

The University of Findlay: College of Liberal Arts

SYLLABUS

*The Mission of the University is to equip our students
for meaningful lives and productive careers.*

“The rule of law is a nobler ideal than the rule of legal texts.”
-- Ronald Dworkin

Philosophy 380.01: “Philosophy of Law: Jurisprudence”

- ◆ 3 Semester Hours
- ◆ T TH 9:30 - 10:45
- ◆ Prerequisites: “C” or better in ENGL 106 or 107 and reading competency

Instructor: Dr. Rich Smith
Office – WTS 222 Office Phone: 434-4592 (or campus ext 4592)
Home Phone: 422-0635 (Please do not call after 9:00 pm!)
E-mail: rsmith2@findlay.edu
Office Hours: T TH 8:45-9:30; 12:15-2:00
(Mon, Wed, Fri, and other times by appointment)

Course Description:

- ◆ Critical introduction to philosophy of law. Students will explore the views of diverse and influential thinkers from Plato to present on the nature of law, associated problems, and types of solutions that have been proposed. The primary objective will be to better understand the function of law in human society. Topics will include the source of the authority of law, different types of law, the concept of legal responsibility, the relationship between morality and law, as well as related subjects such as legal reasoning, legal rights, and theories of punishment.

Overarching Purpose of the Course:

- ◆ To further the university’s mission to equip students for meaningful lives and productive careers.
- ◆ To further the mission of the university’s general education program to offer students a broad-based foundation of knowledge and skills that will help them become life-long learners as members of a profession as well as members of the global society.
- ◆ To further the mission of the philosophy department to help students cultivate self-knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, complement other specializations, and strengthen career preparation.

Specific Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- ◆ Intelligently discuss important historical/philosophical conceptions of law, their relative strengths/limitations, and contemporary critiques of traditional approaches such as those mounted by the critical legal studies movement and feminism.
- ◆ Strategically and meaningfully interpret, analyze, and evaluate given works in jurisprudence.
- ◆ Critically discuss the criteria for determining legal responsibility as well as possible applications.
- ◆ Discuss current theories of punishment and their relative strengths/limitations.
- ◆ Apply legal reasoning to analyze and evaluate actual or hypothetical case situations.

The Following General Education Learning Outcomes Will Be Addressed:

- ◆ Students will take courses which expose them to a range of basic religious beliefs and diverse ethical perspectives and which encourage them to develop their own perspectives on global issues.
- ◆ Students will become familiar with the historical, scientific, literary, and/or philosophical content of a range of disciplines.
- ◆ Students will acquire and practice skills for reading, writing, speaking, listening, abstract inquiry, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and using computers and related technology.
- ◆ Throughout their general education experience, students will analyze and reflect upon the challenges facing our global society as well as the importance of being a life-long learner and responsible citizen.

Required Text: David Adams, *Philosophical Problems in the Law*, 4th edition, Thompson-Wadsworth, ISBN: 0-534-58428-4.

Instructional Strategies:

- ◆ Multiple teaching strategies will be used, including but not limited to traditional lecture, Socratic questioning and class discussion/debate, videos, reading assignments, reflective writing projects, and library/Internet research. A conscious effort will be made to foster an enthusiastic, exciting, and active learning environment.

Methods of Assessment:

- ◆ Attendance/Participation Short Papers
- ◆ Exams Quizzes

Grades Will Be Determined on the Following Basis:

Five Quizzes (No Make-Ups, Drop the Low Score)	20% (5% each)
Four Response Papers (Details Will be Given)	40% (10% each)
Open-Book Midterm and Final Exam	40% (20% each)

Course Grading Scale:

A	92-100	A-	90-91		
B+	86-89	B	82-85	B-	80-81
C+	76-79	C	72-75	C-	70-71
D+	66-69	D	62-65	D-	60-61
F	Below 60				

Final Exam Date: Thursday, December 13 (12:00-1:50pm)

(3)

Honor Code:

- ◆ *I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie or commit any act of plagiarism during my academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University's Honor Code, I may, in my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.*

Attendance And Exam Policies:

- ◆ Attendance is important not only in pursuit of one's own individual learning but also as a contribution to the learning of others in the class. Active participation means completing daily assignments on time, having the textbook and other study materials ready at hand, and joining in discussions attentively and in a critical spirit, both as a respectful listener and as a speaker.
- ◆ Class attendance will be taken and students are expected to participate voluntarily in class activities. Attendance and participation will influence course grades in borderline cases, e.g. 89-90, 79-80, etc. Active participation and fewer than four absences (for any reason) will be considered positive.
- ◆ Students are expected to take quizzes and exams at the scheduled times unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Make-up exams will be given only if the instructor determines that the circumstances of absence are legitimately excusable. There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes.

Blackboard:

- ◆ The syllabus and schedule are always available on Blackboard under the "Course Information" button. Also classroom PowerPoint presentations (in Microsoft Word format) will be posted on Blackboard by the day following the class period in which they were first shown.

Special Services:

- ◆ If you are a student with a disability it is your responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services and your instructor at least one week prior to a needed service so reasonable accommodations can be made.

(Course Schedule Will be Provided the First Day of Class)