

Moravian College
Department of Sociology
SOC 216: Legal Systems

Instructor: Dr. James Ravelle
Professor of Economics and Business
Office: Comenius 211
Office Phone: (610) 861-1378
Office Hours: 9:15 am to 10:15 AM, Mondays and Wednesdays
 2:20 PM to 3:20 PM on Thursdays
 Or by Appointment
Instructor e-mail: ravellej@moravian.edu

Prerequisites:

- * Sophomore or 2nd Semester Freshmen status; or
- * Junior or Senior Standing with permission

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. To that end:

- * We will explore both the criminal and civil justice systems.
- * You 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 but not limited to administrative law; criminal law; the law 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 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.

Disability Support Policy:

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic and Disability Support, located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

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: ***Carperss: Understanding the Law: 7th edition, Cengage Publishing.***

GoogleDocs:

I will be using the ***GoogleDocs*** 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.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- 1.. Class Meeting Time. You will be expected to attend classes regularly. Class will meet for 37.8 hours during the semester. **37.80 hours**

2. Outside Class Activity. You will be expected to spend one day at either the Lehigh or Northampton County Courthouse or in the alternative, a District Justice Court or Federal Courthouse. You must spend at least 8 hours observing activities in court or court-related business. In addition you must also attend at least 5 hours of law-related lectures at either Moravian College or other LVAIC College. You must submit a journal to demonstrate your attendance. **13.00 hours**

3. You will be expected to read and outline 14 Chapters in the text book assigned to you. It should take you about 3 hours for each Chapter to thoroughly read the assignment and make the appropriate notes. **42.00 hours**

4. You will be expected to read (and to be prepared for discussion) for each case study provided to you. There are approximately 30 case studies. Each case study should take about 1 hour to properly prepare. **30.00 hours**

5. You will be expected to study for each of the 3 exams. You should expect to study at least 10 hours for each exam. **30.00 hours**

6. You will have the option to prepare a term paper using at least 6 sources (books, articles, etc.). The term paper should be at least 8 pages and you should expect to spend at least 3 hours of time for each page. **28.00 hours**

Total

176.80 hours

Schedule of Assignments
(All Assignments refer to Carper)

01/19	Intro to the Law. Chapter 1
01/21	The Constitution, Chapter 2
01/26	The Court System, Chapter 3
01/28	Continue with the above
02/02	The Legal Profession, Chapter 4
02/04	Continue with above
02/09	Continue with the above
02/11	Administrative Law, Chapter 5
02/16	Criminal Law, Chapter 6
02/18	Continue with above
02/23	Continue with above
02/25	Exam #1
03/02	Torts, Chapter 7
03/04	Family Law, Chapter 9
03/19	Spring Break - No Class
03/11	Spring Break - No Class
03/16	Continue with above
03/18	Continue with above
03/23	Motor Vehicles, Chapter 10
03/25	Continue with above
03/30	Continue with above
04/01	Exam #2
04/06	Landlord-Tenant, Chapter 11
04/08	Real Estate, Chapter 12
04/13	Continue with above
04/15	Continue with above
04/20	Employment Law, Chapter 13
04/22	Continue with above
04/27	Continue with above
04/29	Estates and Trusts, Chapter 14

05/05 (Tuesday) Final Exam at 1:30 PM