselor within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor on the date of the exam or on the date the assignment is due. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by your medical doctor's documentation, you will be allowed to write a makeup exam or hand in your assignment at a later date.

Policies on Examinations

Students are not permitted to have any electronic devices (laptops or cellphones, etc.) present or turned on during tests/quizzes or examinations.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:

Laptops are permitted in class but are to be used only for taking class notes. If it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Cell phones must be turned off and put away prior to the start of class.

Tape recordings of the lectures without an academic accommodation along with permission from the professor and the rest of the class is **not permitted**.

A Note on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.