JUDICIAL POLITICS 4023

2016 SPRING SEMESTER

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

LSU LAW BLDG; Rm W210

Mondays; 5 p.m.- 8 p.m.

INSTRUCTOR: DARWIN MILLER; 389.3385; 925.3507 Darwin.miller@ebrda.org

OFFICE HOURS: 1 HOUR FOLLOWING EACH SCHEDULED CLASS OR BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to the litigation process within the American legal system. Emphasis will be placed on examinations of the federal system, the state system, and the fundamental principles of law associated within those systems. Students will study the organization of the courts and learn the roles of individuals that work within the systems. The course will introduce students to the litigation process in state and federal courts. The course examines [but is not limited to] jurisdiction and venue, the persons that are active within the system, civil litigation, criminal litigation, the role of law enforcement within the criminal setting, appellate litigation, the use of technology in the courtroom, the use of social media within the systems, Louisiana politics, and other issues related to the legal system. Additionally, students will participate in courtroom observation and draft a legal document that relates to concepts in this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will learn how judges, attorneys, witnesses, and litigation parties interact within our legal system and the significance of their interactions. Also, students will gain an understanding about the structures, organizations, and processes of court systems. Upon the completion of this course, the student will be able to describe the state and federal court system, understand issues related to litigation, identify the role of the persons in the litigation process, and have personal contact with individuals associated with the legal system either in a classroom setting and/or courtroom setting.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend all classes. Advanced arrangements should be made with the instructor should there be a need to miss class. A student missing class is responsible for all materials, notes, etc. disseminated in the missed class. An attendance record will be kept. Students

are required to attend class, be prepared for classroom discussions, and participate in class. Students are responsible to know the LSU attendance policy.

CLASSROOM POLICIES: The use of cell phones will not be tolerated in class. All electronic devices should be turned off and placed under the desk before and during class. The use of a laptop, ipad, or any other electronic device is not allowed in this class. Respectful behavior is expected at all times. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Children are not permitted in the academic classrooms. No food will be allowed in class. Class begins promptly at 5:00 p.m. The door[s] will be closed by 5:10 p.m. Thereafter, entry into class may be made only during a break. There will be two [2] ten minute breaks during this class unless notified differently. **THE USE OF ANY TYPE OF RECORDING DEVICE IS NOT ALLOWED IN THIS CLASS.** The use of a recording device will serve as the basis for immediate removal from the class. Students will not be given any credit/score for work produced in association with recording devices.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM: Cheating and Plagiarism [in any form] will not be tolerated. In general, 'cheating' should be construed as depriving [in any form] someone [or obtaining from someone/something] of something of value by deceit, fraud, dishonesty, etc…… In general, 'plagiarism' should be construed as taking [in any form] the ideas of another and passing the ideas off as one's own [without crediting the source]. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism will be in conformity with the LSU standards. Further, students will not be given any credit/score for individual projects that are the products of cheating and/or plagiarism.

SAFETY ISSUES/CAMPUS SAFETY: Items that may be harmful to one's self or others should not be brought to class. LSU believes that your safety is important in the learning process. One should report suspicious activity to the Office of Public Safety/Campus Security.

In case of a classroom emergency, please exit quickly, and, once outside, continue to a safe distance away from the building. Take your possessions with you.

LIBRARY/LEARNING RESOURCES: Students are encouraged to utilize the library/learning resources center in enhancing skills, using resources, and developing reading enjoyment.

GRADING

The final grade in this course is based upon the total score of the following:

- Mid-term examination [100 total points]
- Final examination [**cumulative**] [100 total points]
- Court observation [50 total points]
- Appellate brief [50 total points]
- Classroom participation [20 total points]

TOTAL POINTS	320 TOTAL POINTS [no curve]
bonus points [discretionary**]	[5-15 per assignment; added to total semester points]

There will be **TWO EXAMINATIONS** during the semester. The exams will consist of short answer, true/false, multiple choice, and essay questions. The format of the exam may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Makeup examinations may be allowed based solely upon the discretion of the instructor and only for those absences necessitated by a legitimate, documented medical emergency or excused absence related to a university function. Makeup examinations may vary in format and will be administered at the discretion of the instructor. **COURT OBSERVATION PAPERS AND APPELLATE BRIEFS** will be due prior to the taking of examinations [refer to attached tentative class schedule]. **CLASSROOM PATICIPATION** is based on regular [punctual] attendance, preparation, and classroom discussion and is discretionary with the instructor. Classroom participation is an important element within your grade. Students are reminded that just showing up for class is not sufficient for earning full credit for class participation. ***THE INSTRUCTOR SPECIFICALLY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE AN APPROPRIATE GRADE BASED [IN PART] ON THE QUALITY OF THE SUBSTANTIVE MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY THE STUDENT FOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS.*** **BONUS POINTS** may be awarded during the semester based upon bonus projects. The decision to administer [or not] bonus projects is a discretionary choice made by the instructor. Students must be present in class at the time of the bonus assignment to receive bonus points. Various handouts may be provided throughout the semester. All materials are intended to complement [not duplicate] each other. Thus, some of what you read may not be discussed in class and some of the lecture material may go beyond what you read. Each student is responsible for **ALL** material. The exams will cover materials from lectures, reading, handouts, and guest speakers. **No late assignments will be accepted. The assignment must be delivered to the instructor by personal delivery only on the assigned due date. ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE MEANS OF DELIVERY TO THE INSTRUCTOR. OTHER ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING DELIVERY OF ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE OF THE DUE DATE AND ARE SOLEY DONE SO AT THE DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTOR.**

In conjunction with LSU policy, a 'plus/minus' grading scale will be utilized in this class relative to course grades. Any questions regarding specific school policy in this matter should be addressed through the LSU Registrar's office.

GRADING SCALE [TOTAL POINTS]

- A+ = 320-310
- A = 309-299
- A- = 298-288

- B+ = 287-277

- B = 276-266
- B- = 265-255

- C+ = 254-244
- C = 243-233
- C- = 232-222

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- D+ = 221-211
- D = 210-200
- D- = 199-190

- F = below 190

DISABILITY STATEMENT: Any student eligible for and needing reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments because of a disability should speak with the instructor in person by February 1, 2016. Further, LSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. If you have a hidden or visible disability that may require classroom or test accommodations, please see the instructor by February 1, 2016. If you have not already done so, register with the appropriate campus department related to disability services.

SPECIAL NOTES: Continued enrollment in this course indicates acceptance of course policy. This syllabus is subject to change. The attached class schedule is tentative and may be subject to change. Changes will be announced in class. You are required to keep this syllabus and refer to it during the semester. You are responsible for all material/data/information presented in this class and all information contained within the class syllabus.

REQUIRED READING

Lawrence Baum, 2001. American Courts; Process and Policy*

Lawrence Baum, 2004. The Supreme Court*

*students are expected to utilize the most recent editions

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE
2016 SPRING SEMESTER

January 25, 2016	Introduction/Fundamental Principles of Law	[A.C.; 1]
February 1, 2016	Organization of the Legal System	[A.C.; 2]
	Courtroom observation assigments	
February 8, 2016	*Mardi Gras Break*	*******
February 15, 2016	Lawyers as Advocates	[A.C.; 3]
February 22, 2016	Judges	[A.C.; 4 & 5]
February 29, 2016	Criminal Courts; Review	[A.C.; 6]
March 7, 2016	**MIDTERM EXAM**	*******
	Courtroom observation assignments due	
March 14, 2016	Law enforcement and the Courts; EXAM REVIEW	*******
	Appellate brief assignments	
March 21, 2016	*Spring Break*	*******
March 28, 2016	Civil Courts	[A.C.; 7]
April 4, 2016	Specialized Courts	*******
April 11, 2016	Appellate Courts	[A.C.; 8 & 9]
April 18, 2016	US Supreme Court; La Supreme Court	[S.C.; 4, 5, & 6]
April 25, 2016	Social Media; La. Politics; Review	******
May 2, 2016	**FINAL EXAM**	*******
	Appellate brief due	