

Women and The Law

PS- 2307

Monday 6:00 pm-8:50 pm Lawrence Hall 309

Instructor: Hanen Obiedat

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Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description

This course surveys the relationship between women and the law, looking at the way women have been defined as legal subjects over time. While much of the material focuses on the United States, the course includes some discussion of women's status in international law and provides some cross-national comparisons of legal policies.

No prior background either in legal studies or women studies areas is required. The main prerequisite is to enter the course with a willingness to learn about the status of women in the Law.

The course has two goals. First, is to introduce students to the various ways the law affect their lives. Second, is to help students develop critical and analytical skills that they can use to address important power-laden gender relation questions and the law that help implement or dismantle this type of relation.

Course Goals

By the end of the semester students are expected to address effectively the following questions:

- How has the law regulated important aspects of women's lives over time and in different contexts?
- What role has equality played in framing the law's conception of female subjects?
- Is the law primarily a tool for liberation or repression?
- What gender-based issues are ripe for legal reform? Where can the law make a difference and how should it do so?

Program Learning Outcomes (Political Science)

The graduating student will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.

TEXAS Domain III Competency 19: The teacher understands and applies social science knowledge and skills to plan, organize, and implement instruction and assess learning.

TEXAS Domain III Competency 23: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of concepts of government, democracy, and citizenship, including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems.

Course Policies:

1. Attendance and Class Preparation:

Attendance is extremely important and mandatory for this course. The class meetings will supplement, not repeat, the readings and assignments for this class. In addition, a significant portion of exam material will be taken from in-class discussion, so it will be very difficult to pass this course if you do not attend regularly.

You are expected to have completed the assigned readings by the beginning of the first class day for which they are assigned.

2. Disruptions and Classroom Respect:

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in class discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts. Please be respectful of others by avoiding disruptive behaviors.

3. Late Work and Make-Up Assignments

If you need to be out of class for an emergency or university excused absence, inform the instructor of the situation as soon as possible. Late or make-up assignments will only be allowed in the case of an emergency or excused absence with appropriate documentation. ~~Any student who~~ ~~is absent from~~ ~~classes for a~~ university-excused absence (such as a game, tournament, or event) will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day. However, arrangements for missing class due to an excused absence must be made with the instructor before the absence. It is your responsibility to speak with me about classes that you will miss.

4- Reading Requirements:

The assigned book for this class is: ***Women and the Law: Stories*** 1st Edition by [Elizabeth M. Schneider](#) (Editor), [Stephanie M. Wildman](#) (Editor)

Additional legal files, case briefs, and contemporary research conducted by political scientists, as well as the primary sources and historical documents that shape law and public policy, will be provided prior to lectures.

In this class, students will be responsible for a presentation, one essay paper, a mid-term and a final exam.

5. Religious Observance:

Any student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day. Arrangements for missing class due to religious observance must be made with the instructor prior to the absence.

6. Academic Integrity:

Any instance of academic misconduct such as turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, cheating and plagiarizing written assignments, collusion, or misrepresenting facts will be punished to the full extent of the university's disciplinary policy. You are responsible for reading the statement on Academic honesty in the Sul Ross State University Rules and Regulations Supplement to the Student Handbook. The faculty considers academic dishonesty to be a serious matter and will act accordingly. Students caught cheating will receive no credit for assignment/test and more severe penalties.

7- *The American with Disabilities Act:*

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Grace Duffy in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. The telephone number is 432-837-8203.

Course Requirements	Course Grades
Group Assignments/presentation 20 points. Each group/ student will be assigned a chapter to present	90-100 points A
Reflection Paper 20 points	80-89 points B
Mid-Term Exam 30 points	70-79 points C
Final Exam 20 points	60-69 points D
Attendance 10 points	50-59 points F

Course Outline

- Jan. 25 **Introduction: Women and the Law**
- Feb. 1 The Rights of Citizenship Introduction & Chapter 1
Minor V. Happerset (1875)
- Feb. 8 Suffrage *Leser V. Garnett (1922)*
Siegel (2002)

- Feb 15 Equal Protection Chapter 2
Neale (2013)
Adkins V. Children's Hospital (1923)
- Feb 22 Women and the Military Chapter 4
Rostker V. Goldberg (1981)
Caslin (1997)
- Feb 29 Employment Law Chapter 7
National Women Law Center (2013)
Phillips V. Martin Marietta Corporation (1973)
- Mar. 7 Sexual Harassment Chapter 8
Meritor Savings Bank V. Vinson (1986)
- Mar. 14 **Spring Break**
- Mar. 21 Title IX Athletics and Education Chapter 3
United States V. Virginia (1996)
- Mar. 28 **Mid Term Exam**
- Apr. 4 Birth Control and Fertility Chapter 5
Griswold V. Connecticut (1965)

- Apr. 11 Reproductive Rights Chapter 6
Roe V. Wade (1973)
- Apr. 18 Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Chapter 13
United States V. Morrison (2000)
- Apr. 25 The Beauty Bias
Nelson V. Knight (2013)
- May. 2 Women and Law around the World
- May 9 Final