



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Winter 2020

FACULTY OF ARTS

Department of Sociology

Department of Sociology Website: <https://soci.ucalgary.ca/>

Introduction to Legal Knowledge			
Course Number	LWSO 203		
Pre/Co-Requisites			
Instructor Name	Sasha Reid	Email	Sasha.reid@ucalgary.ca
Instructor Email Policy	Feel free to contact me over email at any time. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line, and include a proper salutation, your full name, student ID, and a proper closing in the body of your email. All emails will be answered within two business days. I do not answer emails over the weekend. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining assignments or exams. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline first.		
Office Location	SS 912	Office Hours	Monday 12:00 – 1:00pm
Class Dates	M/W/F		
Class Times	10:00 – 10:50		
Class Location	ST 148		

Course Description

This course examines the philosophy and science of law as tools of social engineering. Students will be introduced to tort, contract, property, criminal, civil, and constitutional law and will review different schools of thought and legal movements specific to these areas of law. Current legal developments (including decided Canadian cases) will be covered to illustrate how concepts such as risk, negligence, neighbor principle, contractual obligations, offer and acceptance, consideration, remedies and punishment play out in contemporary Canadian society.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

This class was conceived as an immersive, dynamic, and interactive experience with the goal of preparing students to respond creatively to the pressures that will be placed on the process and philosophy of law and lawyering in the future. This class takes the position that one must obtain a broad consciousness of law in order to better understand the relationship between law, authority and power, law and reason, and the nature of politics in both ancient and modern understandings. Consequently, this course selects a case studies approach as its tool and adopts integrative learning strategies to encourage students to develop a historical conscientiousness of the western legal process, tradition, and philosophy.

Required Textbooks, Readings, Materials, Electronic Resources

There is no required textbook. All readings for this course will be posted on D2L.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Week 1.. Welcome

- **January 13th** Welcome to LWSO 203! This week we'll go over a few introductions
- **January 15th** I'll tell you a bit about this class, the content, structure, and assignments
- **January 17th** Next we'll study the case of OJ Simpson. Major topics to be discussed include: Juries, Jury Bias, and Peremptory Challenges, Confidence Heuristic, Scapegoating, and Social Identity Theory.

Week 2. Police Practice, Stereotypes, and Professional Ethics

- **January 20th** This week we'll be studying the case of the Menendez Brothers. We'll study the crimes, the investigation, and we'll examine how bias and heuristics influenced
- **January 22nd** the initial police contact with the boys. We'll then examine social constructions of grief and how stereotypes about behavior have negatively impacted groups of vulnerable people. In addition, we'll examine the issue of professional ethics, admissibility standards, and the double standards male victims of sexual
- **January 24th** violence face in the court of law.

Week 3. Violence Against Sex Workers and Mitigation,

- **January 27th** This week we'll be studying the case of Aileen Wuronos. We'll study the issue of violence against sex workers, capital murder, and death qualified juries. We'll
- **January 29th** also examine issues such as mitigating evidence, the evil woman hypothesis and the chivalry/paternalism hypothesis and how these issues present themselves in
- **January 31st** the court of law.

Week 4. Moral Panics, Legislation, and Investigation

- **February 3rd**
 - **February 5th**
 - **February 7th**
- This week we'll examine the case of the West Memphis 3. We'll investigate issues such as moral panics and explore how moral panics can hinder the acquisition of legal justice. We'll also begin to examine the fallibility of certain interrogation techniques and debate the ethics of employing the REID technique on juvenile and the intellectually disabled.

Week 5. Moral Panics, Legislation, and Investigation continued...

- **February 10th**
 - **February 12th**
 - **February 14th**
- This week we'll complete our examination of the case of the West Memphis 3. Specifically, we'll end our discussion on the issue of prosecutorial misconduct and the ethical issues connected to the election of prosecutors. On February 14th we will discuss the instructions for the Case Analysis (Due March 6th).

Week 6.

- **February 17th** No classes will be held this week as it is the reading break. Enjoy!
- **February 19th** No classes will be held this week as it is the reading break. Enjoy!
- **February 21st** No classes will be held this week as it is the reading break. Enjoy!

Week 7. DNA Technologies and the Courts, Dangerous Offender Designations, and Sentencing

- **February 24th**
 - **February 26th**
 - **February 28th**
- This week we will examine the case of Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka. We will study how important technologies, such as DNA, have become integral to the acquisition of legal justice. We will also take time to consider the sociolegal impact of Rape Kit Backlogs. Furthermore, we will examine the issue of Battered Wife Syndrome, the Dangerous Offender Designation, and explore the differences between Concurrent and Consecutive sentencing.

Week 8. Labelling Theory, The Death Penalty, Social Unrest and Sentencing

- **March 2nd**
 - **March 4th**
 - **March 6th**
- This week we will examine the case of Ted Bundy. Topics to be explore this week include Social Identity Theory, psychopathy, and mental illness as a mitigating factor. We will examine the concept of labelling and determine how this concept impacts our views and positions on showing empathy toward incarcerates. Furthermore, we will examine the sociolegal history of the death penalty.

Week 9. Circumstantial Evidence, Fetal Homicide Laws, Women's Rights

- **March 9th**
 - **March 11th**
 - **March 13th**
- This week we'll discuss the case of Laci and Scott Peterson. Topics to be included in this lecture include the problematic nature of no-body homicides, the role of suspicious behavior and circumstantial evidence in criminal cases, and Fetal Homicide Law and the Unborn Victims of Violence Act. We'll also use this week to start a discussion on the debate regarding the right to a fair trial versus freedom of the press.

Week 10. Right to a Fair Trial vs Freedom of the Press, Gender Stereotypes and the Law

- **March 16th**
 - **March 18th**
 - **March 20th**
- This week we'll explore the case of Amanda Knox. We'll look at such issues as the right to a fair trial vs freedom of the press, Son of Sam Laws, and how gender and the violation of stereotypical gender rolls effects ones right to a presumption of innocence. We'll also compare the legal systems of the US and Italy. Lastly, we'll examine such issues as double jeopardy and extradition agreements.

Week 11. Racial Bias and the Law, False Confessions, Wrongful Convictions

- **March 23rd**
 - **March 25th**
 - **March 27th**
- This week we'll study the case of the Central Park 5. After an introduction to the case we'll examine the origin and judicial impacts of the Super Predator Panic. We'll come back to the issue of false confessions and also examine the role and effect of racial bias on policing. We'll look at the positive effects of the introduction of DNA evidence into courts and we'll examine the long-term social consequences of exonerees of wrongful convictions.

Week 12. Intellectual Disability and Protective Legislation, Documentary as Advocacy

- **March 30th**
 - **April 1st**
 - **April 3rd**
- This week we'll examine the case of Steven Avery and Brendan Dassey. We'll explore the issue of eyewitness testimony and we'll examine the emerging issue of documentary as advocacy. In addition. We'll examine the topic of social constructivism and the role that plays in sentences and even determinations of guilt. Lastly, we'll take a look at the important work that is currently being done by the Innocence Project.

Week 13. Intellectual Disability and Protective Legislation, Documentary as Advocacy continued...

- **April 6th**
 - **April 8th**
 - **April 10th**
- This week we will finish our discussion on the case. In particular, we will examine the concept of judicial review. We will also begin our discussion on Juvenile sentencing. School will be closed on Good Friday (**April 10th**).

Week 14. Juvenile Sentencing and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

- **April 13th**
 - **April 15th**
- No class on April 13th (Easter Monday)**
- This week we'll continue to examine juvenile sentencing. We'll look at complex issues such as a child's ability to understand right from wrong and how the presence of mental illness complicates this. We'll examine the topic of Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity as it is applied in both the US and Canada. We'll also discuss the arbitrary nature of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (ACR). We'll end with the question, what should sentence for children look like? In particular, we'll examine the ethics of life sentences for juveniles along with the ethics and developmental outcomes of the use of solitary confinement in youth populations.

Methods of Assessment and Grading Weights

In the spirit of bolstering your collaborative skills and to improve your competency in group settings this class utilizes a combination of individual and group-based projects. While a group component is offered, it is optional. Students may work independently on all of their assignments. Groups may be no larger than 3.

Individual Assignments

1. **Critical Commentaries (30%) | Due: Throughout the Semester**

You are required to submit to D2L two (2) commentaries of what you learned over a particular week. The commentaries should not be a summary of what you learned but rather, they should be structured as an integrated synthesis of thoughts, ideas, and critical concepts that you were introduced to and continue to ponder. Submissions are due throughout the semester. There are no solid deadlines, however, you may only hand in one submission on any given week. Do not save these commentaries until the last week of class. Each submission accounts for 15% of your final grade. Commentaries will be graded on the following: depth of reflection, connections to class and to real world cases, ability to provide outside sources, and the overall quality of the writing.

Can Be Completed Individually OR in a Group (Groups may be no larger than 3):

2. **Case Selection + Reflection (10%) | Due: February 7th**

Students are to select one legal case of their choosing. This case will be the foundation for the rest of your course assignments so choose wisely. After the case has been selected, students will then write an executive summary of the case including a discussion of its sociolegal relevance. Cases should be original; meaning not covered in class. In addition to the executive summary of the case, students will also write a short personal reflection on why they chose that particular case. If the assignment is being completed in groups, each member must write their own reflection. Late submissions without approval will be subject to a 10% reduction.

3. **Case Analysis (20%) | Due: March 6th**

Using relevant knowledge and skills developed in this class, students will expand beyond their executive summary by identifying several major implications of their case. Implications must fall under the following categories: (1) Sociological (2) Legal/Policy and (3) Moral/Ethical. After identifying at least one major implication for each of the aforementioned categories, students must then expand, critically, on each of the implications. Further instructions will be provided in class. Late submissions without approval will be subject to a 10% reduction.

4. **Case eBook (30%) + Reflection (10%) | Due: April 15th**

Students will design an eBook dedicated to their case. Instructions will be provided in class. There you will provide an overview of the case, review of the major (1) Sociological (2) Legal/Policy and (3) Moral/Ethical implications and add additional information regarding the case. Additional information that must be included are an opening statement regarding the case and your involvement in its study, a logbook documenting your examination of the case, and a statement regarding your concluding thoughts regarding the case and its role in helping to inform future sociolegal studies. You may also include statistics regarding the case and convicted, the journal articles/law reviews you've read that helped inform your knowledge of

the case, snippets of interviews you've read/watched with some analysis on the content of those interviews, and links to resources that can help inform more people about the case. Creativity is encouraged! At the end of the eBook, students will offer a reflection on their overall experience in the class and their sociolegal investigation into the case. They will describe the challenges they experienced along with their successes. Students will also link this reflection back to their original assignment (Case Summary and Reflection) and will offer some discussion on whether their learning goals were met, what questions they are left with, and how they plan on using their academic knowledge in the future. Late submissions without approval will be subject to a minimum 10% reduction.

Here is one template example: <https://crello.com/>. Others will be discussed/described in class.

Final Exam Information

There will be no final exam in this class.

Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

Grade	Percent range	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	96 – 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
A	90 – 95.99%	4.0	Excellent performance
A-	85 – 89.99%	3.7	Approaching excellent performance
B+	80 – 84.99%	3.3	Exceeding good performance
B	75 – 79.99%	3.0	Good performance
B-	70 – 74.99%	2.7	Approaching good performance
C+	67 – 69.99%	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance
C	63 – 66.99%	2.0	Satisfactory performance
C-	59 – 62.99%	1.7	Approaching satisfactory performance
D+	55 – 58.99%	1.3	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
D	50 – 54.99%	1.0	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
F	<50%	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

Grade Reappraisal

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to the instructor explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or her work and rationale. It should be noted that a re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

Handing in Papers, Assignments

1. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
2. **Protection of Privacy:** The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they can provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human subjects – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without

permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Academic Misconduct

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Absences and Deferrals

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Deferred Final Exam Form: Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at:

https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/1/deferred_termwork15_0.pdf

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive support when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through Student Wellness Services (Room 370 MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

Student Success Centre

The Student Success Centre provides services and programs to ensure students can make the most of their time at the University of Calgary. Our advisors, learning support staff, and writing support staff assist students in enhancing their skills and achieving their academic goals. They provide tailored learning support and advising programs, as well as one-on-one services, free of charge to all undergraduate and graduate students. For more information visit:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success>

Student Ombuds Office

The Student Ombuds Office supports and provides a safe, neutral space for students. For more information, please visit www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/ or email ombuds@ucalgary.ca.

Student Union (SU) Information

The SU Vice-President Academic can be reached at (403) 220-3911 or suvpaca@ucalgary.ca; Information about the SU, including elected Faculty Representatives, can be found here:

<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca>.

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

Assembly points for emergencies have been identified across campus. Assembly points are designed to establish a location for information updates from the emergency responders to the evacuees; from the evacuated population to the emergency responders. For more information, see the University of Calgary's Emergency Management website:

<https://live-risk.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/evac-drills-assembly-points/assembly-points>

Safewalk

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night, anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences Centre, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). Call 403-220-5333 or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. Please ensure your personal safety by taking advantage of this service.