



THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

COURSE NUMBER: LAS 2020

COURSE TITLE/SCHEDULE:

Dimensions of Justice

Quarter/Year: Spring 2015

Day/Time: Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Class Session Dates: March 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME/CONTACT INFORMATION:

Richard Levine

Voice Mail/Telephone: 720-414-5191

Email: Richard.Levine@du.edu

I will respond to email or voicemail messages within 48 hours. I'll set appointments to meet students before class, on request, from 12-1 p.m. after class.

PREREQUISITES:

Students are responsible for completing course prerequisites before registering for a class. Students should check with their scholastic advisor/Department chair to confirm eligibility.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The constant flow of opinions of the US Supreme Court demonstrate that even the most well-established, core principles expressed in the Constitution are subjects of uncertainty, debate, development, refinement and reconsideration. The object of this course is to provide a working overview of the US Constitutional system of government, with specific emphasis on concepts of "liberty" and "civil rights".

To succeed in this course students commit to attending all scheduled classes, complete all reading assignments, and to engage seriously in the assigned projects necessary to fulfill the writing requirements.

Our college now places an emphasis on inclusive learning. This course is an excellent lens to examine concepts of inclusivity, as the history of this country has been the expanding scope of rights and participation to new socioeconomic, ethnic and racial, gender and ideological associations. The classroom is the place where we can put into practice our vision of inclusion. Bring your backgrounds, experiences and unique wisdom. Challenge yourself and your classmates to apply these unique worldviews within the context of a constitutional system. Your inclusion will enrich our class, no matter what your background and association, if and only if you engage energetically with your informed and studied observations.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Become familiar with the basic concepts of a constitutional structure, including:

- Limited government;
- A federalist system;
- Balance of power between federal branches of government;
- Basic concept of civil rights and civil liberties;
- How the U.S. political and legal structures co-exist and influence one another.

Students will become more familiar with and adept at written expression in a format that carries discussion of legal topics discussed in legal terms (as compared, for example, to historical or sociological terms).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students must abide by the University of Denver's Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. 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 (www.du.edu/honorcode). 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.

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

Constitutional Law in Contemporary America: Civil Rights and Liberties (Volume Two), Schultz, Vile and Deardorff (Oxford University Press 2011) ISBN 978-0-19-539006-3

Primary Website Materials:

Exploring Constitutional Law (Prof. Linder):

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/home.html>

National Constitution Center (Prof. Monk):

http://ratify.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/index_no_flash.php

- <http://www.scotusblog.com/>

- US Supreme Court Media:

<http://www.oyez.org/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class participation: 20%. This course component will be gauged on the student's ability to participate meaningfully and regularly in classroom discussion. A student is expected to demonstrate the ability to integrate the textbook materials in a way that informs and promotes discussion and understanding. This is in contrast to simply having an opinion not tethered to the materials.

Reading assignments: 20%. Students are expected to complete all reading assignments. To assist in gauging this, each student will keep a notes journal, and highlight within the

textbook. The instructor will periodically review student notebooks, and will quiz students in both written and oral formats on the reading material to gauge preparedness and comprehension.

Written Essay 25% and Oral Presentation 10%: You will be given the opportunity to describe a fundamental constitutional question, and argue a point of view regarding same. Your paper will proceed according to a form of argument/presentation which will: (1) Describe the Question; (2) Provide socio-legal context; (3) Cite and describe primary legal sources bearing on the topic (the section of the US Constitution affecting the right and/or the power(s) and the manner in which court(s) have addressed the issue); (5) your conclusion as to whether you believe the current state of the law is principled, if so, or if not, why. The paper shall be 8 pages, Arial 12, 1.5 line space, 1" margins, fully justified.

Final Exam: 25%. There will be one "Final Exam". Expect there to be approximately 70 multiple choice questions, 3-5 short essay questions, and several short answer questions. The final exam will cover the material of the entire semester.

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. If an emergency arises, it is the student's responsibility to contact her instructor.

TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM:

You may use technology (computers/internet) freely in the classroom for all academic purposes. Please don't allow the technology to distract our conversation by using social media or personal business.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students who have needs under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the instructor to receive the important accommodations we can provide. Students with learning disabilities should also contact the University Disability Services Program at <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/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 (<http://www.du.edu/crs/>).

ASSIGNMENTS/ SCHEDULE: (This Section is updated throughout the semester. The first two weeks are covered presently in detail. Future weeks will be updated as the course progresses.)

March 28, 2015: Textbook, ch. 1, pgs. 3-18; 20-25; 50-54; 70-74.

Web based material: Introduction to Constitutional Law (Douglas Linder):
<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/conlawintro.htm>

Lecture Topics:

The concept and early practice of democracy in America

Worldview Concepts: Liberty and Equality

Government: Limited Powers

Federalism

Civil Rights

Functional Components of Judiciary

A post-Civil War Constitution (14th Amendment application of Civil Rights to State governments)

April 4, 2015: Equal Protection. Chapter VII (omit 549-558; 580-582; 611-620; 629-635; 643-654; 668-677).

Lecture topics: Timeline: Equal Protection of the Laws

Cases and History on: Race; Gender; Affirmative Action; Other Classifications (Immigration, Mentally and Physically Disabled Persons, Poverty/Right to an Equal Education)

April 11, 2015: Speech
This week (4/11 class) cover the following:
<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/epscrutiny.htm> (include in your reading the hyperlinked cases)
<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/firstaminto.htm>
<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/clear&pdanger.htm> (include in your reading the hyperlinked cases)
Be prepared to debate the cases and issues in the third web assignment above (clear and present danger).

April 18, 2015: Religion
Textbook Reading: PP. 75-82; 86-96; 117-125; 127-129; 137-150

April 25, 2015: Obsenity, Press, Association
Reading Ch. IV: 246-254, 257-258, 261-265, 274-284, 294-298, 304-309, 321-323, 327-329, 332-336, 348-354

May 2, 2015: Rights of the Accused

May 9, 2015: Voting; Privacy and Reproductive Rights

May 16, 2015: Student Reports Due
Oral Presentations

May 23, 2015: Oral Presentations (Con't)
Final Exam Review

May 30, 2015: Final Exam