

DePaul University College of Law Syllabus and Statement on Grading Policy for Jurisprudence

To: Jurisprudence Students

From: Professor Blackman

Date: January 14th, 2009

Re: Course Purpose and Materials

**Texts: Rodney Jay Blackman, *Procedural Natural Law*
Dennis Patterson, *Philosophy of Law and Legal Theory* (paperback)
Rodney Jay Blackman, *Foreign Fanaticism and American Constitutional Values***

There will also be additional handouts.

PURPOSES:

The purposes of the course include the following:

To help the students think and write about the philosophic underpinnings of the law in a more critical, comprehensive and coherent manner; to develop analytic skills and the use of applied logic.

COURSE THEMES:

The following are among the course themes:

To examine what 'law' is; to analyze whether there is a necessary moral dimension to 'law;' to examine what constitutes a just state; to examine why the American state has survived over two centuries and why other radical ideologically based states have not, to examine whether radical religious ideology could pose a danger to the American democratic system and, if so, what if anything can be done about it, to examine whether the American society and its legal system reflect race and gender and, if so, what should be done about it. If there is additional time, we will also focus on possible gender orientation, look and species bias.

WHAT COURSE IS NOT:

This course does not qualify as a paper course for DePaul law school purposes. No outside research will be required, expected or even desired. Nor will this course help you on the bar exam.

GRADING POLICY:

90% of the grade will be based on a **Take Home** final exam. The exam will be based on your readings and class material. You will be required to articulate your own well thought out understanding of the thinkers and/or issues assigned as well as your own take on these thinkers and issues. You will not be asked to provide material from outside the assigned readings and your grade might be lowered if you do so. The **Take Home** exam will consist of seven questions. The maximum length will be 21 double spaced pages using 12 pica type size.

In grading the **Take Home** exam, you will be judged on the basis of some or all of the following factors:

1. familiarity with the materials assigned in the course readings;
2. articulation and analysis of the issues presented by the question(s);
3. the application of the relevant assigned philosophic principles to the issues presented by the question(s);
4. the quality of your analysis;
5. the organization and clarity of your thoughts;
6. the persuasiveness and appropriateness of your language;
7. your grammar;
8. your avoidance of irrelevance, incoherence and inconsistency.

Depending on your collective wishes, the **Take Home** exam will either be passed out on the last class date, the date assigned by the Law School or some date in-between. If it is passed out on the assigned date, it will be due in my office, Room 714, (or under my office door) by 5:00 p.m. seven days later. If it is passed out earlier than the assigned date, the date of its return will be subject to negotiation between you and myself.

In addition, up to 10% of your grade will depend on your class performance. You will be given up to 10% positive credit for superior quality and quantity classroom performance. Class attendance is expected and a record of your attendance will be noted. You will be given up to 10% negative credit for unjustifiably poor attendance record and/or poor class participation. If you are absent for more than seven class sessions

without adequate justification, your grade might be lowered or you might be dismissed from the course or given an F.

Class performance coming within the middle range will be treated as neither adding to nor subtracting from your total grade.

Upon completion of the semester, you will receive one of the following letter grades in the course that corresponds to the following descriptive phrase:

A corresponds to excellent performance;

B+ corresponds to very good performance;

B corresponds to good performance;

C+ corresponds to highly adequate performance;

C corresponds to adequate performance;

D corresponds to marginal performance;

F corresponds to failing performance.

Unless the Law School policy requires it, and this depends on the enrollment size, the grade will not be curved. As I write this, curving is unlikely to be required.

ASSIGNMENTS:

First Day: Blackman (*Procedural*), pp. 3-37.

Second Class: Blackman, pp. 37-74.

Third Class: pp. 75-105.

Fourth Class: pp. 105-140.

Fifth Class: pp. 141-194.

Sixth Class: Patterson, pp. 9-21.

Seventh Class: pp. 22-45.

Eighth Class: pp. 46-65.

Ninth Class: pp. 69-90.

Tenth Class: pp. 91-115.

Eleventh Class: pp. 116-133.

Twelfth Class: pp. 134-143; 147-155.

Thirteenth Class: pp. 155-179.

Fourteenth Class: 180-190.

Fifteenth Class: pp. 192-216.

Sixteenth Class: pp. 216-252.

Seventeenth Class: pp. 253-281.

Eighteenth Class: pp. 325-349.

Nineteenth Class: pp. 349-373.

Twentieth Class: pp. 374-388.

Twenty First Class: pp. 389-417.

Twenty Second Class: Blackman, *Foreign Fanaticism*, through the American Revolution.

Twenty Third Class: the Nazi Revolution,

Twenty Fourth Class: the French Revolution, the Chinese Revolution.

Twenty Fifth Class: the Soviet Revolution

Twenty Sixth Class: Religion.

Twenty Seventh Class: Religion.

Twenty Eighth Class: handouts on critical race and sex theory.

These assignments are subject to change.