Florida State University  
SYP 3540-001 Sociology of Law  
M W 9:30-10:45 PM  
023 Bellamy  
Spring 2018

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor: Gloria Lessan, Ph. D.</th>
<th>E-mail: <a href="mailto:glessan@fsu.edu">glessan@fsu.edu</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office: 513 Bellamy Building</td>
<td>Phone: (850) 644-1839 (office) or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours: W 11-noon or by appt.</td>
<td>(850) 644-6416 (Sociology Dept.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a sociological analysis of the legal order. It is a three credit hours course, meaning that for every hour of “instruction” there are three extra hours of study per week. The basic premise is that law is both, the product of social interaction and the impetus for social change. It emphasizes main sociological theories and research techniques to study the origins, processes, functions, and actors of the social reality known as Law. Additionally, the course considers the role of law in reinforcing and changing class, gender, and race inequalities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify, define and illustrate basic concepts, theories, and research techniques used in Sociology of Law
2. Apply these sociological concepts and theoretical frameworks to personal experiences, popular media, and current events in order to recognize the difference between sociological reasoning and personal opinion about law.
3. Articulate the strengths and limitations of competing sociological theories and research methodologies used to explain the nature, causes, and consequences of law as a social phenomenon.
4. Critically examine, interpret, and explain how structures of legal inequality shape the past and present lives of gender, racial/ethnic, and class groups.
5. Critically examine, interpret, and explain how large-scale social institutions such as the family, economy, education, work, politics, and religion shape the legal world we live in.
6. Critically examine, interpret, and explain how our lives and the decisions individuals and groups make change the structures and culture of law.
7. Gather and analyze data from appropriate online databases for the social sciences to critically evaluate assertions on key sociological issues.
COURSE MATERIALS
Required texts:

The text is in electronic format. The access card to purchase the e-textbook are available at FSU Bookstore and Bill’s Bookstore. You can also get it directly from the publisher Great River Technologies http://www.grtep.com
NOTE: All book’s royalties are donated to educational organizations

Supplemental readings are organized by the Module#/Topic under discussion in the Course Schedule below and are posted on the course Canvas Modules Readings sites containing information on respective weeks and due dates in which they are to be completed.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Attendance
Lectures are organized and presented around the required readings for a specific topic. You are responsible for completing the scheduled readings prior to coming to class. Attendance will be recorded for every meeting. It is imperative that you keep updated with the class readings, attend every class in order to keep up with what is being discussed in class, and to ask questions about any aspects of the material you would like to clarify or discuss further. It is during these class discussions that you will practice and hone your sociological imagination.

All absences require proper documentation to be deemed legitimately excused and recorded as attendance. Perfect attendance will earn you 10% of the grade. One unexcused absence will earn you 7.5%; two and three unexcused absences are worth 5 and 2.5%, respectively; and, FOUR unexcused absences entails Zero points for attendance!

Study-Guide Questions
All assigned readings and lectures are potential exam materials. To facilitate the learning process you will be given a set of study-guide questions to work on before each test. There are four-study guide questions (one for each exam). Answer these questions in your own words, cover all parts of each question, and submit the answers on Canvas Assignments on the dates indicated in the Course Schedule below. Doing so will help you understand the material and thus, meet the course objectives.
The questions are in essay format, cover the materials from different angles, relate issues in a way that complement the text, and hopefully, enable you to develop a sociological imagination. Use the class time and office hours to talk to me and the TA about your progress in answering the questions and preparing for the upcoming test. The study guide is NOT a contract that defines the exam!

As stated above, the answers to each study-guide will be submitted on Canvas Assignments for the corresponding Modules and due dates/times indicated in the Course Schedule below. Do not wait until the eve of the due date to answer the study-guide questions in order to avoid stress and unproductive learning.
Each study guide is worth four percent or a total of 16% contribution to the final grade. The grade (on a scale of 0-100 points) for the study guide will be based on:

1. Timely submittal, and complete, and correct* answers stated in your own words for each and all questions (4 points or 100%);
2. Correct, complete, and original (in your own words) answer of each and all questions BUT one-day delay (3.6 points or 90%);
3. Timely upload, correct original answers BUT more than 10% incomplete (3.2 points or 80%).
4. Meets timely submittal BUT work has 1-3 incorrect answers, minor spelling/grammar problems, and/or misses fewer than 10% of answers (2.8 points or 70%)
5. Meets criterion 1 BUT two-to-three-day delay (2.4 points or 60%)
6. Meets criterion 1 BUT 4-5 days late (2 point or 50%)
7. Failure to submit (0%)

*I will randomly choose questions or students to grade for correct answers at each time a study guide is submitted. By the end of the semester, all students will have at least one study-guide checked for correctness. See policy on late work below. *

**Discussion Boards**

There are three discussion boards in the semester; one each month approximately. The forum for each discussion board is an application of sociology-of-law arguments under discussion at the time of a current event. You are to post an original essay on the issue and a substantive and informed reply to the posting of one of your classmates rather than a mere “interesting approach” or “I agree with your views” and end the comment with a circular reasoning. Each complete discussion board contributes with 8% to the final grade or a total of 24 points for all three discussion board postings.

The format and content requirements are posted on Canvas Discussion Board as well as below:

**Format**

Minimal parameters for presentation

1. Avoid personal opinions. Write your arguments using your own words; use quotes sparsely and reference them appropriately. Inform and reference your arguments with course AND one other source besides textbook and course readings (use JSTOR for pertinent sociology of law sources). Newspaper and magazine articles are accepted as long as these are recognized as legitimate, e.g. *The New York Times*. No blogs and social media based on personal opinion
2. The length of your original entry is to be at least, three paragraphs of single-spaced 7-8 sentences each i.e. about ¾ of a screen. Mentors will not read entries longer than one page.
3. Use formal academic language; avoid colloquialisms such as contractions.
4. Check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors before submitting
5. Proof read your statements to ensure that your arguments do not incur into contradictions left unexplained.
Failure to meet the above criteria will negatively affect your grade to up to 10 points off of the grade of the discussion board. Posting after the due date is accepted IF AND ONLY IF there is documentation legitimating the delay. See FSU policy on this regard below. Otherwise, late submissions to the Discussion Board forum carry a penalty off 10 points off per week of delay from the due date.

**Content**

The quality of the contribution is to show the following college standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-63</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, failure to post a substantive reply to one of your classmates incurs in 10 points off for content.

In a nutshell, participate with questions, answers, opinions, and comments to enrich the forum. Be attentive to what others say, and interact with your e-classmates. *Do all these in a courteous, respectful and scholarly manner. Above all, avoid using the discussion board as a forum for your own agenda. Deliver your opinions in normal, non-aggressive manner, and always participate in ways that advance the discussion of the issues. Each and every one of you must cooperate in building a supportive learning environment that benefits us all. My role is to generate and steer the discussion of the materials always within a civil and respectful atmosphere.*

**Term Paper**

There is ONE term paper in the semester. The paper involves an analysis of a film with a related-law topic. The objective is to identify and analyze five concepts in sociology of law on the specific topic of the movie plot in order to compare and contrast those dimensions between research findings and their portrayal in the fiction piece.
The instructions, content, due date, and grading rubric for the term paper will be posted on Canvas Assignments. The term paper is worth 20% of the final grade.

**Exams**
The course has four exams; three during the semester and a final test given during the FSU final examination week. The dates for each exam are listed in the class schedule below. The formats of the questions are multiple-choice, true-false, and vocabulary-matching.

About one week preceding the test date and up to one hour before the test time/date, there will be an opportunity to review the material via an **open-book bogus test** posted on the course Canvas. The bogus test enables you to perform a self-evaluation and assess your readiness for the test. Your answers to the bogus test have a limited time for completion (75 minutes), earn you 0-5 points proportional to the number of correct answers that will be added to your upcoming exam. The bogus test cannot be made up unless you are representing FSU on an off-campus event (proper documentation is required to certify missing the bogus test during the week of its availability). Thus, it is to your advantage to attend every class, be up to date with the reading materials, and keep track of relevant dates (exams and bogus tests). Otherwise, you will miss the opportunity to earn extra credit or lose time trying to find the answer to a question as you spend time flipping pages from one reading to another.

The first **three exams** cover material discussed in the immediately preceding units. The **final or fourth exam** includes material that is not already evaluated plus the basic tenets and proponents of dominant sociological theories, comparison among theories, and strengths and weaknesses of each to explain society.

The four exams constitute 30% of the final grade; each is worth 7.5%. As stated above, all work is graded on a scale of 0-100.

To recap the factors for calculating the final grade:

- **Perfect Attendance** 10%
- **4 Study Guides** 16%
- **3 Discussion Boards** 24%
- **Term Paper** 20%
- **4 Exams** 30%
- **Total** 100%

Below is the equivalence between numeric and letter grades that will be used to record your grade in the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>(A)</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>(A-)</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(D-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>(F)</td>
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When scores include decimals, the rule is to round up from .45 and above; and to round down from .44 and below.
Grades throughout the semester will be posted in the SYP3540-001 Canvas Grades. Check this site on a regular basis and notify me of any problems regarding your grades as soon as these are posted.

As a general rule talk to me when you need help. Do so immediately; to do so at the end of the semester it is TOO LATE!

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module/Week/Dates</th>
<th>Topics (with assigned readings)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foundations of Sociology of Law: Selected Roots and Basic Concepts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wks. 1-2</td>
<td>First Day Attendance Policy, Introduction to Sociology of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 8-17</td>
<td>Lessan, Unit 1, Law: The Elusive Concept; On Canvas/First Exam Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Black, 1983 * <strong>Law Dictionary</strong> (definition of law and related terms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wks. 2-3</td>
<td>Post original contribution to the Forum of Discussion Board #1 on Canvas Discussions before or by 1/19/18, 11:59 PM and a reply by 1/21/18, by 11:59 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theories on the Society-Law Relationship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wks. 3-4</td>
<td>Lessan Unit 2, Theories on the Social Causes and Consequences of Law On Canvas/Lecture Notes/First Exam Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 22-29</td>
<td><em>Grattett, et.al The Homogenization and Differentiation of Hate Crime Law in the United States, 1978 to 1995: Innovation and Diffusion in the Criminalization of Bigotry”</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wks. 3-4</td>
<td>Submit Answers to Study-Guide Questions #1 on Canvas Assignments/Modules 1 and 2 Study Guide#1 by 11:59PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 29</td>
<td>Bogus Test #1 on Canvas Quizzes/Bogus Test #1. Site closes at 12AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lawmaking Types and Government Branches</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wks. 5-6</td>
<td>Legislation, Judicial Decisions, and Regulations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feb 5-14  Lessan, Unit 3: Lawmaking Processes  
On Canvas/Lecture Notes/Second Exam Materials  

Wks. 6-7  Post original contribution to the Forum of Discussion Board #2 n Canvas/Discussions before or by 2/16/18, 11:59 PM and a reply by 2/18/18, by 11:59 PM

Module 4  Law as an Independent Variable of Social Conditions  
Wks. 7-8  Law as a Means for Social Order  
Feb 19-28  Lessan, Unit 4, Law as Social Control;  
On Canvas/Lecture Notes/Second Exam Materials  
*Mosoff, “Motherhood, Madness, and Law”


Wk. 9  Mar 5  Submit Answers to Study-Guide Questions #2 on Canvas Assignments/Modules 3 and 4 Study Guide#2 by 11:59 PM

Wks. 8-9  Mar 3-6  Bogus Test #2 on Canvas Quizzes/Bogus Test #2. Site closes at 12AM

Wk. 9  Mar 7  Exam #2 in classroom

9  Mar 9  Submit Draft for Term Paper on Canvas Assignment/Term Paper Draft, by 6 PM

Wk. 10  Spring Break!

Module 5  Second Consequence of Law  
Wks. 11-12  Law as a Means for Conflict Resolution  
Mar 19-26  Lessan, Unit 5, Law as a Means for Conflict Resolution
On Bb/CL/Lecture Notes/Third Exam Materials

*Steffensmeier & Hebert, Women and Men Policymakers: Does the Judge’s Gender Affect the Sentencing of Criminal Defendants?

*In His Own Words: Governor’s Ryan Decision to Set a Moratorium on Capital Punishment

Module 6 Third Consequence of Law
12-14 Law as a Means for Social Change
Mar 28-Apr 9 Lessan, Unit 6, Law as a Means for Social Change
On Canvas/Third Exam Material


13-14 Post original contribution to the Forum of Discussion Board #3ON Canvas Discussions before or by 4/6/18, 11:59 and a reply by 4/8/18, 11:59 PM

Wk. 14 Apr 9 Submit Answers of Study-Guide Question #3 on Canvas Assignments/Modules 5 and 6 Study Guide#3 by 11:59 PM

Wk. 14 Bogus Test #3 on Canvas Quizzes/Bogus Test#3. Site closes at 12AM

Apr 7-10

Apr 11 Exam #3 in classroom

Module 7 The Training and Practice of Lawyers
15-16 Apr 16-25 Lessan, Unit 7, The Legal Profession
On Bb/CL/Fourth Exam Materials
*Erlanger, et al “Law Student Idealism and Job Choice: Some New Data on an Old Question”
*Hagan, “The Gender Stratification of Income Inequality among Lawyers”


15 11:59 PM
Submit Answers of Study Guide #4 on Canvas Assignments/Module 4, by

Wks. 15-16  Bogus Test #4 on Canvas Quizzes/Bogus Test#4 site. Site closes at 12AM

15-16  Meetings with instructor to review final draft of written portfolio
April 27  Submit Term Paper on Canvas Turnitin by 11:59 PM
Turn in a hard copy of your paper during regular hours to my office or mailbox (in 526 Bellamy) no later than April 27, 4PM

17  May 4  Exam #4 in the classroom
Friday, 7:30- 9:30 AM

UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE POLICY
Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY
The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy.)

ADA STATEMENT
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the: Student Disability Resource Center 874 Traditions Way 108 Student Services Building
FREE TUTORING from FSU

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services’ comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options at http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES*

Missed assignments will be accepted IF and ONLY IF there is a legitimate reason (appropriate documentation is required as indicated below) for missing to turn in the assignment on the due date. It is your responsibility to turn in the assessment on the date you resume class attendance along with the proper documentation; failure to turn in appropriate documentation incurs in non-acceptance of your assignment.

Midterm makeup exams will be given IF and ONLY IF there is a legitimate reason (appropriate documentation is required) for missing the test. It is your responsibility to notify me and the TA why you are not taking the test. Do so prior to, on, or immediately after the exam date.

In order to justify the absence from a test, students need to show documentation of its reason. This may include an obituary, court order, doctor-signed prescription/bill, or a document from an agency signed by a legitimate authority that fully describes the emergency causing the student’s missing the test. Turn in this documentation to the TA before taking the makeup exam. Contact the TA to learn about the date, time, and location of the makeup exam. The makeup exam may have a different format from the original i.e., essay questions.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

Incomplete (“I”) grades will not be assigned, except in the case of exceptional unforeseen circumstances that occur within the last three weeks of the semester and your work has otherwise been satisfactory (C average).

Student Conduct: My many years of college experience, both as student and instructor, have shown me that for the most part students are bright, good-natured and amiable toward others. In general you are expected to comply with the FSU Code of Conduct at all time while participating in FSU-related activities. Your behavior during class should be courteous, respectful and professional. In a nutshell, anyone who ignores my authority to protect the integrity of the
classroom will be asked to cease his/her disruptive behavior, may be asked to leave the classroom, and/or drop the course.

**Failure to abide by these principles can result in academic penalties ranging from a lowered grade, to dismissal, to failing the course.**

[http://e-soc.net/](http://e-soc.net/)

All electronic devices not needed for the class are to be turned off BEFORE entering the classroom.

**SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY:**

It is the policy of the University that its employees and students neither commit nor condone sexual harassment in any form.  [http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/university_notices.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/university_notices.htm)

**Exams:** There are four exams; each covers the assigned material listed in the Course Outline below. All exams are a combination of multiple-choice and true-false questions. The last exam has the same format but covers some specific issues of earlier themes plus the last topics not yet evaluated.