

POLITICAL ISSUES: LAW IN AMERICA  
790:102:01

PROFESSOR TARR  
FALL 2007

OFFICE HOURS: T, Th 12:30-1:30, 3:00-4:00 and by appointment at 401  
Cooper St.

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READINGS: Students are assigned three books in the course, which are available at the campus bookstore or from most bookstore chains (e.g., Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com), include:

Harr, A CIVIL ACTION  
Bogira, COURTROOM 302  
Baum, THE SUPREME COURT (9<sup>th</sup> ed.)

FOCUS OF THE COURSE: This course examines how courts operate in the United States and their impact on American society. One segment of the course will look at trial courts dealing with civil cases, a second segment will explore the work of trial courts dealing with criminal cases, and a third will analyze the work of appellate courts, particularly the United States Supreme Court, in considering constitutional law cases.

OPERATION OF THE COURSE: The enrollment in this course is purposely kept low, so that it can operate as a seminar. The emphasis will be on active learning, not just lecturing. Students are expected to read assignments prior to class, and to be prepared to participate in class discussions. The instructor will regularly give individual students questions that they should focus on in the readings and be prepared to discuss during the next class period. Students should always bring the assigned reading material to class, as reference may be made to it during class discussions.

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend ALL classes. Excessive absences from class will result in a lowering of a student's final grade.

EVALUATION: There will be three tests in the course (including the final), each of which will count for 20% of a student's grade. These tests will include both objective and essay sections. The exams will not be cumulative but will rather focus on the material from a particular segment of the course. There will be short writing assignments, which in total will count for 20% of a student's grade. (The details on these assignments will be distributed shortly.) Finally, class participation--the quality of one's contributions to class discussions and

presentations on one's assigned questions--will count for 20% of a student's grade. There is no extra credit work.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Students are expected to observe the University's rules regarding cheating and academic integrity. If you have any questions, please consult the instructor.

**SCHEDULE:** This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change.

9/4	Course introduction
9/6	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 1-50
9/11	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 51-120
9/13	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 121-194
9/18	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 195-264
9/20	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 265-290
9/25	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 291-376
9/27	A CIVIL ACTION Read: pp. 377-448
10/2	A CIVIL ACTION; review Read: pp. 449-494
10/4	TEST
10/9	COURTROOM Read: pp. 3-57
10/11	COURTROOM Read: pp. 58-106
10/16	COURTROOM Read: pp. 107-170

10/18	Film on Supreme Court
10/23	COURTROOM Read: pp. 171-230
10/25	COURTROOM Read: pp. 231-284
10/30	COURTROOM Read: pp. 285-347
11/1	Sentencing
11/6	TEST
11/8	Film on Supreme Court
11/13	SUPREME COURT Read: Ch. 1
11/15	SUPREME COURT Read: Ch. 2
11/20	SUPREME COURT Read: Ch. 3
11/27	SUPREME COURT Read: Chs. 3 & 4
11/29	SUPREME COURT READ: Ch. 4
12/4	SUPREME COURT Read: Ch. 5
12/6	SUPREME COURT Read: Ch. 6
12/11	Conclusion; review
12/17	FINAL EXAM (2:00 - 5:00 PM)

