Syllabus TCORE 113

Law and Popular Culture: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Critical Analysis

University of Washington Tacoma
Winter 2018
MWF 11:00am – 12:20pm
Room: JOY 109

Course Instructor: Dr. Sarah Hampson
Contact email: hampsons@uw.edu
Office location: WCG 314
Office hours: Mon and Wed 1-2pm and by appointment

Course Description:
This course is an exploration of the relationship between law and popular culture. In exploring this relationship, we will become acquainted with methods of social science inquiry that treats cultural constructs such as laws and films as texts that can be analyzed as sources and products of meaning-making in society. This course stresses the pervasiveness of both law and popular culture in our lives and helps students to develop the skills necessary to think critically about both.

Required Texts
Michael Asimow and Shannon Mader, Law and Popular Culture: A Course Book 2nd Edition

Additional readings will be provided on Canvas. Please check the syllabus for dates that these are required.

NOTE: A number of films/tv shows will be shown in class and will be available afterward on 24-hour course reserve. However, due to limited availability, it is highly recommended that you are present for the in-class screenings.

Course-Specific Learning Objectives
As a result of the work completed in this course, students will be better able to:
• Critically evaluate and analyze various kinds of culturally-produced “texts”
• Think critically about their own positionality in relation to culturally-produced texts
• Synthesize course materials and questions in order to answer broader, course-length questions about the relationship between law and popular culture
• Identify and research a particular question related to law and popular culture and;
• Communicate research effectively in both oral and written form

CORE Learning Goals
The Core program prepares students for success at the upper division level. The following are the learning goals for these courses, and these goals inform our course’s specific learning objectives:

**Inquiry and Critical Thinking**
- inquiry & problem solving: collect, evaluate, and analyze information and resources to solve problems or answer questions.
- research methods & application: approach complex issues by taking a large question and breaking it down into manageable pieces.
- synthesis & context: make meaningful connections among assignments and readings in order to develop a sense of the 'big picture.'

**Communication/Self-Expression**
- argumentation: formulate an original thesis-driven argument and sustain it in both written and verbal communication.
- analysis: identify, analyze, and summarize/represent the key elements of a text.
- disciplinary awareness: enter/place themselves into an existing dialogue (intellectual, political, etc.).
- expression of ideas: express ideas clearly in writing and speaking in order to synthesize and evaluate information before presenting it.

**Global Perspective-Diversity-Civic Engagement**
- disciplinary perspective: understand events and processes as ‘disciplinarily’ situated.
- global perspective: interact with concepts, ideas, and processes related to the interdependences between personal, local, and global relationships.
- diversity: think outside of cultural norms and values, including their own perspectives, to critically engage the larger world.
- civic engagement: interact with concepts, ideas, and processes related to civic engagement.

**Grading/Assignments**

**Grading Scale**

In compliance with the University of Washington’s grading system, your final grade will be submitted on a 4.0 scale. For those assignments that are based on percentages, the scale below will be used to convert to the 4.0 scale. Please feel free to speak with me at any time about your course grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grades</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100 (Exceptional)</td>
<td>3.5-4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-89 (Above average)</td>
<td>2.5-3.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-79 (Satisfactory)</td>
<td>1.5-2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>62-69 (Substandard)</td>
<td>0.7-1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-61 (Failing)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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**Participation:** (10%) - This grade encompasses active class participation. This is a heavily discussion-oriented course, and participation is required. I expect students to turn up to class having completed the assigned readings and ready to discuss or otherwise engage with the assignments. In the first week of class, you will be assigned to a working group, which will problem-solve and engage in discussion both in class and online. There will also be opportunity for general class discussion both in class and online. If you feel unable to speak in class, please come see me immediately (i.e. within the first week or two of class) to
discuss this, and we can work out an alternative method of participation for this grade. 
Please note: half of the points for this grade will be assigned anonymously by the 
other members of your working group, and half by me.

Short Essays (30%): You will complete three short, 3-page writing assignments over the 
course of the quarter (see schedule of assignments below for details). Each of these must 
be completed by their assigned date and handed in during class or online. There will 
be no makeups, though if you miss class you can still hand in your essay for a maximum of 
8 (rather than 10) points. Each of these assignments will be graded using the following 
simple rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Full credit (2 points)</th>
<th>Partial credit (1 point)</th>
<th>No credit (0 points)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Responds thoughtfully to one or more of the guided reading questions</td>
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<td>Critically examines the main arguments/ideas of the reading</td>
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<td>Uses quotes and/or examples from the readings effectively to illustrate or support points made</td>
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<td>Provides an example from outside the text to illustrate a concept or idea in the reading</td>
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<td>Attends class and shares written response with small group</td>
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Total points received /10

Reading Quizzes/Homework (30%) All reading quizzes are to be completed on Canvas by a 
certain date, and may be completed open-book, open-note. Because they can be completed 
anytime, anywhere, late quizzes are not accepted, however, I will drop the lowest grade.

Required Visit to the UWT Teaching and Learning Center: (5%) At some point in the 
quarter, you must set up an in person appointment with a UWT writing tutor for help with 
your writing. You can bring one of your short essays, or the group paper. You must upload 
short 1-2 paragraph description of what help you got at the meeting with the tutor and 
what actions you took as a result of the meeting. This must be submitted on Canvas no later 
than Friday, March 2\textsuperscript{nd} though due to a lack of appointment availability at the end of the 
quarter, I strongly suggest you set up your appointment earlier.

Group Project: (25%) Your working group will conduct research on the relationship 
between law and a particular example of popular culture and present that research in oral 
and written form. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and on Canvas. The grade 
will consist of three elements. 1) Submission of a viable research question (5%) 2) Group 
research presentation (10%) and 3) Group research paper (10%)

Inclusive Learning Environment
As your professor, I strive to foster an inclusive classroom. I require that everyone in this 
class respect one another’s backgrounds and beliefs, and that we work together to assure 
that everyone’s voice is heard in this classroom. Additionally, I affirm people of all gender 
expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on 
the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender 
pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns about class inclusivity, please do not 
hesitate to speak with me.
**Missed Course Work/Exams**
In order to make up exams, I require that you provide me with documented evidence of medical or other kind of excuse. **Scheduled flights or other avoidable contradictions do not constitute an emergency.**

**Plagiarism:**
I read all of your assignments very carefully, and require electronic copies of written assignments to be submitted, so I can easily check suspicious text using Turnitin. I am therefore highly likely to spot an instance of plagiarism. Most acts of plagiarism occur, however, because of ignorance of what plagiarism actually is, so I'll spell it out for you:

*Plagiarism:* "an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author" (dictionary.com).

If you are unsure of whether something you write counts as plagiarism, **ask me**. But the bottom line is this: if in doubt, **always cite**.

**Electronic Devices**
A study recently published in *Psychological Science* demonstrated that taking notes longhand is much more effective at helping students to process class material than taking them on a laptop – even when the laptop was used only to take notes, and not surf the web, etc. ([http://pss.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/05/21/0956797614524581](http://pss.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/05/21/0956797614524581)).

If you must use your laptop, you will not be restricted from doing so – you are adults, and this is your education – but I strongly encourage you to consider the benefits of longhand notes.

Cell phones are another story. I find students checking texts during class to be extremely distracting both to me and to the class as a whole. **Please turn off your cell phones during class as a sign of respect for me and your fellow students.**

**Disability Support**
I am **100% committed to working with students with disabilities of any kind.** Please approach me at any point if you require support to make instruction in this course more accessible.

Furthermore, The University of Washington Tacoma is committed to making physical facilities and instructional programs accessible to students with disabilities. Disability Support Services (DSS) functions as the focal point for coordination of services for students with disabilities. In compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any enrolled student at UW Tacoma who has an appropriately documented physical, emotional, or mental disability that "substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working]," is eligible for services from DSS. If you are wondering if you may be eligible for accommodations on our campus, please contact the DSS reception desk at 692-4522, or visit [http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/dss_about.cfm/](http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/dss_about.cfm/)

**Other Student Resources:**
*Teaching and Learning Center:*
The Teaching and Learning Center in SNO 260 offers free academic support for students at all levels. Call 253-692-4417 or visit http://tacoma.uw.edu/tlc.

Counseling Center:
The Counseling Center offers short-term, problem-focused counseling to UW Tacoma students who may feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of college, work, family, and relationships. Counselors are available to help students cope with stresses and personal issues that may interfere with their ability to perform in school. The service is provided confidentially and without additional charge to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students. To schedule an appointment, please call 692-4522 or stop by the Student Counseling Center (SCC), located in MAT 354. Additional information can also be found by visiting http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/scc_about.cfm/

Library:
(253) 692-4440
http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/library/LIB
The UWT Library provides resources and services to support students at all levels of expertise. We guide students through the research process, helping them learn how to develop effective research strategies and find and evaluate appropriate resources. For assistance or to schedule an appointment, visit us at the Reference Desk in the Library, email tacref@u.washington.edu or phone 253-692-4442. For more information about the Library and its services, see http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/library/

Campus Safety Information:
Non-Emergency (253) 692-4416
Emergency (253) 692-4888
http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/security/
DOU 180

Escort Service: Safety Escorts are available Monday - Thursday 5:00pm - 10:30pm. They can be reached either through the duty officer or by dialing #300 from a campus phone.

In case of a fire alarm: Take your valuables and leave the building. Plan to return to class once the alarm has stopped. Do not return until you have received an all-clear from somebody "official," the web or email.
In case of an earthquake: DROP, COVER, and HOLD. Once the shaking stops take your valuables and leave the building. Do not plan to return for the rest of the day. Do not return to the building until you have received an all-clear from somebody "official," the web or email.

For more information, please refer to the Emergency and Safety Plan prepared by the UWT Safety Committee:
Schedule of Assignments

I. Introduction
Wednesday, January 3rd
Required Readings:
None for today

Homework
None for today

In Class:
Introductions and Syllabus discussion
Brief lecture: Law as Culture as Law

II. The Adversary System and the Trial Genre

Friday, January 5th
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, Introduction (p 3-21)

Homework
None for today

In Class
Watch: Anatomy of a Murder

Monday, January 8th
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, (p 23-30)

Homework
Reading quiz on Canvas

In Class:
Watch: Anatomy of a Murder

Wednesday, January 10th
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, (p 31-43)

Homework
Reading Quiz on Canvas

In Class:
Peer-review of essays
Lecture and Discussion: *Anatomy of a Murder*, the adversary system and the trial genre

**Friday, January 12th**
Required Readings:
**PDF on Canvas** David Papke, “The American Courtroom Trial”

Homework
**Short Essay #1 Due in Class** (see Canvas for assignment details)

In class
Discussion: *Anatomy of a Murder*, the adversary system and the trial genre (continued)

**Monday, January 15th – NO CLASS MLK DAY**

**III. Lawyers on Television**

**Wednesday, January 17th**
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, (p 124 - 147)

Homework
Reading Quiz on Canvas

In Class:
*Boston Legal* Season 1, Episodes 1&2

**Friday, January 19th**
Required Readings:
Watch at least one episode of a television show that contains courtroom scenes (options include, but are not limited to: *Law & Order, The Good Wife, Suits, Damages*)

Homework
**On one page that you bring to class and upload to Canvas**, jot down the program, the type of case featured on the program (criminal or civil) and a brief summary of the plot. What was the outcome of the case? Who won? Why?

In class
IV. **Media, Activism and Law**

**Monday, January 22nd – GUEST SPEAKER**

*Required Readings:*
TBA

*Homework*
None for today

*In Class:*
Guest speaker – “media activism”

**Wednesday, January 24th**

*Required Readings:*
PDF on Canvas, Adedayo Abah, “Popular Culture and Social Change in Africa”

*Homework*

**Bring to class and upload to Canvas** one page discussing an example of an artifact of popular culture and why you believe exemplifies this relationship between popular culture and activism for social change. (More details on Canvas assignment)

*In Class:*
Discussion: The relationship between popular culture and social change

**Friday, January 26th – GUEST SPEAKER**

*Required Readings:*
TBA

*Homework*
None for today

*In Class:*
Guest speaker – “media activism”

V. **Criminal Justice in Popular Culture**

**Monday, January 29th**

*Required Readings:*
Asimow & Mader, (p 153-163)

*Homework*
Reading Quiz on Canvas

**In Class:**
Watch: *Law & Order* Season 5, Episodes 1&2

**Wednesday, January 31st**
**Required Readings:**
Asimow & Mader, (p 164-179)

**Homework**
Reading Quiz on Canvas

**In Class:**
Discussion: U.S. Criminal Process on television

**Friday, February 2nd**
**Required Readings:**
Asimow & Mader, (p 181-190)

**Homework**
Reading Quiz on Canvas

**In class**
Watch: *12 Angry Men*

**Monday, February 5th**
**Required Readings:**
Asimow & Mader, (p 191-200)

**Homework**
Reading Quiz on Canvas

**In class**
Watch: *12 Angry Men*

**Wednesday, February 7th**
**Required Readings:**
PDF on Canvas, Hans “Deliberation and Dissent”

**Homework**

**Courthouse visit** – You must visit the Pierce County District Courthouse and observe trial proceedings for one hour and **complete the courthouse visit worksheet**
In class
Lecture and Discussion: Juries and the relationship between film and politics

Friday, February 9th
Required Readings:
None for today

Homework
Short Essay #2 Due in Class (see Canvas for assignment details)

In class
Peer Review of Essays
Lecture: Developing research questions
Time to work in groups on project

VI. Civil Justice and Popular Culture
Monday, February 12th
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, (p 241-255)

Homework
Submit on Canvas a group project research question

In class
Watch: A Civil Action

Wednesday, February 14th
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, (p 255-270)

Homework
Reading Quiz on Canvas

In class
Watch: A Civil Action

Friday, February 16th
Required Readings:
PDF on Canvas Taunya Banks, “Civil Trials: A Film Illusion?”

Homework
Reading Quiz on Canvas

In class
Lecture and Discussion: Civil trials and their popular presentation

VII. Interlude: Working on Research Skills
Monday, February 19th – NO CLASS PRESIDENTS DAY

Wednesday, February 21st
Required Readings:
Canvas Module: Introduction to Evaluating Sources

Homework
Reading Quiz on Canvas

In class
Discussion: Locating and reading high-quality sources for research
Field trip to the library and TLC

Friday, February 23rd
Required Readings:
You should skim the book you checked out from the library (read the intro/conclusion and skim the chapters to determine what might be relevant).

Homework
Locate and check out at least one book you think will be useful for your research project. Bring to class and upload on canvas a 1-page paper that includes 1) the correct APA citation for the book and 2) a description of how you think the book will contribute to the project.

In class
Working group activity

VIII. Civil Justice Continued: Civil Rights
Monday, February 26th
Required Readings:
Asimow & Mader, (p 271-301)

Homework
Reading Quiz on Canvas

In class
Watch: Philadelphia

Wednesday, February 28th
Required Readings:
**PDF on Canvas** Bradford Kelley, “The Rainbow Sea Change” (p 283-309)

**Homework**
Reading Quiz on Canvas

**In class**
Watch: *Philadelphia*

**Friday, March 2nd**

*Required Readings:*
**PDF on Canvas** Bradford Kelley, “The Rainbow Sea Change” (p 309-331)

**Homework**
**Short Essay #3 Due in Class (see Canvas for assignment details)**

**In class**
Peer Review of Essays
Discussion: Popular culture, law, and social change

**Monday, March 5th**

*Required Readings:*
TBA

*Homework*
TBA

*In class*
Group Presentations

**Wednesday, March 7th**

*Required Readings:*
TBA

*Homework*
TBA

*In class*
Group Presentations

**Friday, March 9th**

*Required Readings:*
None for today

**Homework**
TBA

In class
Class wrap up and discussion
Course evaluations

FINAL GROUP RESEARCH PAPER IS DUE ON CANVAS NO LATER THAN MONDAY, MARCH 12TH AT 11:59PM

**This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be stated in class and on Canvas**