SYLLABUS RACE, LAW & SOCIETY

SPRING 2021   Thursdays: 5:30 – 7:20pm

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This is a two hour seminar.  The course is interdisciplinary and will be taught by professors across many disciplines. The goal of the seminar is to expose law students to the ways in which the creation and enactment of law, particularly as to race and social justice issues, impact all aspects of our society, those within law as well as those outside of law. By the end of the semester students should have the skills to critically examine the practice of law, as it plays out in the real issue, rather than just in a theoretical bubble of academic analysis.

Full preparation for class and on-time attendance in class is expected. The course grade will be calculated based on two components: Class participation and submission of an acceptable final paper. Each component represents 50% of the final grade. Excessive absenteeism will negatively impact the final grade. A seminar class meets once a week, therefore anything more than two absences for the entire semester is excessive. Failure to actively participate in class will negatively impact the final

grade. Full class participation will not be awarded simply because a student shows up in class. Students must demonstrate that they have read assigned materials and can contribute to class discussions of the materials. Failure to return from class breaks in a timely fashion will result in the student being noted as absent for the class.

The final paper is to be twenty-five pages in length and must be in Bluebook format. If students require the Advanced Writing Certification, the paper must be 25 pages in length **EXCLUDING** footnotes. Each student will be required to submit an outline of her/his paper topic. **PAPER TOPICS MAY NOT BE CHANGED WITHOUT FACULTY APPROVAL** once the outline has been returned to the student. Thereafter, a draft of the paper will be required. The professor reserves the right to request a second draft if necessary and appropriate (which it usually is). Failure to submit the outline and/or any required drafts will negatively impact the final grade. The paper is a legal research paper, meaning you are researching a question of law which impacts the law's understanding or application of racial concepts. It is always best to write a paper on a subject you are interested in as opposed to one assigned to you. The paper must use primary as well as secondary resource material. Primary resource material would be cases, statutes, executive decisions, regulations and pleadings if you have access to them. Secondary source material would be law review articles and books. You may also use references to web-based materials, news articles online and other internet related material HOWEVER, this is a legal research paper, the majority of your source material should be to legal materials.

Papers which do not meet these criteria will not be awarded an advanced writing certificate, although they may satisfy the writing requirement for the course. For those students not needing an advanced writing certificate, which would only be a student who already has a certificate, other arrangements can be made to satisfy the writing requirement.

The classroom is an academic environment and all activities within it should be focused on development of the mind and the advancement of the understanding of the development of law. The class will be held virtually. In order for that to happen electronic devices must be used. Nonetheless, it is expected that students will use those devices for class purposes. Surfing the internet, downloading music or other materials, updating social media pages, emailing friends and relatives and watching pornography are all strictly prohibited.

The grading system at the University of Florida provides for grades that include “-“ and “+”, except there is no grade of A+.

The University of Florida recognizes students' rights to worship on state recognized religious holidays. Students wishing to take an absence on recognized religious holidays may do so without penalty.  The University of Florida recognizes and adheres to rules and regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Any student needing accommodation because of a disability should contact the Office of Student Affairs for further assistance.

The University of Florida adheres to all requirements under Americans with Disabilities Act. If a student needs an accommodation, he or she should contact the Office of Student Services. All students are permitted to observe officially recognized religious holidays without penalty. Absences for observation of officially recognized religious holidays do not count against the permitted absences.

Announcements required by the Law School:

(1) The faculty has been asked to give you guidelines on how long you should spend preparing for class. In a professional school environment there can only be one answer. A student needs to spend as much time preparing and is required for that student to BE prepared. Some students read faster than others. Some understand abstract concepts more quickly. One student may be able to adequately prepare for class in two hours while another may need four. Each student should spend the amount of time that will allow him/her to be adequately prepared. As a general guideline, a student should spend two to four (2-4) hours reading and preparing for each 50 minute class hour. HOWEVER, PLEASE BE ADVISED if a student spends that amount of time and comes to class unprepared, it shall not be an excuse that the suggested amount of time was spent preparing. If a student is unprepared, the student will be marked as such with the accompanying penalty mentioned above.

(2) Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at [https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/](https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/#_blank). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals or via [https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/](https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/#_blank). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/](https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/#_blank).”

(3) Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must first register with the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (Assistant Dean Brian Mitchell). Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

\*\*THE SYLLABUS IS NOT A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE PROFESSOR AND THE STUDENTS. IT IS A GUIDE TO HELP YOU PREPARE EFFECTIVELY FOR CLASS. PLEASE STAY ALERT FOR ANY ANNOUNCED CHANGES IN THE SYLLABUS\*\*

First Assignment: See Canvas