

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology 4250 Law and Society

September – December 2010

Course Lecturer: DR. JENNIFER JARMAN

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Lecture Hall: RB 3051

Lecture: T 2:30-5:30

Office Hours: T 5:30 – 6:00, F 4-5

Course Description (from Calendar): An examination of different theoretical approaches to the relationship between law and society.

What is this Course About?

This course provides an introduction to the theoretical approaches to understanding the law, drawn from the tradition of sociology. Sociology is a discipline which has many schools of thought, and there is no “one” sociological approach that is dominant. We will seek to understand the nature of the three major classical approaches drawn from structural functionalism, Weberian theory and conflict theory. The student will be asked to compare and contrast the differences amongst these approaches.

Then we will consider how these different approaches build a foundation for critical legal studies. The final portion of the course will focus on more recent theoretical developments and explore the contribution of psychoanalytical theory, feminist theory and civil rights developments. While the main emphasis of the text is on the theoretical issues, in class we will also discuss practical applications in terms of landmark cases in order to better understand the subject matter.

Please note: One of the challenges of this course is that some of the theorists use some pretty fancy language to express some interesting ideas. In class, we will work collectively together to understand together what some of these people are trying to say and to link these insights into some problems which you/we define as important and interesting.

Main Learning Objectives:

To be able to think critically about how law shapes our society.

To engage personally with some of the best of thinking about the changing relationship between law and society.

To link the theoretical thinking to real-world legal and social outcomes on some topics which interest you and which you can justify as being important.
To learn an approach to reading which allows you to read social theory texts without being overwhelmed and frustrated.

Assessment:

Essay #1, 10 pages: 20%
Mid Term Test: 20%
Essay #2: 10 pages: 20%
Final Examination: 20%
Participation: 20%

Term 1

	Due Date	Value
Essay 1	October 5	20%
Mid Term Test	October 19	20%
Essay 2	November 16	20%
Final Exam		20%
Online and Seminar Participation	Ongoing	20%

Key Text:

Milovanovic, Dragan. 2003. *Introduction To The Sociology Of Law*. Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press.

Assignments:

There will be two required course assignments during the term. The first assignment will be a 10 page essay (double-spaced) in which the student is asked to explore one classical theoretical approach to the law. The second assignment will be an 10 page essay (double-spaced) in which the student is asked to explore a contemporary theoretical approach to the law.

Seminar Participation and Presentation

Mid Term Test:

The Mid Term Examination will cover all assigned readings, class discussions and lecture topics up to the date of the class prior to the date of the test. It will be short-answer essay in format.

Final Examination:

The final examination will consist mainly of short essay type questions and will cover the entire scope of the topics discussed in class and in the assigned readings.

Reference Style for Assignments:

The Department of Sociology uses the ASA Style Guide as a reference style for students. These guidelines are posted on the Sociology website, so please refer to them.

Tentative Schedule: (To be confirmed during the first week of term)

Date	Topic	Text Readings
Sept 14	Introduction,	Introduction
Sept 21	The ‘Function’ of the Law’	Part 1, 1
Sept 28	Weber’s Contribution	Part 1, 2
Oct 5	Marx’s Contribution	Part 1, 3
Oct 12	Critical Legal Studies	Part 2, 4
Oct 19	Test	
Oct 26	Gender and the Law	Part 2, 4
Nov 2	Ethnicity and the Law	Part 2, 4
Nov 9	The Language of Law	Part 2, 6
Nov 16	Postmodern Perspectives	Part 2, 7
Nov 23	Postmodern Perspectives: Feminist	Part 2, 7
Nov 30	Conclusions & Review	

Final Exam Date and Time will be set by the Registrar’s Office during the Exam Period December 8th to 18th.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. It involves not only copying word-for-word a portion of someone else's written work without crediting the author, but also paraphrasing the ideas of others without crediting the original author. See the website How to Avoid Plagiarism at <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>, and see University Regulations section “**IX Academic Dishonesty**,” Lakehead University Calendar. You will receive zero on an assignment if any part of it is plagiarized, and your name will be reported to the Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities.