S220 23833 - Law and Public Affairs  
TuTh 4:00-5:15pm  
PV 273  
Professor Andrea Need  
Offices: SPEA 220 (M-Th); Lewis Bldg, 116 S. Indiana, Rm 217 (F)

Introduction and course goals:  
This course is designed to introduce you to:  
• what we mean by “law”;  
• who creates laws and how;  
• the many different forms that law may take; and  
• the nature of legal reasoning.

We will review our form of government to help understand our legal system, some of the reasons why cases are decided the way they are, and why our court-decided law changes over time. We will discuss how laws are drafted and how they are interpreted (through rules of statutory construction). Our focus will be on US Supreme Court cases in areas of high importance or interest in our society, such as marriage, school prayer, and health care (equal protection, first amendment, and the commerce clause, respectively), to demonstrate the Court’s role in determining, influencing, or reflecting US public policy.

Throughout the class we will go through “hypotheticals” to apply the law we have covered. Quizzes and assignments will assess your understanding of basic concepts. There is no final exam, however there is a final paper and presentation.

I will post power points on Oncourse. I will post readings in advance of their dates, but not all will be posted at the start of the course.

My objectives for the course are:

• to have students become familiar with major legal doctrines and Supreme Court cases relevant to the subject matter addressed in the course; and  
• to have students gain experience in research, presentation, and writing clear, concise and persuasive documents.

Grading:  
• 3 quizzes: 90 points (30 each)  
  Quiz 1-What is law, court systems, statutory interpretation, general US constitution  
  Quiz 2-1st Amendment, 2nd Amendment, equal protection, due process  
  Quiz 3-Takings, commerce clause, 4th Amendment, agencies and administrative law  
• 4 assignments: 80 points (20 each)  
  In Class Drafting  
  In Class Statutory Construction  
  Comparing Constitutions  
  Second Amendment
- 1 group paper and presentation: 90 points
- Class participation and attendance: 40 points

A 94-100  B 84-86  C 74-76  D 65-66
A- 90-93  B- 80-83  C- 70-73
B+ 87-89  C+ 77-79  D+ 67-69

Grading criteria: analysis of legal issues; following directions; clear and accurate writing; spelling and grammar; preparation for and attendance of class.

Attendance:

I expect you to attend class. I will call roll or have an attendance sheet at the front of the room at the start of class each day for you to sign. I will collect these at the end of each class and maintain attendance records. Please be advised that I consider it academic misconduct for a student to sign in for another student. Each day you miss will reduce your total 40 points by 10 points.

Contact me in advance for excused absences based on health, an interview, or similar situation. Contact me about emergencies as soon as you are able.

Participation:

I expect you to participate. This class will have a combination of voluntary participation and cold-calling. If you are not in class and I call on you, you will lose 20 of the participation points (rather than just 10 for failing to show up).

Your total 40 points will be reduced by 20 if it is apparent to me that you have not read the cases or materials. You WILL NOT be penalized for giving the wrong answer when I call on you—unless it is apparent to me that you have not read the cases or materials.