

**SOCIOLOGY 4455G – 001**  
**Winter 2019**

**THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF LAW**

**Tuesday's 9:30-12:30 in SSC5230**

**Instructor:** Jennifer Reynolds

Office Hours: Tuesday's 12:30-1:30

Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5209

(please book an appointment during these times through email correspondence)

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**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to examine the law as a social institution in Canadian society. This course will cover the ways in which the law is a product of social action, organizations, and processes. We will look at concepts and frameworks for thinking about law and legal process and will explore both classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives which considering a number of topics and cases related to current contemporary issues in the law and legal system. The goal of this course is to understand how sociologists study law and to explain some of the patterns and dynamics of law in a variety of social settings and will focus on the role of race, socioeconomic status, and gender in the process of law. places great emphasis on the gender, race, and the implantation and process of law.

***Prerequisite(s):***

Enrollment in fourth year in one of the Honours Specializations in Sociology of Criminology.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students should:

1. Understand what is meant by “the sociology of law” and the implication this view has for understanding the law and legal system in the Western world
2. Have an understanding of the connection between law and society, specifically with regarding to race, ethnicity, gender, and social class
3. Use knowledge on socio-legal theories to analyze contemporary problems in Canadian society.
4. Critically reflect on law in the contemporary world and the complex role of power in both the formulation and application of the law

**Required Text(s):**

All assigned readings will be available via the Western Libraries or on OWL.

**Evaluation**

Your grade for this course will be based on your performance on each of the following evaluation components of the course:

(1) Participation (10%)

In order to make this class educational and enjoyable, there will be plenty of opportunity for you to participate in discussions, voice your opinion, pose a question or make a comment about the material or discussion. Therefore, as a fourth year seminar course, students will be expected to have read the required readings and to actively participate in class discussions.

(2) Seminar Presentation (15%): TBD

Each seminar will be led by one or two students (depending on course enrollment) who will be responsible for having read the required readings and leading the class discussion on the week's topic. Students will provide a presentation of the key arguments presented by the authors in the readings while offering their own critical insight and analysis into the topic. They will also be responsible for providing understanding of how the themes presented by the authors interact and how they might relate other aspects of the course. The presentation should be approximately 30 minutes long and is primarily meant to provide a starting point for the day's discussion. Following the presentation, the student(s) will be expected to have developed points for discussion by preparing discussion questions and analytical arguments for debate.

(3) Reaction Paper (10%)

One week after the completion of their presentation, students are to submit a theoretically informed reaction paper on their week's topic. This paper should analyze the required course readings and take a position regarding the themes discussed. This paper is not an exploratory paper, but rather an argumentative paper where students should take a position on one of the main arguments being made in the articles assigned, and thus should have a strong thesis statement. Students may wish to incorporate feedback and discussions that were used during their presentation to aid in their reflection. The reaction paper is expected to be 5 pages long with standard formatting and text size (ie. 1" margins and size 12 font). Please follow APA referencing style.

(4) In Class Tests (20 x 2 = 40%)

There will be 2 in-class tests written over the course of the term. The test will include a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions, and will NOT be cumulative.

(5) Term Paper (25%): Due the Last Day of Class

Students will choose a topic of their choice that is related to the course and prepare a final term paper. This essay is to be an argumentative paper that contains a strong thesis rather than an exploratory/descriptive paper. While students are encouraged to use some course

material, a substantial portion of your sources should come from sources beyond the required readings. It is encouraged that students confirm an essay topic with the instructor to ensure that the student is on the right track. The paper is expected to be approx. 8-10 pages in length double-spaced with standard formatting and text size (ie. 1" margins and size 12 font). Please follow APA referencing style.

**How to Contact Me:**

If you have got a question or would like to discuss course content further, please come and see me during my office hours. If you are in class during my office hours and wish to speak with me regarding course material, you can book an appointment with me in person or through e-mail. If you wish to contact me via email, please be advised that I will respond to your message within two business days. I will not provide email responses to questions that have already been addressed on the course outline or in class lectures.

**How to get important information:**

OWL will be used to post course information, content, reminders and important instructions regarding deadlines, expectations, requirements, etc. It is expected that you check OWL regularly to ensure that you are kept up to date on new and revised course content. From time-to-time I may post or e-mail additional content that may aid in your learning and understanding of course topics. This material may be used in assignments or class discussions.

## **Important Policies**

### ***Policies for Assignment Deadlines:***

Students who miss the assignment or examinations will not be permitted to write unless they submit formal written documentation regarding their absence to academic counseling. Only reasons deemed appropriate by academic counseling will be granted the option to rewrite (ie. doctor's note regarding illness, religious holiday, death/illness of a family member, etc.). If a student suspects that an unavoidable crisis might arise preventing them from completing the assignments or examinations, they should get in contact with the instructor as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements. Students should note that they will not be automatically granted approval for a missed assignment or test and that your home faculty's Academic Counseling office will determine the legitimacy of your request and documentation.

### ***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](http://www.turnitin.com)).

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 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. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

### ***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](http://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](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](http://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](http://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](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

## Course Outline

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<i>Jan. 8</i>	Course Introduction/ Overview
<i>Jan. 15</i>	The Sociology of Law and Canada's Legal System
<i>Jan. 22</i>	Early Theoretical Perspectives on the Sociology of Law – Part I
<i>Jan. 29</i>	Early Theoretical Perspectives on the Sociology of Law – Part II
<i>Feb. 5</i>	Test #1
<i>Feb. 12</i>	The Law: Types and Functions Topic: Drug Policy
<i>Feb. 19</i>	<b>READING WEEK</b>
<i>Feb. 26</i>	Foucault, Law and Governance Topic: The 'Never Deserving' Poor
<i>Mar. 5</i>	Law and Risk Topic: Mental Health and the Law
<i>Mar. 12</i>	Test #2
<i>Mar. 19</i>	Social Control and Social Movements Topic: Sexual Orientation and Reproduction
<i>Mar. 26</i>	Race and Law: Critical Race Theory Topic: Indigenous Persons and the Law
<i>Apr. 2</i>	*NO CLASS – Online Participation Assignment*
<i>Apr. 9</i>	Feminism and Law: Feminism and Power of the Law Topic: Violence Against Women