

Lecture Course on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Texts (available on Amazon and at Columbia University Bookstore):

- Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy*
- Rothstein, *The Color of Law*
- Tirado, *Hand to Mouth*
- Coates, *Between the World and Me*
- Goldberg, *The Means of Reproduction*
- Stevenson, *Just Mercy*
- Ash, *Free Speech: Ten Principles for a Connected World*
- Forman, *Locking Up Our Own*
- Pollitt, *Pro*
- Turow, *Ultimate Punishment*
- Emmett, *The Fate of the West*
- Recommended: Franzese, *A Short and Happy Guide to Being a College Student*

Course Description: This course explores seminal law and policy to inform contemporary civil rights and civil liberties jurisprudence. Specifically, the readings examine discrimination, class, freedom of speech and the press, the right to privacy, reproductive freedom, criminal procedure and adjudication, the rights of the criminally accused and the death penalty.

Requirements: Students are required to attend all classes. Class participation counts for 20% of the final grade, the take-home midterm for 40% and the take-home final for 40%.

Learning Objectives: This course will provide students with a working knowledge of the legal method of inquiry, as it pertains to matters of constitutional interpretation and adjudication. Civil rights and civil liberties will be assessed in their legal context. Specifically, students will learn to:

1. Read and analyze judicial opinions.
2. Identify the various constitutional standards of judicial review.
3. Apply legal and analytical constructs.
4. Evaluate the merits and shortcomings of the major theoretical debates within the civil liberties discourse, both in oral and written presentations.
5. Analyze and assess contemporary scholarly and journalistic writings on civil rights and civil liberties by critically examining their claims and applicable counterpoints.

Grading: Grades will be calculated as follows:

Class participation: 20%

Take-Home Midterm: 40%

Take-Home Final Exam: 40%

Topics and Readings Schedule

Week One

Overview of the judicial system and court organization; introduction to key concepts of judicial review and theories of constitutional interpretation.

Week Two

Race-Based Discrimination

Rothstein, The Color of Law

Week Three

Race-Based Discrimination

Coates, Between the World and Me

Week Four

Economic Inequality

Tirado, Hand to Mouth

Week Five

Class, Culture and the American Dream

Vance, Hillbilly Elegy

Week Six

Criminal Procedure and Adjudication

Forman, Locking Up Our Own

Excerpts from DuVernay, 13th

Week Seven

The Death Penalty

Turow, Ultimate Punishment

Stevenson, Just Mercy

TAKE HOME MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED

Week Eight

First Amendment Values

Ash, Free Speech: Ten Principles for a Connected World (assigned chapters)

TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE

Week Nine

First Amendment Values

Ash, Free Speech (assigned chapters)

Week Ten

Gender-based Inequality

Goldberg, The Means of Reproduction

Week Eleven

The Right to Privacy

Pollitt, *Pro*

Serrin, The Feminist Case Against Abortion

<http://feministsforlife.org/-taf/2004/summer-fall/Summer-Fall104.pdf>

Week Twelve

The Right to Privacy: Marriage Equality, Transgender Equality

Posted Readings

Week Thirteen

In Summation

Emmett, The Fate of the West

TAKE-HOME FINAL DISTRIBUTED