**Principles and Concepts of Law Layered Curriculum**

The goal of concepts in law is to introduce students to the American Court System from its make-up, processes, various types of cases and burdens of proof. The class also seeks to introduce students to types of advocacy in various courts of law. Students will also be introduced to a range of other law fields and the types of law dealt with in those fields. This course will help give students an introduction into the Murrow Law Program as well as help to guide, foster interest in, and expose students to a range of law professions.

**Foundation #1: Introduction to the American Legal System**

**Overarching Question: - Does the American Legal System provide justice fairly?**

**Enduring Understandings:**

*- the divisions of the American Court System*

*- the appeals process*

*- the distinctions and jurisdictions between State and Federal Courts*

*- the structure and abilities of the justice system*

**Assignment #1: Introduction to the American Court System**

**Read:** <http://www.uscourts.gov/EducationalResources/FederalCourtBasics/CourtStructure/UnderstandingFederalAndStateCourts.aspx> (Read “Why two court systems” and “structure of federal courts”)

<http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf> (Read section for “inside the federal courts”)

\*Feel free to explore other links\*

**Vocabulary:**

1. *Jurisdiction*
2. *Constitutionality*
3. *Delegate*

**Assignment:**

**1.** *Why is the American Court system divided in this manner? (one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least two examples)*

**2.** *Do you believe this division helps or hurts the justice system? (one paragraph 4-7 sentences, providing at least two examples*

**Assignment #2: State vs. Federal Courts**

[**http://www.uscourts.gov/EducationalResources/FederalCourtBasics/CourtStructure/ComparingFederalAndStateCourts.aspx**](http://www.uscourts.gov/EducationalResources/FederalCourtBasics/CourtStructure/ComparingFederalAndStateCourts.aspx) **(Read “Comparing Federal and State Courts” and “Cases in Federal and State Courts”)**

**Vocabulary:**

*1. Admiralty Cases*

*2. Adversary Process*

**Assignment:**

**1.** *How is state and federal jurisdiction similar and different? Do you agree or disagree with the division of power? (one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least two examples)*

**Assignment #3: Appeals Process and Foundation Assignment**

**Read:**

<http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu4d&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/282?opendocument> **(read entire appeals section)**

**Vocabulary:**

1. *Alternative Dispute Resolution*
2. *Reserve*
3. *Uphold*
4. *Remand*
5. *Writ of certiorari*

**Assignment #3 and Foundation Assignment:**

*Research a current case that is being appealed to, in questioned of being appealed to, or denied being appealed to the Supreme Court.*

*In your opinion, should the Supreme Court hear this case?*

* Use the concepts and vocabulary from the Foundation as well as the issues in the case for your opinion.
* Two paragraphs, 4-7 sentences each.

**FOUNDATION #2: Civil vs. Criminal law**

**Overarching Question: - How are cases prosecuted and defended in civil and criminal cases**

**Enduring Understandings:**

*- the differences between civil and criminal cases*

*- the different types of civil cases and criminal cases*

*- the role of negligence*

*- the different types of injuries in cases*

*- the different types of defenses in civil and criminal cases*

*- the legal and courtroom processes*

*- how the legal distinctions and processes contribute to a fair American Justice System.*

**Assignment #4: Introduction to Civil vs. Criminal Law**

**Read:**

<http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu2c&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/A2ACB10A0EEA99B185256824004B4FAA?opendocument>

**Vocabulary:**

1. Restitution
2. Indictment

**Assignment:**

1. What is the difference between Civil and Criminal cases? (*one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples*)

**Assignment #5: Introduction to Tort Law**

<http://dictionary.law.com/Default.aspx?selected=2137>

[**http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/2.htm**](http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/2.htm)

[**http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/1.htm**](http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/1.htm)

**Vocabulary:**

1. *Negligence*
2. *Intentional Tort*

**Assignment:**

*1) What is the difference between “accidental” and “intentional” torts? (one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

*2) Choose one of the scenarios (3rd link), do you think the person was guilty or not guilty? Why? Use specific legal terminology in your answer.*

**Assignment #6: Types of Tort legal injuries**

[**http://www.settlementcentral.com/page3000.htm**](http://www.settlementcentral.com/page3000.htm)

[**http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/3.htm#1**](http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/3.htm#1)

[**http://www.ehlinelaw.com/what-are-torts-breach-of-contract.htm**](http://www.ehlinelaw.com/what-are-torts-breach-of-contract.htm) **(read up to Defenses)**

**Vocabulary:**

* 1. *Standard of Reasonableness*
  2. *Proximate Cause*
  3. *Tort Feasor*
  4. *Res ipsa loquitor*
  5. *negligence per se*

**Assignment:**

**1.** *How do the types of tort legal injuries differ from each other? Which do you think is more difficult to prove in a court of law? Why? (one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Assignment #7: Tort Defenses and Cases**

[**http://www.settlementcentral.com/page3000.htm**](http://www.settlementcentral.com/page3000.htm) **(read from defenses to end)**

[**http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/6.htm**](http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/february99/6.htm)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Contributory Negligence
2. Comparative Negligence
3. Assumption of Risk

**1.** *How do the Tort Defenses protect potential Tort Feasors? Do you think that these are valid defenses against Tort cases? Why? Why not? In what scenarios can/should these defenses fail? (one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Assignment #8: Introduction to Criminal Law**

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/) **(follow both tabs)**

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/mens-rea-a-defendant-s-mental-state.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/mens-rea-a-defendant-s-mental-state.html)

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/classifications-of-crimes/**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/classifications-of-crimes/)

[**http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/criminal\_law**](http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/criminal_law)

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/criminal-law-basics.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/criminal-law-basics.html)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Mens Rea
2. Actus Reus
3. Statute of Limitations
4. Felony
5. Misdemeanor
6. Infractions

**Assignment:**

**1.** *What are the distinctions between levels of criminal violations and burdens of proof? Do you think these distinctions empower the American Justice system or do you think these distinctions make law enforcement and the dispensing of justice more difficult? (one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Assignment #9: Criminal Law Process and Foundation #2 Assignment**

**Read:**

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/how-does-the-criminal-justice-system-work.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/how-does-the-criminal-justice-system-work.html)

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/what-happens-when-you-re-charged-with-a-crime.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/what-happens-when-you-re-charged-with-a-crime.html)

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/defending-yourself-against-a-criminal-charge.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/defending-yourself-against-a-criminal-charge.html)

**Vocabulary:**

1.“beyond a reasonable doubt”

2. preliminary hearing

3. true bill

4. no bill

**Assignment #9 and Foundation Assignment.**

**1.** *Is the criminal law process too lengthy; allowing for too many unprosecuted crimes, or is the criminal law process fair and support the American Justice System?* *(one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**2.** Research a case in which one of the criminal law defenses was used and in which the defendant won. Why was this case a Criminal and not a Civil Case? What level of distinction was this case tried on? Why? Based on the case facts, and your previous work in this course, do you agree or disagree with the verdict of the court? *(one-two paragraphs, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Foundation #3: Introduction to Trial Roles**

**Overarching Question: - How do the participants of the trial contribute to the American Justice System?**

**Enduring Understandings:**

*- the roles and responsibilities of the juror*

*- the roles and responsibilities of the judge*

*- the extent to which a judge is bound by a jury’s decision*

*- the roles and responsibilities of lawyers*

*- the skills necessary to be an effective juror, judge, lawyer*

*- an introduction into direct examination, cross examination, opening and closing statement*

**Assignment# 10: Role of the Jury**

**Read:**

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/difference-between-grand-jury-and-trial-jury.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/difference-between-grand-jury-and-trial-jury.html)

[**http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/what-is-the-role-of-a-jury-in-a-criminal-case.html**](http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-law-basics/what-is-the-role-of-a-jury-in-a-criminal-case.html)

[**http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/306?opendocument**](http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/306?opendocument)

[**http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/307?opendocument**](http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/307?opendocument)

1. “petit” jury
2. peremptory challenges

**Assignment:** Do you agree or disagree with a trial by jury? Should the jury have the final say in verdict and sentencing? Why? Why not? *(one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Assignment #11: Role of Judge**

**Read:**

[**http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/305?opendocument**](http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/305?opendocument)

[**http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public\_education/resources/law\_related\_education\_network/how\_courts\_work/judge\_role.html**](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/resources/law_related_education_network/how_courts_work/judge_role.html)

[**http://www.flnd.uscourts.gov/jurors/courtparticipants.cfm**](http://www.flnd.uscourts.gov/jurors/courtparticipants.cfm)

[**http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public\_education/resources/law\_related\_education\_network/how\_courts\_work/being\_a\_judge.html**](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/resources/law_related_education_network/how_courts_work/being_a_judge.html) **(follow the links under “judge”)**

[**http://crime.about.com/od/Crime\_101/a/The-Sentencing-Stage-Of-A-Criminal-Case.htm**](http://crime.about.com/od/Crime_101/a/The-Sentencing-Stage-Of-A-Criminal-Case.htm)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Bench
2. Deliberation
3. Recuse

**Assignment:**

1. Why is a judge considered more of an umpire than an enforcer of the law? Do you agree or disagree with this role for judges? (*one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*
2. Should a jury’s sentence be binding on a judge? Why or why not? (*one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Assignment #12: Role of the lawyer and Foundation Assignment**

[**http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/312?opendocument**](http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe?OpenForm&nav=menu5a&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/312?opendocument)

[**http://www.synchronicsgroup.com/articles/articles\_jurypicking.htm**](http://www.synchronicsgroup.com/articles/articles_jurypicking.htm)

[**http://www.exforsys.com/career-center/career-tracks/the-role-of-a-lawyer.html**](http://www.exforsys.com/career-center/career-tracks/the-role-of-a-lawyer.html)

[**http://www.trialtheater.com/articles/role.htm**](http://www.trialtheater.com/articles/role.htm)

**Follow the opening, closing, direct and cross examination links:**

[**http://criminaldefense.homestead.com/Direct.html**](http://criminaldefense.homestead.com/Direct.html)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Voir Dire
2. Opening
3. Closing
4. Direct Examination
5. Cross Examination

**Assignment #12 and Foundation Assignment:** Find real court room examples of an opening, closing, direct examination and cross examination (you can find this either in transcript or in video). Choose two: Explain why each was effective from a lawyers standpoint and as a judge/jurors’ standpoint.

**Foundation #4: Introduction to Other Types of Law**

**Overarching Question: - What opportFoundationies for justice and career do various fields of law offer?**

**Enduring Understandings:**

*-an introduction and background to various fields of law*

*- the sub-categories of law that each field covers*

*- how the Supreme Court and lower courts have shaped these fields of law with their decisions*

*- the rights and responsibilities of consumers, citizens, property owners, arbiters and lawyers in these fields of law*

*- a basis for entry, requirements and knowledge into these fields*

**Assignment #13: Introduction to Business and Corporate Law**

[**http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/starting-business/understand-business-law-r#**](http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/starting-business/understand-business-law-r#)

[**http://www.hg.org/corporate-law.html**](http://www.hg.org/corporate-law.html)

[**http://www.angelfire.com/me4/francute/corplaw.htm**](http://www.angelfire.com/me4/francute/corplaw.htm)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Stock vs. Non-stock Corporation
2. 4 legal attributes of a corporation
3. De facto corporation
4. De jure corporation
5. Estoppel corporation
6. Corporate Veil

**Assignment:**

1. Research the case *Salomon v A Salomon and Cos. (1897). Do you agree with the court’s decisions that corporations should be considered a legal person? Why/why not?* (*one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*
2. *Under what situations can the “corporate veil” be pierced and the stockholders are accountable for the corporations actions? Find a case in which the courts allowed this – explain the circumstances and if you agree or disagree with them.* (*one paragraph, 4-7 sentences, providing at least three examples)*

**Assignment #14: Intellectual Property Law**

**Read:**

[**http://www.copyright.gov/title17/**](http://www.copyright.gov/title17/)

[**http://www.bitlaw.com/copyright/fair\_use.html#fair\_use**](http://www.bitlaw.com/copyright/fair_use.html#fair_use)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Copyright
2. Patent
3. Trademark
4. “Fair Use”

**Assignment:** *Choose one of the music copyright cases on* <http://www.fairwagelawyers.com/most-famous-music-copyright-infringment.html>

*Summarize the arguments for each side, what the court held and then respond – do you agree or disagree with the decision, why/why not? (2-3 paragraphs).*

**Assignment #15: Technology Law: Internet Law and Software**

**Read:**

[**http://www.bitlaw.com/index.html**](http://www.bitlaw.com/index.html) **(follow all of the links for internet law)**

**Vocabulary:**

1. Defamation
2. Derivative Work
3. Copyright Concerns
4. Trademark Concerns
5. Linking Concerns

**Assignment** research *A and M records vs. Napster* (2001). Summarize the arguments for each side, how does the case deal with both internet law and copyright infringement, what the court held and then respond – do you agree or disagree with the decision, why/why not? (2-3 paragraphs)

**Assignment #16: Introduction to Sports Law**

**Read:**

[**http://sportslaw.uslegal.com/**](http://sportslaw.uslegal.com/)

[**http://sports-law.blogspot.com/**](http://sports-law.blogspot.com/)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Title IX
2. Promulgate

**Assignment:** Read the case of **SMITH v. NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (1998).** Summarize the arguments for each side, what the court held and then respond – do you agree or disagree with the decision, why/why not? (2-3 paragraphs).

**Assignment #17: Introduction to Legal Writing and Contract Law**

**Read:**

[**http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/legal\_writing**](http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/legal_writing)

[**http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/**](http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Legal Citation
2. Citation Principles
3. Negative Injunction

**Assignment:**

**Choose 1:** Part of legal writing can be contracts:

1. Although English Law, the case of *Carlill v Carbolic Smoke Ball Company* (1892) is an important contract law case. Summarize the arguments for each side, what the court held and then respond – do you agree or disagree with the decision, why/why not? (2-3 paragraphs).
2. Review the contract section of **<http://sportslaw.uslegal.com/> (Assignment 17).** Read the case of **Philadelphia Ball Club, LTD. v. Lajoie** Summarize the arguments for each side, what the court held and then respond – do you agree or disagree with the decision, why/why not? (2-3 paragraphs).

**Assignment #18: Introduction to Immigration Law**

**Read:**

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/immigration> (follow subcategory tabs)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Naturalization
2. Visa
3. Asylum

**Assignment:** Research the proposals for immigration reform. What are the key provisions (or desired provisions) in the reform? Do you agree or disagree with the proposed immigration reform? Why/why not? (2-3 paragraphs)

**Assignment #19: Consumer Protection Law**

**Read:**

[**http://www.fdic.gov/regulations/laws/rules/6500-200.html**](http://www.fdic.gov/regulations/laws/rules/6500-200.html)

[**http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/consumer-protection-laws-business-29641.html**](http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/consumer-protection-laws-business-29641.html)

[**http://www.natlawreview.com/article/consumer-financial-protection-bureau-and-department-justice-collaborate-actions-agai**](http://www.natlawreview.com/article/consumer-financial-protection-bureau-and-department-justice-collaborate-actions-agai)

**Vocabulary:**

1. Deceptive Advertising
2. PFoundationive Damages
3. Deceptive Pricing
4. Statute of Limitations
5. New York State Business Law Section 349
6. Class Action Law Suit

**Assignment:** Read Fink v. Time Warner (2013). What are the arguments in each side? Why did the Appellate Court dismiss the case? Do you agree or disagree with the Appellate Court’s decision? Do you think the Supreme Court should hear this case? Why/whynot? *(2-3 paragraphs)*

**Assignment #20: Other Fields of Law**

**Choose and read about two of the following:** Family Law, Finance Law, Real Estate Law, Civil Rights, Education, Employment/labor, Environmental, Juvenile, Health, International, Entertainment and Tax

**Vocabulary:**

Write down and define 2-3 vocabulary words for each that you think would be important to know in each field.

**Assignment:**

1. What sub-categories does this field cover? (list all specifics)
2. Choose a supreme court case from this field and explain the court’s decision and its impact on this field of law and how future such cases might be tried.

**Assignment #21 -- End Mile Assignment**

**Choose one of the legal professions covered in this course that you may be interested in going into as a profession. Then answer:**

1. **Why did you choose this area of law? (one-two paragraphs)**
2. **Research what are the steps and requirements to become part of this profession? (one-two paragraphs)**
3. **Interview a member of this profession. (5 to 10 minute interview) Many lawfirms will be more than accommodating in a simple phone interview – don’t be shy!** 
   1. **Your interview should include:**
      1. **Why they chose this profession?**
      2. **What do they like and dislike about this profession?**
      3. **How they got into this profession?**
      4. **Would they recommend this profession?**
4. **After your interview, were you encouraged or discouraged to join this profession? Why? (one paragraph)**