SPEA-S 220 23527 Honors, Law and Public Affairs
Lisa Amsler
TuTh 4:00-4:15 p.m.
PV 270

In this course, we will explore how public policy is reflected in law, and how the forms and institutions for making and enforcing law shape public policy. We will review

- The U.S. Constitution
- Forms and sources of law including statutes, regulations, and court cases
- The structure and function of state and federal courts
- The legislative and administrative process
- How to read and interpret statutes and regulations
- Important recent cases and current legal issues such as regulation of guns, gay marriage, data privacy, open government, and voting rights, among others.

You will achieve a better understanding of how lawyers analyze cases, how they build arguments, and how courts review government action. We will focus particular attention on how all these elements are manifest in U.S. Supreme Court decisions and their political context over history. My goals for you are to achieve a realistic understanding of 1) how our legal system works, 2) how to find, read and understand cases, statutes, and regulations, and 3) how public policy is created, implemented, and enforced through law. To build these skills, we will use writing assignments including case briefs, essays or minute papers applying cases to a hypothetical fact pattern, quizzes, and a final research paper and presentation. In addition to required books, readings and powerpoints will be posted in Oncourse. There are no prerequisites for this course.