

Moravian College  
Department of Sociology  
**Sociology 216: Legal Systems**

Instructor: Dr. James Ravelle  
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Office Phone: (610) 861-1378  
Office Hours: 9:20 AM to 10:20 AM, Tuesdays and Thursdays  
1:15 PM to 2:15 PM on Mondays and Wednesdays  
Or by Appointment  
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**Prerequisites:**

- \* Sophomore or 2nd Semester Freshmen status; or
- \* Junior or Senior Standing with permission of the college

**Course Objectives:**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the language, theory and practice of the law with a particular emphasis on the American legal system as it compares to other legal systems in the world.

- \* We will explore both the criminal and civil justice systems;
- \* We will be introduced to the foundation of the constitutional process and Court structures and procedure.
- \* We will look at the major topical areas of the law; including not limited to Administrative law; Criminal law; the law of Torts; Family law; Property law; Employment law; Estates and Trusts.

**Requirements and Methods of Evaluation:**

There are four requirements to successfully complete this class:

- \* You will be expected to attend and participate regularly in class (See Attendance and Participation Policy below)
- \* You will be expected to read the homework assigned to you, whether in the book or by handout.
- \* You will be expected to participate in at least one team presentation for which you either volunteer or are asked to present.
- \* You will be expected to take all three (3) exams at the times at which they are scheduled.

**Grading:**

Component	Weight
Class Participation.....	20%
Exams and Presentations.....	80%

**Attendance Policy:**

All students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussion. Failure to attend class on three or more occasions for any purpose automatically disqualifies the student from the possibility of receiving the highest participation grade.

**Academic Honesty Policy:**

The rules of the college as they apply to withdrawal from the course and plagiarism will be strictly followed. Students are encouraged to consult the college handbook for details of these policies.

**Other Useful Information:**

***Make-Up Exams.***

Make-up exams will not be given unless the student can prove serious illness resulting in hospitalization or death in their immediate family. The burden of proof is on the student to demonstrate the above. Minor illnesses, fatigue, vacation plans, death of pets, and distant relatives are not excuses unless the Dean of the College permits dismissal for these reasons.

***Required Text and Materials:***

The following book is required and is available for purchase at the Moravian College Bookstore: ***Understanding the law;*** by Carper and West, 4th edition.

***Blackboard:***

I will be using the Blackboard online system as an instructional tool. Students will be able to download and print the syllabus, class assignments, and outlines for class and challenge cases. You will also be able to chat with me in real time about class matters and more easily contact me at other times. Greater facilitation of group work may also be a byproduct of this process.

**Schedule of Assignments**  
**(All Assignments refer to Carpers et al unless otherwise noted)**

08/25	Intro to the Law, Chapter 1
08/27	The Constitution, Chapter 2
09/01	Continue with above
09/03	The Court System - Chapter 3
09/08	The Legal Profession - Chapter 4
09/10	Continue with above
09/15	Administrative Law - Chapter 5
09/17	Crimes - Chapter 6
09/22	Continue with above
09/24	Exam #1
09/29	Torts, Chapter 7
10/01	Continue with above
10/06	No Class – MidTerm Break
10/08	Continue with above
10/13	Family Law - Chapter 9
10/15	Continue with above
10/20	Continue with above
10/22	Motor Vehicles, Chapter 10
10/27	Continue with above
10/29	Exam #2
11/03	Landlord-Tenant, Chapter 11
11/05	Continue with above
11/10	Real Estate, Chapter 12
11/12	Continue with above
11/17	Continue with the above
11/19	Continue with the above
11/24	Employment Law, Chapter 13
11/26	Thanksgiving – No Class

12/01 Estates and Trusts, Chapter 14  
12/03 Continue with the above

12/08 Continue with the above  
12/10 Review for the Exam