S220 23903 – Honors, Law and Public Affairs
TuTh 4:00-5:15pm
PV 270
Professor Andrea Need

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