

THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

LAS 2200: Legal Literacy

Fall Quarter 2014

Saturday 1:30-5:30pm

Class Session Dates: Sept 13, 20, 27 and Oct 11. No class on October 4th. Use October 4th to take your final exam.

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Deborah Klein, JD, LLM

Voice Mail: 720-648-5464

Email: debbieklein78@gmail.com

I will respond to email or voicemail messages within 48 hours.

PREREQUISITES: WRIT 1122 and WRIT 1133

Students are responsible for completing course prerequisites before registering for a class. Students may be removed from a course for which they have not fulfilled the prerequisite course work.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Legal Literacy provides an introductory overview of how the legal system functions in the United States. This course seeks to demystify the law for students and show them how to use legal tools for problem solving. It examines the general structures and processes of government, such as how legislatures enact laws, how courts decide cases, and how executive officials and administrative agencies regulate our behavior. It introduces some specific skills, such as how to read judicial case decisions and how to construct legal arguments. It also examines the basic forms of dispute resolution—from negotiation and mediation to arbitration and litigation. Throughout the course, students will be required to think critically about the strengths and weaknesses of our legal system.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students should leave the class able to:

- 1) define and understand legal terms (e.g., tort, civil procedure, criminal procedure, statute);
- 2) be familiar with civil and criminal trials;
- 3) understand the role and impact of the various branches of government (legislature, judiciary, and executive) on the U. S. legal system;
- 4) distinguish civil from criminal law; and
- 5) observe, understand and apply the increasing importance of the various forms of dispute resolution in the U.S. legal system.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The Women's College fully endorses the University of Denver's Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of data and research—is in violation of the code and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course.

As student members of a community committed to academic integrity and honesty, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the DU Honor Code and its procedures (**HYPERLINK** "<http://www.du.edu/honorcode>" www.du.edu/honorcode).

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

REQUIRED: James V. Cali and Susan Coleman, *American Law and Legal Systems*, 7th Edition (Longman 2012). ISBN-13: 978-0-205-02818-4.

Additional readings and resources will be available via our Blackboard course site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Requirements: A total of 100 points may be earned for your work in this class:

- **Participation in class dialogue (25 points):** Our exploration of the ways in which law interacts with society will be a community effort. You are expected to explore the assigned materials in depth outside of class, and come to class prepared to participate in class discussions about these materials. You are also expected to participate in assigned group activities.
- **Quizzes (10 points each, for a total of 30 points):** Sporadic quizzes will be administered throughout the course (some will be practice and some will be for a grade).
- **Mock Trial (20 points):** The class will be split into two groups to conduct two separate trials. One trial will be a civil trial and one a criminal. More details about this assignment will be forthcoming.
- **Final Take-Home Exam (25 points):** I will distribute a take-home final exam, which will consist of short essay questions. This exam will be —open book;|| you are encouraged to use your reading and class discussion notes, your response papers, and our text to respond to these questions. **Your completed exam will be due to me at debbieklein78@gmail.com by the end of the day (midnight) on Saturday October 4, 2014.**

Percentage	Grade
95-100	A

90-94	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0-59	F

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory in all class sessions. Active participation in class and online discussions is also required and will be a determiner in a student's final grade. An absence, for any reason, will result in forfeiting points for in-class student presentations. These may not be made up in another class session. If an emergency arises, it is the student's responsibility to contact her instructor.

A grade of incomplete will be granted only under special circumstances as determined by the instructor. HYPERLINK "<http://www.du.edu/registrar/records/incompletepolicy.html>" <http://www.du.edu/registrar/records/incompletepolicy.html>

TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM

In order to create and maintain an optimal learning environment in the classroom, students should use technology appropriately as directed by the instructor for the purposes of the course. Work done on laptops, cell phones, and other devices that is not relevant to the class can hinder the process of communication and shared discussion of ideas that require full engagement by all participants.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact the instructor to discuss their needs. Failure to notify the instructor immediately may hinder the college's ability to accommodate accordingly. Students with learning disabilities should also contact the University Disability Services Program at HYPERLINK "<http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/>" <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/> HYPERLINK "<http://www.du.edu/>

disability" . University Disability Services houses the Learning Effectiveness Program (LEP) and the Disability Services Program (DSP).

OBSERVATION OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students wishing to observe a religious holiday not celebrated on the academic calendar may do so provided advanced written notice is given the instructor during the first two weeks of the quarter. With advanced written notice, the absence will be considered an excused absence. For additional information, contact DU’s Center for Religious Services (HYPERLINK "http://www.du.edu/crs/" <http://www.du.edu/crs/>).

COURSE SCHEDULE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FIRST CLASS

Because we only meet four times, you must be ready to hit the ground running. You must be prepared to discuss Chapters 1-3 of *American Law and Legal Systems*.

Class Date & Topic	Readings to be Completed Before Class	Class Activities
September 13 The American Legal System	Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-80) <i>American Law and Legal Systems</i>	Brainstorm roles you have or may play in the legal system Go over a sample quiz
September 20 Alternative Dispute Resolution	Chapters 4-7 (pages 81-218) <i>American Law and Legal Systems</i>	Settlement Negotiations
September 27 Litigation	Chapters 8-13 (pages 219-357) <i>American Law and Legal Systems</i>	Mock Trials (criminal trial will be first)

October 11 International Law Tribal Law Non-Governmental Organizations	Chapter 14 and Legal Research (358-374)	Optional Presentations Active Roles in the Global Legal System Preparing for Law School Course Evaluations
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