INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN LAW
LAW 498
Fall 2015
Tuesday 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Classroom 103 in Lesar Law Building

SYLLABUS

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Course Description and Goals: This course will provide an overview of the basic principles and theories of American Law.

Attendance & Grading: Attendance is required per University and Law School Requirements. Students may miss no more than two scheduled classes, and attendance will be taken at each class. While school policy allows two absences and I am not reducing that, I do encourage students to attend every class. Please review Rules Relating to Attendance, Article III-Academic Regulations, 5. Course and Degree Requirements, regarding the results of violation of the school’s mandatory attendance policy for Required Courses.

This class will be graded and is not offered on a S/U basis. This course will have a final exam which will constitute 75% of the final grade. There will be a written paper which will constitute 20% of the final course grade. The remaining 5% of the final grade will be based on class attendance and participation, and the presentation of a case brief to the class.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:
Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.
Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. **It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency.** The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Disability Policy:** Disability Support Services provides the required academic and programmatic support services to students with permanent and temporary disabilities. DSS provides centralized coordination and referral services. To utilize DSS services, students must come to the DSS to open cases. The process involves interviews, reviews of student-supplied documentation, and completion of Disability Accommodation Agreements. [http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/](http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/). Upon completion of a Disability Accommodation Agreement with DSS, students should bring the agreement to the School of Law Registrar’s Office to ensure the School of Law provides the proper classroom and examination accommodations.

**Saluki Cares:** The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students and their families, SIU will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For Information on Saluki Cares: 618-453-5714, or siucares@siu.edu, [http://salukicares.siu.edu/index.html](http://salukicares.siu.edu/index.html). At the School of Law, Assistant Dean Judi Ray is also available to help students access university resources. Her email is judiray@siu.edu, and her phone number is 618-453-3135.

**Notice of Recording Policy:** These class sessions will not be recorded by SIU, myself, or any student. If a student wishes to have classes recorded, they can bring that to my attention and if the rest of the class agrees, I will reconsider the issue of recording classes. Otherwise, any recording of any class is strictly prohibited.

Further, it is a violation of the Honor Code for any student to create and/or distribute such class recordings when the instructor has prohibited class recording. (See the Honor Code I.E.1.g).

**CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

**August 24**  Read Chapter 1, Basic Principles of American Law. Also Read Appendix A, the Declaration of Independence, and Appendix B, the
Constitution and Bill of Rights.

**September 1** Read Chapter 2, The Jury System.

**September 8** Read Chapter 3, The Legal Profession.

**September 15** Read Chapter 4, Constitutional Law: Individual Rights.

**September 22** Read Chapter 5, Civil Procedure and the Federal Courts.

**September 29** Read Chapter 7, Tort and Product Liability.

**October 6** No formal class session. Read and brief *Miranda v. Arizona*, 384 U.S. 436, 86 S. Ct. 1602, 16 L. Ed. 2d 694 (1966). Your brief will be turned in at the next class session and will be reviewed and returned to you. It will not be graded, but comments or corrections may be made. Pay particular attention to the drafting of the issue statement(s).

**October 13** Read Chapter 8, Property, and Chapter 9, Intellectual Property. Turn in case brief of *Miranda v. Arizona*.

**October 20** Read Chapter 10, Criminal Law and Procedure. Written movie paper assignment is due.

**October 27** Read Chapter 6, Contracts, and Chapter 11, Business Law.

**November 3** Read Chapter 12, Marriage and the Family.

**November 10** Read Chapter 13, Administrative Law, and read and brief a case that you select which is legally significant in an area of law which interests you. You will present this brief in a presentation to the class next week.

**November 17** No Class. Student presentations of case briefs.

**November 18** Final Class. Review for final exam. **Snacks will be provided.**

**FINAL EXAM:** *Wednesday, Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at 8:15 a.m.*

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT:** Each student will select a different movie from a list of legal movies that I will provide to you. The student will watch the movie and draft a three to five page paper describing the legal issues raised in the movie and whether they were portrayed in a realistic way. The paper will be graded and returned during the semester, and the paper is 20% of the student’s final course grade.
**Final Exam:** The final exam shall consist of three sections. The first will be a section match the term to its definition. The second section will be short answer questions. The third section will be a bonus point section where you can earn up to five additional points toward your total points on the exam. The final exam is 75% of the final course grade.

**NOTICE:** I reserve the right to add specific case law readings to each assignment, and those will be included in the class discussions with the textbook material. Students will be notified in advance of any additions or changes to this syllabus.