Prof. K. Russell-Brown Fall 2020

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**SOCIAL SCIENCE, CRIME, AND LAW**

LAW 6930, section 15918

3 credits

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines and explores the relationship between law and social science. Course material includes the following focal points: how social science evidence has been used and viewed historically by the courts; identification of social science methods, compared with legal methods; analysis of how social science data is used by the courts (e.g., to establish facts or to make law); and an assessment of the policy implications of using and not using social science data. Several areas of law are covered, including capital punishment (death qualification and racial discrimination), segregation in school (race and gender), cultural defenses, racial profiling, obscenity, and jury size. The assigned readings primarily focus on the use of social science data in criminal cases.

**REQUIRED MATERIAL\***

* John Monahan & Laurens Walker (2018) Social Science in Law: Cases and Materials (9th Ed.)

\*Please note that some course material will be assigned (TWEN & handouts).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Research Presentation 30 percent

Class Participation 10 percent

Take-Home Final Examination 60 percent

The expectation is that students will attend each class, read all assigned materials prior to class discussion, and participate regularly in class discussions.

**RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**

Students are required to complete a Research Presentation. Students will select a criminal justice topic, identify a trial or appellate court criminal case (a state or federal case) that addresses the topic, identify a research question, locate social science research on the topic; and discuss findings from two social science studies that would assist a court in addressing the research question. Advance approval for topics is required.

**FINAL EXAMINATION**

The final examination for this course is a written Take-Home Exam.

**The Final will be available on Friday, December 4, 2020 at 9:00 AM. It is due on Thursday, December 10, 2020, at 12:00 PM Noon.**

**COURSE WORKLOAD**

Students should expect to spend, on average, approximately 2-3 hours preparing for every hour of class.

**GRADING SCALE**

Grading for this course will adhere to the Levin College of Law’s mean and mandatory distributions, detailed in the below chart. For further information, visit <http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/academic-policies#9>.

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| **Letter Grade** | **Point Equivalent** |
| A (Excellent) | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.33 |
| B | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.67 |
| C+ | 2.33 |
| C (Satisfactory) | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.67 |
| D+ | 1.33 |
| D (Poor) | 1.0 |
| D- | 0.67 |
| F (Failure) | 0.0 |

**ACCOMODATIONS, ACADEMIC CONDUCT & OTHER POLICIES**

Requests for classroom accommodations must be made with the Office of Disability Resources. The UF Office of Disability will provide documentation to the student who must then provide documentation to the Law School’s Office of Student Affairs.

For information on UF Law grading policies, visit:

<http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/academic-policies#9>

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community.

Please review the UF Student Honor Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>

Please plan to remain in class for the entire time period. If you need to leave class before the end time, or arrive after the start time, please notify the professor in advance.

**COVID-19**

This course will be taught in person and online. The following policies and requirements are in place to maintain the learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions:

* Students are required to wear approved face coverings *at all times during class* and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to wear an approved face covering will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. You also will no longer be permitted on the UF Law campus. Finally, Dean Inman will also report your noncompliance to the relevant state board of bar examiners.
* This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
* Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
* Follow your TA’s guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom.  Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
* If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please do not come to campus or, if you are already on campus, please immediately leave campus. Please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions about when you are able to return too campus. <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/>.
* Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. List historical approaches to the use of social science evidence

2. Identify and discuss seminal Supreme Court cases on use of social science evidence

3. Discuss how social science evidence is used to determine facts

4. Provide examples of how social science is used to make law

5. State how social science evidence is used to provide context

6. Discuss how social science evidence is used in litigation strategy

7. Discuss how expert witnesses are used in court to offer (and refute) social science

Evidence.