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Office Hours: T, Th 11:20-12:50  
Office: 990 Fullerton, Room 2216

PSC 269  
Fall 2014  
Levan 501  
T, Th: 9:40-11:10

## TOPICS IN PUBLIC LAW: INTRODUCTION TO LAW AND SOCIETY

This course provides an introduction to the study of law from a sociolegal perspective. Students will be encouraged to expand their view of law beyond the walls of the courtroom, to understand how law both shapes, and is shaped by societal norms. This course asks students to engage with a number of critical concepts designed to enrich your understanding of how law impacts our everyday lives. We will begin by exploring the development of modern law, and thinking critically about the common conception of law as an arena of reason and logic free from moral, emotional, or political influences. We will then consider whether or not law can be used as an effective tool for bringing about social change. Finally, we will conclude the course by examining the complex relationship between law and violence.

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## MATERIALS

There are four required texts for this course. All of these texts are available for purchase in the university bookstore or online. Additional required reading materials will be made available on D2L throughout the semester.

Calavita, Kitty. 2010. *Invitation to Law and Society: An Introduction to the Study of Real Law*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Darian-Smith, Eve. 2010. *Religion, Race, Rights: Landmarks in the History of Modern Anglo-American Law*. Portland, OR: Hart Publishing

Wilson, Joshua. 2013. *The Street Politics of Abortion: Speech, Violence, and America's Culture Wars*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York, NY: New Press.

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## GRADING

Exams (20% Each)	60%
Journals (5% each)	20%
Participation	<u>20%</u>
	100%

**Exams:** Your performance on three exams will account for 60% of your overall grade for this course. These exams will consist of in-class essays that must be completed within a specified time frame. The exams will be open-book, and will not be comprehensive.

**Journals:** Students will be expected to complete 5 weekly writing assignments reflecting on course readings over the course of the term. I will post discussion questions on D2L each week, and ask you to write a 1-2 page essay answering any *one* of these questions. There will be 10 total weeks worth of discussion questions, meaning students may skip 5 weeks without penalty. These short essays should include a thesis statement which is supported with at least one citation from the course readings. Hard copies of these essays are due in class every Thursday. Answers to discussion questions will account for 20% of your grade for the course.

**Participation and Attendance:** Regular and attentive class attendance is necessary to succeed in this course. Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 10% reduction in your participation grade. Students who miss class due to illness or other significant personal circumstance are required to complete the Absence Notification Process through the Dean of Students Office (Student Center #307 & DePaul Center #11001) in order to have their absence excused. Students are expected to come to class ready to participate meaningfully in class discussions. This means you have carefully read all required readings.

**Late Assignment Policy:** Students who miss class for a legitimate reason must inform me in advance, and provide documentation from the Dean of Student's Office excusing the absence. Students with excused absences may be allowed to make up work without penalty. Otherwise, I will accept late papers up to 3 days after the due date. Late papers will receive a 10% penalty for each day they are late.

**Academic Integrity:** Any occasion of academic dishonesty, large or small, on *any* assignment, will result in failure for the assignment and/or the entire course and disciplinary action. Work done for this course must adhere to the University Academic Integrity Policy, which you can review in the Student Handbook or by visiting Academic Integrity at DePaul University (<http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>). Please note that ignorance of prevailing academic conventions or of DePaul's policies is never an excuse for a violation.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling you to access accommodations and support services to assist your success. For more information please visit [www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/csd](http://www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/csd). Students are also invited to contact me privately to discuss your challenges and how I may assist in facilitating the accommodations you will use in this course. This is best done early in the term. Our conversation will remain confidential.

**A note on Writing:** This course requires students to complete a variety of writing assignments. Good writing is a process which takes time— you should never turn in a piece of writing that has not been thoroughly reviewed and revised beforehand. I am happy to discuss written work with you during office hours and will review rough drafts sent to me in advance. If you need additional help with writing assignments you might want to contact the writing center to schedule a face-to-face meeting or get feedback on written work ([www.depaul.edu/writing](http://www.depaul.edu/writing)).

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## **INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS LAW AND SOCIETY?**

September 11	Introduction to the Course
September 16	Calavita, <i>Invitation to Law and Society</i> pp 1-9; 30-50; 74-93
September 18	Ewick and Silbey, "Common Knowledge and Ideological Critique" (D2L**)

## **THE ORIGINS OF MODERN LAW**

September 23	Calvita, <i>Invitation to Law and Society</i> pp 10-29 Darian-Smith, <i>Religion Race and Rights</i> pp 1-51
September 25	Darian-Smith, <i>Religion Race and Rights</i> pp 52-87; 115-147
September 30	Darian-Smith, <i>Religion Race and Rights</i> pp 148-208
October 2	Darian-Smith, <i>Religion Race and Rights</i> pp 209-247 Exam Review
October 7	****EXAM 1****

## **LAW AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

October 9	Calvita, <i>Invitation to Law and Society</i> pp 94-115 Wilson, <i>Street Politics of Abortion</i> pp 1-24
October 14	Wilson, <i>Street Politics of Abortion</i> pp 25-74
October 16	Wilson, <i>Street Politics of Abortion</i> pp 75-130
October 21	Wilson, <i>Street Politics of Abortion</i> pp 131-188
October 23	Calvita, <i>Invitation to Law and Society</i> pp 116-147 Exam Review
October 28	**** EXAM 2****

## **LAW AND VIOLENCE**

October 30	The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence (film)
November 4	The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence (film) Robert Cover, "Violence and the Word" (D2L**)

November 6	Calvita, <i>Invitation to Law and Society</i> pp 51-73 Alexander, <i>New Jim Crow</i> pp 1-19
November 11	Alexander, <i>New Jim Crow</i> pp 20-96
November 13	Alexander, <i>New Jim Crow</i> pp 97-177
November 18	Alexander, <i>New Jim Crow</i> pp 178-220 Final Exam Review
November 25	***FINAL EXAM: 8:45-11:00***