

# Law and Society

Fall 2022 | CJL3038 | PUGH 170 | University of Florida, Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the scholarly study of law from a multidisciplinary, liberal arts perspective. We will examine legal ideas, legal institutions, and the legal process with emphasis on the study of criminal behavior and the American criminal justice process. Note: This is not a course in the content of the law. Instead, it is a course designed to help you critically evaluate the interaction between the law and the society in which it operates.



Professor:  
**Dr. Lora Levett**  
Pronouns: she/her/hers



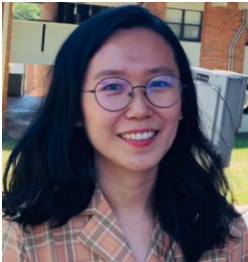
Email: [llevett@ufl.edu](mailto:llevett@ufl.edu)  
Use CJL3038 in the subject line



Office Hours  
Turlington 3336

Wednesdays 9:30am – 11:30am  
**and by appointment**

Email is the easiest and most effective way to reach me.  
However, if I don't answer your email within 48 hours, please re-email me.



Teaching Assistant  
**Tian Zhi - Jackie**  
Pronouns: she/her/hers

Email: [tzhi@ufl.edu](mailto:tzhi@ufl.edu)

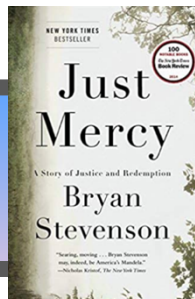
Office Hours  
Turlington 3349

TBA

## READINGS

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson (get a digital copy at UF library!)

Other readings as assigned and available through the library or on Canvas



✓ Define the law using different definitions and paradigms.  
Consider and analyze different models of law.

✓ Debate basic choices one must consider in studying or creating law. Explain how various ways of knowing and values systems may contribute to our choices in creating law.

✓ Identify and analyze functions and dysfunctions of law.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, you should be able to demonstrate an understanding and ability to think critically about legal ideas, institutions, processes, and practices using an interdisciplinary approach to law and society. To that end, students should be able to:

✓ Critically engage with theoretical perspectives in law and society; apply those theoretical perspectives to events to demonstrate understanding of law in everyday life.

✓ Describe the evolution and development of law, legal institutions, processes, and roles in the legal system. Critically analyze these concepts in light of the theoretical perspectives and tough choices one considers in creating and discussing law.

✓ Analyze the relationship between law and various identities, including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and intersections of identities.

# COURSE REQUIREMENTS



## Exams

Four non-cumulative, closed note/book exams will be administered. The exams consist of 30 multiple choice questions worth 2 points each. The exams will cover all topics discussed up to the date of the exam including assigned readings, lectures, videos, and in-class activities. The final exam is non-cumulative; it is a fourth exam. Note that even though the assigned readings may not be covered in class, you are responsible for knowing the material. Exams will be administered in class from on the day of the exam.



## Class Discussions

Discussion is pivotal to engaging in critical thinking about the ideas in this course. Your grade for activities and discussions will be determined by **random** throughout the semester - usually in the form of an in-class writing assignment participating in a discussion, or in-class assignment. Or you will earn points toward your class activity and discussion grade through participating in online activities or discussions or engaging with material outside of class. These class activities and discussions are worth 60 points toward your final grade; points are awarded as a portion of the total number of assignments completed.



## Application Assignment: Current Event Analysis

Many of the concepts, theoretical perspectives, and issues we discuss in class can aid in your analysis and understanding of real-world events or law in everyday life. For this assignment, throughout the semester, you will be responsible for turning in 4 analyses of current events, relating the events to some class material that we have discussed this semester. In your written analysis, include:

- 1) A short (2-3 sentence) paragraph summarizing the issue in the current event.
- 2) A link to the credible news source that you used to get your information; include a sentence or two about WHY this is a credible source.
- 3) A 1-2 paragraph summary of the class material you are using in the assignment – *as if you were teaching it to someone new*.
- 4) A 1-2 paragraph summary of the analysis/evaluation of the issue as it relates to the class material – again, as if you were teaching it to someone new.

Each of these application assignments is worth a total of 10 points toward your final grade.



## Just Mercy Assignment: Paper

You are responsible for writing a response paper after reading the book *Just Mercy*. Details about the response paper (including the grading rubric) is available in the Canvas site. Your paper is worth 50 points toward your final grade.

Grades are determined according to a **point structure** based on your work on a combination of exams and assignments. In encourage you to use this chart to keep track of your points earned this semester:

# GRADING

**Final grades** will be determined according to the following structure. GPA assignments are also noted below. For more information about UF grades and grading policies, see [www.catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regularions/grades-grading-policies/](http://www.catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regularions/grades-grading-policies/)

Component of your grade		Points you can earn	Points you earned
<b>Exams</b>	Exam One	60	_____
	Exam Two	60	_____
	Exam Three	60	_____
	Exam Four	60	_____
<b>Class Activities/Discussions</b>		60	_____
<b>Just Mercy Paper</b>		50	_____
<b>Application Assignments</b>	Application Assignment One	10	_____
	Application Assignment Two	10	_____
	Application Assignment Three	10	_____
	Application Assignment Four	10	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		390	_____

Points Earned	Grade	Corresponding Grade Points
362-390	A	4.00
351-361	A-	3.67
339-350	B+	3.33
323-338	B	3.00
312-322	B-	2.67
300-311	C+	2.33
284-299	C	2.00
273-283	C-	1.67
261-272	D+	1.33
245-260	D	1.00
234-244	D-	.67
233 and below	E	0.00

**Note:** I do not round up or add points at the end of the semester, so please do not ask. However, you will be given a 5-point extra credit opportunity this semester. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity! It is provided so that if your grade is considered 'borderline' or within a few points of the next highest grade, you will have the opportunity to boost your grade. It is offered fairly to everyone, unlike arbitrarily asking the professor to award extra points on an individual basis at the end of the semester.



# COURSE POLICIES

## Makeup Policies

I understand that sometimes one's life sometimes interferes with one's ability to complete class requirements. If you have a legitimate reason for missing a class assignment (e.g., illness, death in the family) and **can provide documentation**, you will be allowed to make up what you missed IF you contact me immediately before/after the missed assignment. If you miss a class discussion, you may be given an alternative assignment depending on the feasibility of completing the assignment given the timing of your absence. Religious holidays are excused without documentation but must be discussed in advance.

## Course Evaluation

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 <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. 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/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

## Academic Misconduct

UF Students are bound by the Honor Pledge which states “We the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the honor code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code ([sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/](http://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or the TA in the class.

For this course, **all work is to be completed individually** unless otherwise specified.

## Technical Help

For technical issues with the course, contact the UF Help Desk at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu) or 352-392-4357.

## Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

## Campus Resources

Part of examining the relationship between law and society involves examining sensitive topics, such as racial disparities, gender discrimination, and victimization. This may be emotionally difficult at times, and I encourage you to seek out campus resources for support. Academic resources may be helpful in navigating issues you may encounter in this class or at your time at UF. I encourage you to take advantage of these resources. UF provides several different types of resources:

**Counseling and Wellness Center:** <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> 352-392-1575

**Student Health Care Center:** <https://shcc.ufl.edu/> 352-392-1161

**UF Police Department Office of Victim Services:** <http://www.police.ufl.edu/victim-services/>

**Dean of Students Office – emergency response team:**

[https://www.dso.ufl.edu/home/about/emergency\\_response](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/home/about/emergency_response)

**U Matter, We Care** can also help students, staff, or faculty in distress. You can reach them via email at [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or phone 352-392-1575. If you find yourself concerned about a fellow student, you can notify U Matter, We Care, and they will reach out to the student.

**Library support:** [www.cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask/](http://www.cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask/) various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

**Teaching Center:** Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. [www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu](http://www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu)

**Writing Studio:** 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. [www.writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/](http://www.writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/)

**Student Complaints (on-campus):** [www.sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/](http://www.sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/)

**Student Complaints (on-line):** <https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>

## Civility and Values

As members of this class and university, we are members of a larger learning community where excellence is achieved through civility. Our actions affect everyone in our community. Everyone is to be treated with respect, regardless of gender, age, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or other identity.

## Classroom Behavior

Students are expected to behave appropriately and professionally in the online class environment. This class is meant to be an enriching, enjoyable experience for all of you. Disrupting the class or behaving inappropriately in our online environment results in depriving your fellow classmates and yourself of this experience. The instructor is the final arbiter of what behavior is appropriate and inappropriate. However, you may use the following principle to guide your classroom behavior: Your behavior should not be disruptive to the instructor or your classmates. This principle will help you determine appropriate classroom behaviors.

### For office hours:

- ✓ Be prepared! Come with an agenda and questions that you would like to ask.

### Guidelines for our course:

- ✓ **Be attentive in your work.** Each assignment is carefully laid out for you – make sure to answer **EVERY** part of the question.

### Privacy and Recording Policy:

- ✓ Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.
- ✓ A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.
- ✓ Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## Communication

When in doubt, communicate with us! We are here to help you navigate this course and this semester. There are several ways you can communicate with us:

**Discussion Board:** You can post content or class related questions on the discussion board in our Canvas Course Shell. Be sure to look at previous posts to see if your question has been asked/answered. Dr. Levett and your TA will check this board regularly and weigh in. However, often, your fellow students will be your best – and fastest – resource. Think of this discussion board as a place to ask things that you would typically ask by raising your hand in class.

**Email:** The fastest way to reach your instructor and your TA is through email. Please **use your UF email** and include CJL3038 in the subject line. **If you do not hear back within 48 hours, please pop your email to the top of our inbox by forwarding it.** We get a TON of email, and don’t want to lose yours in the shuffle! Email should be used whenever questions are of a private manner or something you would not generally raise your hand about during class.

**Office hours:** Please pop by to say hi during office hours! We are here to meet with you and help you with course material, answer questions about the major, chat about careers – we are here to be a resource for you! If office hours don’t work for your schedule, we are also available to meet in person or via zoom by appointment.

## Administrative Information

This syllabus is provided for your information and may change as deemed necessary. You are responsible for learning all the material contained in the syllabus as well as any modifications that are made to the syllabus during class time. All changes to the syllabus will be announced and emailed to you. If you have any questions about the syllabus or course requirements, please feel free to contact me. A proposed semester schedule appears below, and any changes will be updated on canvas and announced in class.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

The material for each week will be released before the week begins. Pay attention to the 'to do' list as the materials may change based on where we are in the course, current events, new scholarship, etc. Each week, you'll have readings to complete, videos to watch, and assignments to complete. Make sure to check the course page each week in canvas for a detailed list of when to complete each reading, watch supplemental videos and movies, and participate in online class discussions (and what to do to participate!). Other class discussions will take place at random in class, so be sure to attend.

Other assignments and exams are due according to the schedule below.

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings for this Week (posted on Canvas) Additional media posted on canvas	DUE DATES FOR APPLICATION ASSIGNMENTS, PAPER, EXAMS; SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS
1	August 24-26	<b>Introduction to Course</b>	<b>Reading: Calavita, 2016</b>	
2	August 29- September 2	<b>What is Law?</b>	<b>Website: World Justice Project</b> <b>Reading: Tommasoli, 2012</b>	
3	September 5- 9	<b>Critical Thinking and the Law, Evolution of Law</b>	<b>Reading: Ellerton, 2017</b>	<b>September 5: NO CLASS (labor day)</b> <b>September 9: Application Assignment 1 due</b>
4	September 12-16	<b>Evolution of Law and Legal Systems</b>	<b>Reading: Llewellyn &amp; Hoebel, 1941</b>	
5	September 19-23	<b>Before the Law</b>	<b>Reading: Bracket, 1995</b> <b>Reading: Kafka, 1998 (1925)</b> <b>Reading: Poiltzer, 1962 (Kafka's The Problem of Our Laws)</b> <b>Reading: Poiltzer, 1962 (Kafka's Couriers)</b>	<b>September 21: Exam One IN CLASS</b>
6	September 26- September 30	<b>Before the Law; Tough Choices in Law and Society: Crime Control and Due Process</b>	<b>Reading: Kaylor, 2013</b>	<b>September 30: Application Assignment 2 Due</b>

7	October 3-7	<b>Crime Control v. Due Process in Resolving Conflict; The Role of the Attorney</b>	Reading; Frank 1950 Reading: Curtis, 1951 Reading: Mills 1971	October 7: NO CLASS (Homecoming)
8	October 10-14	<b>Tough Choices in Law and Society: Discretion and Equality</b>	Reading: Klein, 2016	October 12: Exam Two IN CLASS
9	October 17-21	<b>Police and Prosecutorial Discretion</b>	Reading TBA	October 21: Application Assignment 3 due
10	October 24-28	<b>Judicial and Jury Discretion</b>	Hinton, 2018	
11	October 31- November 4	<b>Theoretical Perspectives in Law and Society:</b>	Reading: Stamp, 1956 Reading: Thornton & wife v. The Suffolk Manufacturing Company, 1852 Reading: Ballinger, 1992	
12	November 7-11	<b>Theoretical Perspectives in Law and Society</b>	Podcast: The Fight to Make Sexual Harassment a Crime Reading: EEOC v. Sears Robuck Co., 1986 Website: Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc., 1993	November 9: Exam Three IN CLASS November 11: No class (Veterans' Day)
13	November 14-18	<b>Theoretical Perspectives in Law and Society</b>		November 18: Application Assignment 4 due
14	November 21-25	<b>Movie Analysis</b>		November 21: No in-person class—instead of meeting in person, see the instructions for our movie analysis discussion and participate in the discussion on canvas. November 23 and 25: No class (Thanksgiving holiday)



15 November 28- December 2 **Science-Based Policy Solutions** Gross, 2017 Summer, 1999

November 30: Just Mercy Paper due

16 December 5-9 **Science-Based Policy Solutions** --

December 7: EXAM FOUR IN CLASS  
December 9: No class (reading day)

## A MESSAGE FOR STUDENTS:

Finally, I have a message for you all, taken from the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1997):

“To Students:

You forfeit your chance for life at its fullest when you withhold your best effort in learning. When you give only the minimum in learning, you receive only the minimum in return. Even with your parents’ best example and your teachers’ best efforts, in the end it is your work that determines how much and how well you learn. When you work to your full capacity, you can hope to attain the knowledge and skills that will enable you to create your future and control your destiny. If you do not, you will have your future thrust upon you by others. Take hold your life, apply your gifts and talents, and work with dedication and self-discipline. Have high expectations for yourself, and convert every challenge into an opportunity.”

It is my hope that you will take this course and your years in college as a unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to expand your mind, enjoy yourself and your capacity to learn, and absorb as much knowledge as you can. Remember, you may never be here again. Get ready for a GREAT semester, and as always, **press on!**

-Dr. L