



The University of Western Ontario

SOCIOLOGY 3260A - 001

Sociology of Law

Fall 2025

In-Person

Instructor: Dr. Ballucci, Associate Professor

Department of Sociology

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Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the broad-ranging field of law and society. Our focus is to challenge how people ordinarily understand law by beginning to think about law outside the box of legal logic. This course will introduce students to different ways of thinking about law as a social phenomenon and some of the main themes and debates that characterize the field of law and society today. Themes addressed may include law and social control, law and culture, law and knowledge, law and violence, law and governance, law and diversity, and law and social change. Students will consider the various ways law gains its meaning and authority from society and the extent to which law shapes society through its regulatory force.

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

Unless you have either the prerequisites or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, 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 if you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

***Antirequisite(s):* The former Sociology 260F/G, and 2260A/B**

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should:

- Distinguish between personal opinion and critical analysis
- Compare and contrast different ways of thinking about the interconnections between law and society
- Describe and challenge the ideal image of Law by looking at the everyday practices and experiences of law
- Identify and describe various social forces that influence, and are influenced by, law
- Identify, define, and illustrate basic concepts of law and society
- Be prepared for Advanced topics in Sociology of Law 4455

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Course Material:

- 1) Calavita, Kitty (2016). *Invitation to Law & Society: An Introduction to the Study of Real Law (second edition)*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- 2) Additional readings will be provided via OWL.

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

All relevant course material will be available in the course outline and in class. Course announcements and information may also be sent to your Western email account.

Office hours:

Professor Ballucci: I will be available for office hours by appointment. Also, please provide me with some information concerning your questions.

How to Contact Me and the Teaching Assistants

I can be contacted via email at dballucc@uwo.ca. The teaching assistant's email will be provided below. Only emails that use proper etiquette will be answered. For example, a salutation is required. "Hello Professor Ballucci, or Dr. Ballucci" is acceptable. "Hey", "Miss", or the absence of a salutation is not sufficient. Also, no texting terminology is acceptable. Lastly, please provide me with your name and the course and section you are emailing about. These rules also apply when email teaching assistants are involved.

Please do not email me questions about course content or course procedures. I will take time in every class to answer these types of questions. There are, however, two main exceptions to this policy:

1. You are experiencing a personal emergency that I need to know about before the next class.
2. You want to make an appointment to see me.

I will give my best effort to respond to these emails within 24 hours.

Teaching Assistant: The TA can be contacted by appointment only. Suppose you have questions about the Module assignments. BEFORE you contact the TA, please carefully read the instructions and information provided concerning the Module.

Please note that if you do want to contest your grade, you must present in writing a rationale for this request. You must illustrate using direct evidence why you feel your grade should be re-evaluated. Stating to the TA, or myself, "that you need a higher grade", "that you normally get higher grades," are not reasons to have your work reggraded. In these cases, please note that your grades can go up and down.

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements.

1. In-Class Assignments: Total worth 40% (6 x 6.67%). Dates & topics listed in a detailed outline.
2. Midterm: 25%: October 28, 2025.
3. Final Exam: 35%: TBA.

1. In-Class Assignment Philosophical Approach: Each assignment will allow you to learn about the concepts, theories and challenges in the law and society. The assignments will teach you about the discipline and help you further develop your academic skills. The modules encourage you to reflect and critically engage with the course material. You must cover the required content assigned to each module, complete any assigned learning activities, and attend office hours if you have any questions or concerns about the course. (For further details, see Appendix)

All assignments are due on the dates noted. Coursework received after the due date will have its grade reduced by a rate of 5% per day (including weekends). If an assignment is due at the end of class (4:30), it will be considered one day late any time after 4:30 p.m. the following day, unless Dr. Ballucci provides a class extension.

This course includes 7 in-class assignments, with only 6 counted toward your final grade. Each assignment must be submitted by the end of class, unless otherwise stated by Dr. Ballucci. You must attend the entire class to complete the assignment. You are allowed to miss 1 in-class assignment without penalty. If you miss more than one, you will receive a 0 for any additional missed assignments. If you complete all 7, only your top 6 grades will be used in the final calculation. Since these assignments are based on in-class discussion and video content, academic consideration or makeup opportunities will not be granted for missed assignments beyond the one permitted absence.

2. Mid-Term Exam (25%): October 28, 2025 (you will have 3 hours)

The midterm exam will be given in class and will address all the material covered in the class. Mid-term 1 will include material from September 10th to October 28th. Questions will be based on lectures, readings, films, discussions, and guest lectures. The exam may consist of multiple-choice, true and false, matching concept definitions, fill-in-the-blank questions, and/or short-answer questions. The mid-term exam will cover ALL the materials, readings, class discussions and videos assigned and covered in the course.

Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course, the Midterm Exam has been selected as requiring supporting documentation.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam must write a makeup exam. The course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to answer questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

3. Final Exam: Final Exam (35%): TBA

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The final exam will be given during the formal examination period and may include all material in the course. Questions will be based on lectures, readings, films, discussions, and guest lectures. The exam may consist of multiple choice, true and false, matching concept definitions, fill-in-the-blank, and/or short-answer questions. The final examination period is Dec 9-22. Students are advised NOT to make travel commitments during this time period. Please note that students are expected to write their examinations honestly and straightforwardly. Students who do not write the final exam will fail the course. Only students with proper documentation will be allowed to write a make-up exam. The final exam will cover ALL the materials, readings, class discussions, and videos assigned and covered in the course throughout the term.

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. No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

Bonus Grades: From time to time, I may provide opportunities for bonus marks. I may offer these on days with low attendance, either at the start or end of each class.

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:

All assignments are due on the dates noted. Coursework received after the due date will have its grade reduced by a rate of 5% per day (including weekends). If an assignment is due at the end of class (4:30), it will be considered one day late any time after 4:30 p.m. the following day, unless Dr. Ballucci provides a class extension.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

1. *All assignments must be completed independently, without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI).*
2. *Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Essays, written assignments and/or lab reports should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. Students should also generate their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and all them to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing the essays and other written assessments.*

Electronic Devices:

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

Course Policies:

Approach and Expectations:

The learning outcomes will be achieved through lectures, readings, class discussions and activities, multimedia clips, written and collaborative work, and exams. Students are expected to:

- Attend **all** classes;
- Read any required readings **before** class.
- Participate actively and thoughtfully in class discussions and group assignments (treat others with respect);
- Make notes on class content and identify questions as they arise during the process of reading required texts;
- Keep all rough work (notes, drafts, etc.) until their final marks have been officially recorded and be able to supply this rough work if requested by the course instructor.
- Keep an electronic copy of any paper or written commentary that is submitted in this course. The instructor may verify any written work using anti-plagiarism software (e.g., Turnitin.com);
- Contact Dr. Ballucci with any problems that may arise during the semester.
- **Turn off all handheld electronic devices in class and refrain from using cell phones, messenger, Facebook, and other social networking tools during class time.**
- **Do not use the Student Absence Portal (SAP) for your critical reflections. If you are not in full class attendance, you cannot complete the necessary reflection. There is a “freebie” built into the class to account for unexpected events (such as illness, family emergencies, etc.).**

Academic 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 website: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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.

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 (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

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.

Copyright: Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration](#) – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request using the Student Absence Portal (SAP) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html . Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness must include the completed Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf> or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Once the request and supporting documentation have been received and reviewed, appropriate academic consideration, if granted, shall be determined by the instructor in consultation with the academic advisor, in a manner consistent with the course outline. Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam, unless otherwise specified in the course outline. The course instructor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup text/exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test/exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test/exam.

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty Academic Counselling Office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Religious Accommodation: Students should review the policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf. Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning: In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence or University approved emergency during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL Brightspace for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Code of Student Conduct: It is the responsibility of every student to read the Code and familiarize him or herself with its contents. The Code is available at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf. Sanctions for non-compliance range from a warning or reprimand to expulsion from the University.

Student Responsibility: Students in a degree program must select courses in accordance with the published requirements. Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and

that they are aware of any antirequisite course(s) they may have taken. Students must familiarize themselves with the Student Responsibility for Course Selection policy https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/academic_counselling.pdf and the Registration and Progression policy https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/registration_progression.pdf. Students are responsible for the successful completion of the Graduation Requirements for their degree program https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/graduation.pdf.

Support Services:

Office of the Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

[Faculty Academic Advising](#) - Please visit your Home Faculty Academic advising webpage for information regarding adding/dropping courses, important dates, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html.

[USC services](#) offers information about student the health/dental plan, Bus Pass, food support services, Peer support Centre etc <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

[Mental health](#) – Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

[Health & Wellness Services](#) – Registered part-time and full-time students can book a physical health appointment at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html>. Additional on-campus services are also available <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/services/index.html>.

[Accessible Education](#) provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western, in all programs and faculties. Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

[Gender-Based and Sexual Violence](#) – Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experience GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: http://uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

[Western Libraries](#) – Visit the many library locations on campus. Western Libraries provide access to material in physical and digital formats <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/catalogue/index.html>. Research support is available <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/research/index.html>.

[Writing support](#) – Online writing resources, writing support and writing modules are available <https://writing.uwo.ca/undergrads/>

Bookstore: Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>