

University of Waterloo
Department of Economics
Econ 451
Law and Economics
Fall 2019
M W 11:30AM – 12:50PM, PAS 1229

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Phil Curry

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Office Phone: 519-888-4567 x32644

Office Hours: 2:00-3:00pm Mondays and Wednesdays, or by appointment

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Course Description

This course uses economic theory to understand the general structure of law. It is not a law course. Specifically, it uses the economic model of decision making to examine how the law can be used to influence people's behaviour. It also considers the concept of economic efficiency as a criterion for evaluating laws. Topics include property (including intellectual property), contracts, torts, family law and crime. The course will be very much discussion oriented and the amount of time we spend on each topic will be determined by student interest.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

This is a writing course, which means there is a very serious reading and writing component. There will be many readings over the course of the semester, generally from academic journals. You will be expected to keep up with the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class.

Required Text

- There is no textbook for this course. Instead, we will read a variety of published articles.

Readings Available on LEARN

- LEARN will be used extensively in this course. Please check regularly for readings and more.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Assignment 1	Oct. 4	10%
Assignment 2	Oct. 25	10%
Assignment 3	Nov. 8	10%
Term Paper Proposal	Nov. 1	10%
Presentation	Nov. 18 – Dec. 2	15%
Participation		10%
Term Paper	Dec. 13	35%
Total		100%

Assessment 1

You will be asked to read a scholarly article commenting on an actual court case. Your task will be to summarize the details of the case, summarize the author's argument and comment.

Assessment 2

You will be asked to read the rulings of an actual court case or legal development. Your task will be to summarize the court case and comment on the ruling.

Assessment 3

You will be asked to read the rulings of an actual court case or legal development. Your task will be to summarize the court case and comment on the ruling.

Assessment 4

For your term paper proposal, you should find a real-life scenario with legal implications germane to this course. You should discuss how it fits in with the topics of this course and find a few examples of academic literature relevant to it.

Assessment 5

You will present your term paper (as it stands at the time) in a 10-minute presentation in class.

Assessment 6

Your participation in class discussion will contribute to your grade.

Assessment 7

Your term paper will analyze a current, real-life scenario with legal implications relevant to this course. You will discuss the scenario in light of relevant academic literature, and provide your own analysis.

Course Outline

A list of potential readings will be posted on LEARN. However, we are not bound to this list, and readings on any topic pertinent to this course can be added at any point. The exact articles covered will be determined by class interest. In addition, we will discuss actual legal developments, recent and past. These readings will also be made available on LEARN.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	Sept 4	Introduction to Property Law	none
2	Sept 9, 11	Intellectual Property and Liability Law	none
3	Sept 16, 18	Contracts, Crime	none
4	Sept 23, 25	Family Law, Role of the Courts	none
5	Sept 30, Oct 2	Class discussion of readings	As determined in class
6	Oct 7, 9	Class discussion of readings	As determined in class
7	Oct 21, 23	Class discussion of readings	As determined in class

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
8	Oct 28, 30	Class discussion of readings	As determined in class
9	Nov 4, 6	Class discussion of readings	As determined in class
10	Nov 11, 13	Class discussion of readings	As determined in class
11	Nov 18, 20	In class presentations	As determined in class
12	Nov 25, 27, Dec 2	In class presentations	As determined in class

Late Work

Assignments, the proposal and the term paper are due in the dropbox on LEARN on the due date given. Late work will be assessed a 20% penalty per day.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

All written work in this course will be vetted by Turnitin. This will be used as a teaching device as much as to prevent plagiarism. For information about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin, see Turnitin at Waterloo (<https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo>). Students who do not wish to have their work screened by Turnitin should inform the instructor in writing or email no later than the end of the second week to arrange for an alternative option.

Electronic Device Policy

Students are encouraged to bring laptops to class, especially for the purposes of taking notes and looking for material related to our in-class discussions.

Attendance Policy

Students are encouraged to attend all classes and to contribute to the in-class discussions. Students that do not attend, or attend without contributing will not receive participation marks and will most likely find the assignments and term paper more difficult.

Economics Department Deferred Final Exam Policy

Cross-listed course

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity](#) webpage and the [Arts Academic Integrity](#) webpage for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For

information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: [The AccessAbility Services office](#), located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments and the term paper in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. See [guidelines for instructors](#) for more information.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

On Campus

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext 32655
- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7

- [Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- [Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- [OK2BME](#): set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe](#) app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.