

PS 210 – “The Law & Social Justice”

Seventh Block, Palmer 13
March 21-April 13, 2016

Professor Fred Galves
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is structured around historically significant US Supreme Court constitutional law cases. Basic constitutional law is considered with special attention given to the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments, and the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the 5th and 14th Amendments. Legal policy topics include Constitutional Legal Reasoning and Interpretation; Racism: Slavery, Segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, Affirmative Action, Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment; Privacy Rights and Abortion, GBTL Discrimination,; Criminal Law, Death Penalty, Gun Control, Criminal Procedure, and the Rights of the Accused; Free Speech and Free Press; and finally, “Judicial Activism”—whether subjective political ideology is more powerful and prevalent than objective neutrality in judicial decision-making.

In addition to: (1) discussing and debating these policy issues; (2) understanding the logic and rationale of the Supreme Court; and (3) recognizing the ambiguous yet inextricable relationship between law and political ideology; we shall examine throughout the course the form, rhetoric and historical context of legal argumentation. This close examination of legal argumentation will, in turn, force you to confront your own moral values, political theories, and underlying structure of assumptions which constitute your social vision, legal ideals, and personal conception about political life in America.

II. COURSE METHODOLOGY.

This course will be primarily a lecture and class discussion course. Class participation by students is extremely important. Students will be expected to be prepared for class each day. Class will begin at 9:00 am each day and continue through 12 noon. We will usually take a 15 minute break at 10:30 am.

III. COURSE GRADING.

There are four (4) areas from which I shall determine your final grade:

- (1) **Quiz:** On Friday, April 1st, there will be a short, 60-minute, Mid-Term Exam/Multiple Choice Quiz at the end of class covering the material presented during the first two weeks of the course. The quiz will constitute **20%** of the final grade.
- (2) **Paper:** There will be a 10-15 page paper for you to write and present during the last week of the course (on either Monday or Wednesday, April 11th and 13th) on any legal, political, social, or economic topic you choose (although you will need to discuss and clear your topic with me). The paper (and your presentation of it to the class) will constitute **30%** of the final grade.
- (3) **Final Exam:** On Friday, April 8th there will be a final comprehensive examination (with a little more emphasis on the last week of the course than the first two weeks of the course covered by the Quiz). The Final Exam will constitute **40%** of the final grade.
- (4) **Class Participation:** Throughout the course I shall call randomly on students as well as request volunteers. Students will be expected to be prepared for class, and provide good and consistent class participation. Class participation will constitute **10%** of the final grade.

For both the quiz and the final exam, they will be closed book and closed note so you will not be able to consult your class books, notes, or other materials during the exams.

IV. COURSE MATERIALS.

There are only two books for the course (and I will also have a few short handouts for the students here and there). As far as official books for the course they are:

- (1) Louis Fisher & Katy J. Harriger, **American Constitutional Law**, Vol. 2, Constitutional Rights: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (Carolina Academic Press, 2016) – ISBN: 978-1-61163-811-0 [paperback edition] -- \$72.00.
- (2) Fred Galves, **Genesis Reloaded** (Dog Ear Publishing, 2012) – ISBN: 978-145751-364-0 [paperback] -- \$19.99.

V. COURSE FIELD TRIP.

On the second to the last day of class, Tuesday, April 12th, we will have a field trip visit up to the US Federal District Courthouse in Denver, to (1) hear a presentation from court personnel; (2) see part of an employment discrimination trial; and then (3) hear from a federal judge—Judge Christine Arguello.

VI. PROFESSOR BACKGROUND.

Here are some links to my website/background→

Web site: <http://professorfredgalves.com/>

Bio: <http://professorfredgalves.com/about/>

Resume: <http://professorfredgalves.com/about/resume/>

Teaching Philosophy: <http://professorfredgalves.com/professor-of-law/>

VII. HONOR CODE.

Students will be responsible to uphold the CC Honor Code. Please remember to sign the Honor Code on your exams and papers.

Please see the Revised Course Syllabus/Assignments.