

SOC 15: LAW & SOCIETY

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students should be able to identify different lawmaking systems in the United States.
- Students should be able to compare and contrast major theoretical approaches to the study of law and society.

Description

Provides an overview of the American legal system, including its development, structure, and history. Review of the legal and judicial process in the United States, covering the adversarial system, the jurisdiction of federal and state courts, and the general process of judicial review. Explanation of different sources of law, including statutes, court cases, and administrative agency rules. Review of basic legal reasoning and introductory research methods. Introduction to civil law, criminal law, family law, real property law, contracts, employment, immigration, intellectual property, and other areas of law. Also included is a review of the principles of legal ethics, theories of jurisprudence, and practical problems of law enforcement and the administration of justice.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Describe the structure of the federal and state court systems
2. Apply the basic fundamentals of law and further understand the functions of a legal system in human society
3. Develop a functional knowledge of legal terminology and procedures
4. Acquire an understanding of socio-legal conflicts and problems
5. Gain practical insights concerning the individual's rights, duties, and remedies under various systems of law
6. Demonstrate additional reading, writing, and critical thinking skills related to legal research and methodology
7. Understand the adjudication of social issues resulting from cultural diversity and ethnic pluralism of American society
8. Identify different roles in the legal profession, including, lawyers, paralegals, and judges; describe the process to become each identified role

Course Content

1. Survey of the mechanics of social control and study of comparative legal systems
2. Historical analysis of legal changes as products of social evolution and cultural influences
3. Definitions of law and theories of jurisprudence
4. Analyze relationships between law enforcement systems and individual rights, including minority protections and discrimination
5. Functional theories of punishment and problems of equal treatment under the law given stratification (social class) inequalities
6. Study of sources of law and the problems of maintaining judicial consistency
7. Analysis of relationships between substantive legal rights and procedural legal remedies
8. Case method analysis on the adjudication of social issues relevant to the following topics:
 - a. Administration of criminal justice
 - b. Life and quality of life
 - c. Family law
 - d. Personal liberties
 - e. Individualism
 - f. Consumer/debtor rights
 - g. Poverty and welfare
 - h. Federal and State government powers/actions vs. individual rights and duties

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught as an online distance learning section, students and faculty need ongoing and continuous internet and email access.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Class discussions
Active learning exercises
Oral presentations
Critical essay(s)
Examinations or quizzes

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture
Discussion
Oral presentations
Electronic discussions/chat

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Lippman, Matthew. *Law and Society*. 2020.

Vago, Steven, and Steven E. Barkan. Law and Society: An Introduction. 2021.

MacDonald. Social Context and Social Location in the Sociology of Law. 2001.

Walsh, Anthony, and Craig Hemmens. Law, Justice and Society: A Sociolegal Introduction. 2020.

The MacDonald text is the most recent edition and is considered current and relevant.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. College level readings from primary and secondary sources
2. College level writing assignments based on primary and secondary source reflection and/or analysis

Discipline(s)

Sociology