

3L SEMINARS—AY 2018-2019
(fulfills the 3L Writing Requirement)

Fall 2018

301-A Seminar: Environmental Law (Blomquist)

This course will consist of a set of readings on Climate Change. The readings will be presented by students for discussion. Two drafts of a paper will be required addressing a legal/policy issue of Climate Change.

301-B Seminar-Drug Law (Brown)

The course will review the U.S. drug laws from the perspective of before and after the war on drugs. The modern era of drug law enforcement began under the Nixon administration and the Controlled Substance Act of 1970. The Act placed controlled substances under federal jurisdiction and created the Drug Enforcement Administration. The 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act created the controversial differential sentencing structure of 100 to 1 for crack cocaine versus powder cocaine. No legislation has had a greater impact on incarceration rates than the enhanced sentencing structure for crack cocaine. Study after study traces the soaring incarceration rates to strategic application of laws by federal and local law enforcement.

After nearly 30 years of draconian laws and soaring incarceration rates, the tide may be changing. States can no longer afford to maintain the immense budgets for corrections after a devastating recession. Federal prison populations are decreasing. Attorney General Eric Holder has taken bold stances in equalizing the sentencing regime between crack and powder cocaine. This course will review attempts at dismantling the regime created by the 1986 Act. U.S. drug laws have a convoluted and controversial history. This course will explore the changing attitudes over the last forty-five years through legislation, research studies and popular culture. Race permeates what should be impartial legislation. The goal of the course is not only to give a history of the American drug laws but to give a critique of the impact of such laws. Race will be used as the barometer to measure how neutral laws can have a disparate impact.

Spring 2019

301-A Seminar: Comparative Islamic Law (Kutty)

Introduction to the history and basic concepts of traditional Islamic law, followed by an account of the reasons why Muslims during the 19th and 20th centuries began to question some (but not all) of the traditional assumptions about how they should look for God's law. The course will finish discuss some of the new understandings of Islamic law (some progressive and liberal, some reactionary and anti-liberal) that are today competing for the hearts and minds of Muslims who want their law to be "Islamic." It will conclude with discussions of the role that something called "Islamic law" plays in the legal system of several contemporary, Muslim majority states. Students will learn how to critically analyse the discussions about "Islamic law" among legislators, judges and other authorities who administer the legal system and by citizens subject to "Islamic law". The course will be taught from a comparative law perspective and will emphasize research and writing.

301-B Seminar: Intercollegiate Sports Law (Straubel)

The Intercollegiate Sports Law Seminar will cover the structure, operation, and rules of the NCAA and the legal issues facing the NCAA. After covering that back ground information, students will research, write, and orally present papers on legal issues facing the NCAA.

301-C Seminar: Natural Resources Law and Policy in the American West (Wehling)

Students will fulfill the third-year research and writing requirement through an introduction to the historical, legal, and policy development of the management of natural resources in the American West. The American West would be defined primarily by EPA Regions 8 and 9; areas also known as the Mountains and Plains and the Pacific Southwest, comprising 9 states and more than 130 tribal nations. Through readings, discussions, and student papers, examine the competing interests in uses of land and water and the legal complexities in balancing commerce, conservation, and preservation. With a focus on federal land, explore the shifting American culture, values, economics, and politics that interact with federal statutes and western regional perspectives.