

# **Brookdale Community College**

Spring, 2016

LAW AND SOCIETY

SOCIOLOGY 01 920 349

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The course will explore the social forces that affect law and conversely how laws affect society. The course will cover the ongoing global changes in legal systems with a concentration on the American legal system. The internet and other technological advances have created great changes in our society. The American legal system is also undergoing a revolutionary transition from a strict adversarial mode to alternative forms of dispute resolution. How have social forces expedited this transition? The course will also examine theories and current research as to the law and social control; the law and social change; and the relationship among the participants in the legal system. In addition, the course will explore the dynamics, functions and dysfunctions of the law and how various social groups are affected by these dynamics and its effect upon our society.

## **REQUIRED TEXT:**

Law and Society (10<sup>th</sup> Edition) by Steven Vago; Pearson/Prentice Hall Publishers.

## **Exams and Grading Scale**

1. Mid-term exam (March 22)  
40 Points
2. Class Attendance  
10 points
3. Final Take Home Exam (Details TBA)  
50 Points

## **Grading Scale**

A = 90 – 100 Points  
B+ = 88-89  
B = 80 – 87  
C+ = 78-79  
C = 60 – 77  
D = 50 – 59  
F = < 50 Points

**SAKAI:** Syllabus will be posted on SAKAI as well as material and topics for discussion for each individual class. Students should check SAKAI for the material and current topic and be prepared to discuss the topic in class.

## **Course Calendar**

The dates indicated are tentative and may change based upon how this class proceeds. In other words, some topics may take a bit more time than noted below and some may take less time than indicated. Any changes in dates, including assignment due dates, will be announced in class. You are responsible for finding out about any announcements made in class.

January 26

Introduction to syllabus

Chapter 1: Introduction to Law and Society

February 2

Chapter 2 Part 1: Theoretical Perspectives

Evolution of Legal System

Theories of Law and Society

February 9

Chapter 2 Part 2: Theoretical Perspectives contd

Current Intellectual Movements in Law

February 16

Chapter 3 Part 1: The Organization of Law

Courts

The Flow of Litigations

Legislatures

February 23

Chapter 3 Part 2: The Organization of Law contd

Administrative agencies

Law enforcement agencies

March 1

Chapter 4 Part 1: Lawmaking

Perspectives on Lawmaking

Legislation

Administrative Lawmaking

March 8

Chapter 4 Part 2: Lawmaking contd

Judicial Lawmaking

Influences on the Lawmaking Processes

Sources of Impetus for Law

Mid-Term Exam Review

March 15

Spring Break

March 22  
Mid-term exam

March 29  
Chapter 5 Part 1: Law and Social Control  
Informal Social Controls  
Formal Social Controls  
Crimes without Victims

April 5  
Chapter 5 Part 2: Law and Social Control contd  
White-Collar Crime  
Social Control of Dissent  
Administrative Law and Social Control

April 12  
Chapter 6 Part 1: Law and Dispute Resolution  
A Note on Terminology  
Methods of Dispute Resolution  
Demands for Court Services in Dispute Resolution

April 19  
Chapter 6 Part 2: Law and Dispute Resolution contd  
Prerequisites for the Use of Courts in Dispute Resolution  
A Typology of Litigants  
Disputes Between Individuals  
Disputes Between Individuals and Organizations  
Disputes Between Organizations

April 26  
Chapter 7 Part 1: Law and Social Change  
Reciprocity Between Law and Social Change  
Social Changes as Causes of Legal Changes  
Law as an Instrument of Social Change

May 3  
Chapter 7 Part 2: Law and Social Change contd  
Advantages of Law in Creating Social Change  
Limitations of Law in Creating Social Change  
Resistance to Change  
Final Take Home Exam announced

May 10  
Review  
Last Class