

Econ 320A (Law and Economics) Syllabus

Professor: Sean Inoue

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Office: 10 Spear House (2nd Floor)

Office Hours: ONLINE Monday 3:00-4:00 PM, in-person Wednesday 2:00-3:00 PM and Thursday 11:30 AM-12:30 PM or by appointment.

Term: Fall 2022

Time: 11:20 AM-12:10 PM

Location: 27 Persson Hall

Overview

This course analyzes the Economics of Law. We will utilize Economics to think about the economic impact of laws, efficiency of laws, and the economics of the legal process. We will examine papers and models in different areas of law such as Tort Law (damages), Criminal Law, and Contract Law. This course will utilize many different fields of Economics in application to Law, and although this course utilizes a textbook, a large portion of the learning in this course will be done through exploring papers in the field. We will mainly use game theory and economic micro theory, but students who are interested in using other branches of Economics will have ample opportunity to explore.

After the introduction of the course where we will learn about the legal process, each week there will be a presentation by a student/students on a paper followed by a discussion of that paper. Additionally, each student will submit a project/research paper by the end of the course that reflects a deeper dive into one specific topic in Law & Economics.

Course Text

The course text for this class is Law and Economics (6th Edition) by Robert Cooter and Thomas Ulen, which is available for free at this link:

<https://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/books/2/>

We will also pull from many papers within the field of the Economics of Law, which will be posted on Moodle.

Grade Breakdown

In this class you will earn your grade according to the following breakdown:

Participation	10 %
Friday Presentation	15 %
Homework	15 %
Final Project/Research Paper	20 %
Midterm	20 %
Final Exam	20 %
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Total	100%

Attendance and Class Participation Policies

Regular attendance and class participation are expected, and are worth 10% of the overall grade. This is mainly to encourage participation in the weekly discussions, which will rely on you reading a paper for the week and being knowledgeable enough to discuss that paper. A few absences or some discussions in which participation is limited is fine, but frequent absences and/or silence during a majority of discussions will hurt this grade. I highly recommend taking notes in class, and encourage questions. The exams and homework are both based on the materials that I cover in class, and while the textbook and papers can be a useful guide, it cannot replace the experience of being in a classroom.

Homework

Homework will be posted periodically and will be graded based on whether it is turned in. I may decide to grade a couple of the more challenging problems to provide feedback. Upon turning in of homework, a solution will be posted. Please make sure to look at the solutions, see what you may have missed/don't understand, and come to office hours to resolve those questions.

Presentation

Each week (typically Friday) after the introduction there will be a presentation by a student/group of students on a paper. I will suggest a paper on the topic, but each student should feel free to look for an alternative. The paper must be locked in one week in advance, and we will determine the schedule 2-3 weeks before the presentation. The presentation on the paper should be around 15 minutes, but it can be longer or shorter, and then the student presenting the paper will lead the discussion on the paper with questions or with points of discussion. When you are presenting, you should be near an expert on the paper: you should be very knowledgeable with some questions about details, but you shouldn't feel the need to answer every question that others have, or know the answer to every question. When you aren't presenting, you should have read and understood enough of the paper to ask questions and to discuss questions about the paper.

A student who misses a presentation day for any reason (which a majority of the participation grade is based off of and which may contain material pertaining to the homework) and wants to get participation credit must submit a minimum 2 paragraph essay no more than 1 week after the missed presentation day that both summarizes the paper and discusses any takeaways/questions you may have.

Project/Research Paper

There will be a project/research paper due on the last day of class. This paper will either be a research paper on a topic in law, going into detail about three papers in a particular topic of law, or you can execute a theory model/empirical analysis of a particular topic in law. We will discuss more details in a future class, but keep this project in mind as you exploring different topics in Law.

Grading and Exam Policy

The midterm will happen sometime in the middle of the semester around when we cover contracting (date TBD). The final will occur during the final period on Tuesday December 13th at 12:00 and will be cumulative.

A student who needs to miss an exam/presentation day must notify me as early as possible with a valid excuse unless it is a medical emergency (vacation/set dates of travel are not appropriate excuses). Students who email me with a valid excuse will, depending on the circumstances, either make up the missed midterm or have another test count in place of the missed exam. Students who fail to attend an exam/presentation day without first notifying me with a proper excuse will be given a 0 on the exam. Students who miss an exam due to illness or other emergency should contact me as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

If you must miss a presentation day, your partner will be responsible for presenting the material and running the class, and you will have to send me a report about the paper to make up for it. If you work alone on a presentation or both members are sick, you will send me the presentation and I will do it, and all members will send me a report of the paper in place of the presentation.

Classroom Behavior Policy

To foster a positive learning environment, students and instructors have a shared responsibility. We want a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment where all of us feel comfortable with each other and where we can challenge ourselves to succeed. While in-person, please wear a mask at all times for the first few weeks and we will reevaluate

throughout the semester. Additionally, refrain from behavior that would distract others from learning, and please be respectful towards everyone during our discussions.

Special Needs/Adjustments

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Colgate University is committed to ensuring comprehensive educational access and adjustments for all registered students seeking access to meet course requirements and fully participate in all University programs and activities. Students with documented disabilities/conditions are encouraged to request these services by registering with the Office of Disability Services.

Academic adjustments are provided via the student's Academic Adjustment Plan and must be renewed each and every semester through the Office of Disability Services. Once renewed, it is the student's sole responsibility to provide their Academic Adjustment Plan to their faculty members. Faculty members must be provided a minimum of one business week (or five business days) to review and implement the student's Academic Adjustment Plan. If the student fails to provide faculty with a minimum of five business days notice before their intended use of adjustments, faculty may not have the ability to provide said adjustments. For information related to these services, policies/procedures, and/or to schedule an appointment, please contact the Office of Disability Services using the information provided:

Evelyn Lester, Director Office of Disability Services, elester@colgate.edu, (315) 228-7375, Lathrop Hall, 101A

Renée Chapin, Coordinator Office of Disability Services, rchapin@colgate.edu, (315) 228-7375, Lathrop Hall, 101A

Code of Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to share intellectual views and discuss freely the principles and applications of course materials. However, graded work/exercises must be the product of independent effort unless otherwise instructed. Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Academic Integrity as described in the Student Handbook. See <https://www.colgate.edu/current-students/student-handbook/student-rights-and-responsibilities/academic-honor-code-and-for-details> for details. For undergraduate students found to violate this code, the outcome will range from failing the assignment to failing the class along with disciplinary probation.

Office Hours and Email Policy

My office hours will be Monday online from 3:00-4:00 PM, in-person Wednesday from 2:00-3:00 PM, in-person Thursday from 11:30-12:30 or by appointment. Generally, any email sent to me will receive a response within 24 hours.

Subject to Change Statement

All information in this syllabus, outside of the grading and exam policy, is subject to change by the instructor with advance notice.

Course Outline

This schedule may (and probably will) change throughout the semester

Section	Chapters
Introduction & Overview of Law (no presentations)	Ch 1 and 3
Property Law	Ch 4 and 5
Tort Law	Ch 6 and 7
Contract Law	Ch 8 and 9
Midterm Around Here (Maybe During Contract Law)	
Legal Process	Ch 10 and 11
Criminal law	Ch 12 and 13