Political Science 200: Introduction to Law and Commerce;  
Spring Quarter 2010  
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Catalog Course Description:  
This is a holistic, case method course which uses a critical thinking model to introduce the U.S. legal system through an examination of several substantive areas of law. Covers procedural and jurisdiction issues, constitutional law, survey of crimes, torts; including negligence and product liability, agency, and property issues. Uses business environment perspective, but also considers general social context within which these laws have emerged. Discusses structure of American legal system and investigates sources of law for that system. Satisfies social science distribution requirement for AA or AB-DTA degree. Prerequisite: Reading 94, or be eligible for Reading 104.

Text: Required: Primiani, Processing the Law; A Holistic Approach. Recommended: Mann and Roberts, Business Law and the Regulation of Business, Custom Edition. NOTE: Relevant portions of this text may be available online through www.I-chapters.com (see Login Instructions for I-chapters on the last page of this syllabus pack, and also on my website below). Also required is also a small blue booklet entitled Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking, Concepts and Tools, by Paul and Elder which is adjacent to the textbooks in the bookstore. Website: www.instruction.greenriver.edu/fprimiani The information on this site may change periodically, and is not always the most current. Check with the instructor before relying upon specific information. Note: A WIKI site, or the college “Angel learning” website may be used to supplement the course. Both sites are linked to the website above.

I. Introduction

The purpose of this course is to expose you to several broad areas of law and the general context within which disputes are resolved. This course will require a significant amount of participation, including group work in a “case presentation” context (see below). Therefore, reading comprehension and class attendance/participation is an important component of this class and your grade. If English is your second language, you are encouraged to have your reading comprehension evaluated on the Compass Test, or take a Legal Terminology class (Bus E 109), which may be taken concurrently. No tutor may be available for the course, and the instructor will not devote much time to basic language interpretation. In the next few days groups and cases will be assigned. You will be guided as to how to use critical thinking skills in the analysis of presentation cases. If you have reservations or questions about group work or case presentations, you are encouraged to the instructor after class.

II. Course Objectives:

A. Overarching Institutional Learning Outcomes:

Green River Community College has committed to the achievement of a standard set of learning outcomes that are to be expected for every student attending classes at this institution. These are global outcomes, which are felt to be inherently important to the
concept of an “educated mind”. This class is committed to the development of these traits and skills in each student. The outcomes are as follows:

1. Critical Thinking:

   **Definition**: Critical thinking finds expression in all disciplines and everyday life. It is characterized by an ability to reflect upon thinking patterns, including the role of emotions on thoughts, and to rigorously assess the quality of thought through its work products. Critical thinkers routinely evaluate thinking processes and alter them, as necessary, to facilitate an improvement in their thinking and potentially foster certain dispositions or intellectual traits over time.

   We will use critical thinking on a regular basis to process the course content. You will learn how to map out the logic of particular cases and use appropriate standards to assess each case's reasoning, as well as your own.

2. Quantitative Reasoning:

   **Definition**: Quantitative Reasoning encompasses abilities necessary for a student to become literate in today’s technological world. Quantitative reasoning begins with basic skills and extends to problem solving. This outcome includes abilities designed to help students: (1) that they value quantitative reasoning, (2) that they become confident in their ability to reason quantitatively, (3) that they use quantitative reasoning to solve problems, and (4) that they use quantitative reasoning to communicate.

   As law often involves abstract and intangible concepts. We will learn and apply tools, concepts, and tests which are used in law to quantify such legal intangibles as due process, equal protection, and legal balancing tests including the “substantial” and “compelling” interest tests.

3. Responsibility:

   **Definition**: Responsibility encompasses those behaviors and dispositions necessary for students to be effective members of a community. This outcome is designed to help students recognize the value of a commitment to those responsibilities which will enable them to work successfully individually and with others.

   In the case method approach, teams will be set up for which each team member becomes partially responsible for the group outcome and grade. Students will also become exposed to group cooperation and negotiation skills in determining their overall grade.

4. Written Communication:

   **Definition**: Written Communication encompasses all the abilities necessary for effective expression of thoughts, feelings, and ideas in written form. This outcome includes abilities designed to help students: 1) learn to value clear written communication, 2) demonstrate a clear sense of purpose, 3) gain confidence in their written communications skills, and 4) improve their ability to assess the effectiveness of their own writing as well as the writing of others.

   Students will be provided the opportunity for written communication of course content in group and individual activities or exams. In addition, groups will utilize PowerPoint presentations to communicate their group assignments in summarized written form.

5. Valuing Diversity:

   **Definition**: Valuing diversity encompasses those behaviors and dispositions necessary for students to be effective members of a changing world. This outcome is designed to help students understand, respect, and value the attitudes and practices which may be different from their own
by considering various perspectives in areas of race, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, age, culture, disability, and/or sexual orientation.

The system of logical analysis in the Case Method approach involves consideration of various Points of View which may relate to changing social and cultural factors stated above. Each group will be expected to present various perspectives for each case presentation.

6. Oral Communication:

Though oral communication is not yet campus-wide outcome, it is highly recommended as part of the transfer degree program. In this class, students will be provided the opportunity to develop speaking and presentation skills while presenting case assignments.

B. General Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, each student should be able to:

1. Display a working knowledge of the functions of law in society, and the factors that affect the evolution of laws over time.

2. Understand the fundamental Concepts of Jurisdiction, Legal Procedure, Criminal Law, Torts, Agency, and some Contract principles, and how they fit under the umbrella of Constitutional principles.

3. Demonstrate an ability to concisely articulate the specific holdings and reasoning in given assigned cases.

4. Work cooperatively and effectively in group presentations.

5. Articulate and use several “balancing tests” commonly used in the resolution of public policy and Constitutional law cases.

6. Understand, appreciate, and reflect on the elements of thought as they are applied to case analysis.

7. Recognize and apply certain intellectual criteria used to evaluate the merit of a particular argument, case, or presentation.

8. *Recognize and articulate relevant economic principles and perspectives within assigned Legal cases. (for Law and Econ class)

III. Grading

The grade for this class will be partially based upon the results of content examinations (midterms) that will be given throughout the quarter, plus a Final Examination or Presentation. Unit or content exams will generally be given at the end of each 2 or 3 chapters in the text. You will also be graded on your regularly assigned group case presentations. Each person in the group will receive the same raw score, but self appraisal “adjustments” may be negotiated within each group, as long as the overall group average score is not exceeded (refer to Class Rules). Essentially, Grades will be weighted as follows:
A. 2 or 3 Content Midterms: 25%
B. Quizzes or Special Assignments: 10%
B. at least 2 Regular Case Presentations: 25%
C. Cumulative Final Exam or Case Presentation (TBD): 25%
D. Participation (formal in class, and/or informal “wiki” contributions): 10%
F. Class attendance 5% (i.e. -2% per class hour for unexcused absences, or tardiness)

NOTICE: Z grades or unofficial withdrawals are no longer granted at GRCC. If you do not withdraw or seek a Credit/No Credit option at the appropriate time, your final grade for the course will be a 0.0. See Enrollment Services for further details. It is the student’s responsibility to know the relevant deadlines. There are no formal extra credit options.

IV. Attendance
The subject matter of POLS 200 is such that your attendance is an important aspect of the course. Not only may absences affect your grade, but it may also affect your group partners. Overall, each class day approximates about 2% of the time spent in the classroom. If you know that you will be absent on a presentation day, please share this information with the Instructor and your group members early so that arrangements can be made to cover your portion of the Case. This directly relates to the institutional goal of promoting personal responsibility.

V. Proposed Reading Assignments:
Generally, the course proceeds in the following sequence. However, the instructor reserves the option of deviating from the order below with prior notice. Most Chapter Readings are from the “Processing the Law, a Holistic Approach” text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus pack, Text Introduction and Critical Thinking Booklet (blue book)</td>
<td>First week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Thinking Process Applied to Law</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantive Law: The Historical Context</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Procedure (Civil)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constitutional Law</td>
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<td>Basic Criminal Law Principles</td>
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<td>Intentional Torts</td>
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<td>Negligence and Strict Liability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mann and Roberts: Property and Insurance*</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property and Cyberlaw*</td>
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*If time allows: chapters available through I-chapters

VI. Americans with Disabilities Act Notice
If you have a recognized physical or mental condition, which may impair your ability to fully participate in class, you may be entitled to an accommodation. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the Disabled Students Services Coordinator, in the Lindbloom Student Center (LSC) and provide the appropriate documentation. If you already have a documented disability which would qualify you for any special accommodation, or if you have emergency medical information or special needs the instructor should know about, please notify me during the first week of class.
VII. Student Good Faith and Rules of Conduct:

The college and instructor assume that all enrolled students are taking this course for the legitimate purpose of learning and improving their life skills. Therefore, any conduct by students which are inconsistent with that goal, such as plagiarism, cheating, class disruptions, or other forms of misconduct will be subject to the disciplinary procedures specified in the Student Rules of Conduct found in the Appendix of the College Catalog, which are herein incorporated by reference. Further class Rules of Conduct, herein incorporated by reference, will follow.  Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabi, class rules, and/or reading assignments as is reasonably necessary. Prior notification is normally given for significant changes.

Disclaimer: The foregoing class is general information provided to the public on a subject of interest. It is intended merely as a general review of a complex and confusing subject for which there are very few clear and reliable answers. The information is not intended as legal advice and may not be relied on as such. By providing to the public the general information below, no attorney-client relationship is created. The legal outcome in a given case will completely depend on all of the relevant facts in a given case and thus will vary from case to case. For legal advice and representation, students are cautioned to consult a qualified attorney who practices in the relevant area of law they may have questions about.. FP Rev 04/09
POLS 200 Introduction to Law
General Class Rules

The purpose of the following rules is to augment and clarify the objectives and expectations of the Course Syllabus provided above. If there is any conflict or disagreement between these rules and the Syllabus, the Syllabus will govern. The instructor reserves the right to modify these rules, as circumstances require. However, every effort will be made to provide advance notice of any such change.

EXAM TAKING:

Students will take several chapter examinations during the course. Delays in student exam taking often prevents review of the exam by the rest of the class in a timely manner. Therefore, it is expected that each student will be present in the classroom to take exams on the scheduled day, unless a written request for an exception, along with appropriate documentation, is made at least 24 hours in advance of the exam day. Subject to paragraph one, above, exceptions will be considered only for the following situations:

1. Serious Illness or hospitalization of student or immediate family member.
2. Emergency transportation problems
3. Required Legal obligations
4. Death of close relative
5. Students who speak English as a second language, upon the showing of the need for reasonable accommodation.
6. Students with documented physical or learning disabilities, who have made proper institutional requests for assistance. Refer to syllabus.

Other unexpected emergencies, such as unexpected work obligations, not falling into the above categories may be considered at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student’s responsibility to provide advance notice to the instructor about these matters.

Without proper prior documentation or notice, the instructor’s options may include, but are not limited to, the following:

*An alternate exam assignment may be given consisting of written problem sets and/or the examination may be allowed to be taken at the Testing Center, or alternate site (if open), subject to a 10% discount for first occurrence, and additional 5% deductions for each subsequent occurrence.

CLASS ABSENCES:

As the syllabus indicates, class participation is an integral part of this course. Each student is expected to come to class prepared and ready to discuss assigned cases and questions posed by the instructor. As each student will be assigned to a presentation group for cases, absences will necessarily detract from the overall group assignment. If you meet one of the conditions above (as for exam absences), you are expected to also notify your group members and/or provide your portion of the presentation to them prior to the group’s presentation date. Delays will not be granted for group presentations without penalty (typically -10%). For planning purposes, you will be provided a tentative schedule for case assignments and presentations. Excessive absences will indirectly affect your group presentation grade, and may also be taken into account for the overall course grade.
GROUP WORK:

As noted on the syllabus, group presentations are an important portion of each student’s grade. It is understood that in such endeavors, individuals do not usually contribute to group work in equal proportions. Therefore, it is not uncommon for group dynamics to be affected by disproportionate student contributions. For this reason, a mechanism is in place to allow for grading adjustments to be made in such circumstances within the discretion of a majority of group members. The initial presumption is that each member of a group will contribute equally and receive the same score. If this assumption is challenged by a majority of the group, score adjustments may be made within the group, as long as the average group score remains the same. That is, in order for a group member to gain points, another member must give up points. **It is up to each group to negotiate such point allocations should intragroup circumstances dictate.** If the group can not reach a settlement on the matter, the instructor may be called upon to mediate or arbitrate a resolution. If this option is chosen, however, an “administrative fee” of 5% for mediation and 10% for arbitration will be deducted from the group score before the matter is resolved. Note: There can be no point reallocation for students who have dropped or stopped coming to class. Note: While negotiated settlements require group consensus, an individual group member may request mediation or arbitration if negotiations have stalled. Thus, the “costs” associated with this request may act as an incentive for further bargaining. Since law is fundamentally about conflict resolution, such experiences can provide an opportunity for direct application of “cost-benefit” analysis and other course principles.

THE “FREE AGENT” POTENTIAL (read carefully):

In extreme cases, and with prior instructor permission, a group may reach a consensus that a particular group member has become a non-contributor or detractor to the group effort. If such circumstances should arise, a written **warning of group action, including dismissal, shall be issued by the group members to the affected member, and a copy shall be delivered to the instructor (e-mail is okay). The warning will give a one week remediation period to the affected group member. If such remediation does not occur and/or the affected group member does not respond, or show reasonable cause why group action should not be taken, the group reserves the right to dismiss such member from the group.** If such member is dismissed from further group participation, such action may be disclosed to the class and the affected student will become a “free agent”. The affected student may attempt to be “rehired” by another group. However, no group will be obligated to accept such free agent. If no one will accept the free agent, the instructor will determine an alternate assignment for the member, subject to a discretionary penalty for being dismissed. Conversely, a group member may wish to voluntarily withdraw from group activity. Since both of the above events are evidence of **failure of group cohesion,** however, each group member may be assessed a **5% penalty.** It is not in student’s best interests to allow either of these actions to be taken.

CLASS DISRUPTIONS:

As courtesy dictates, each student is entitled to be able to participate in class, free of interference. Therefore, disruptions of any type (particularly cell phones, I-pods, laptops, or similar devices) will not be tolerated during class time, **and may affect a student’s participation points.** If there is a need to converse or communicate with classmates during class, students are asked to step outside the classroom to do so.
As stated in the course syllabus, 50% of each student’s overall class grade will be derived from Group “case method” presentations, which includes the final presentation. To better explain the meaning of the possible score achievable for each presentation, the following guidelines will be used:

You will note that there are 10 categories for evaluation, most of which correspond to the Intellectual Standards discussed in your Blue Miniature Guide for Critical Thinking. These are Clarity, Accuracy, Precision, Relevance, Depth, Breadth, Logic, and Significance. Also, there is a standard for Organization/Efficiency. Each of these is worth up to 5 points. The tenth category is for “general interest”, which addresses whether the presentation was able to maintain your interest, and stimulate questions. This category will be worth 5 points. Therefore, there are a maximum total of 50 points for each presentation.

The following guidelines will serve to assist you in determining more precisely how each presentation will be scored. You should note that points are added from 0-5 for four of the standards (I will call these “inductive standards”), and deducting points from 5-0 for the others (“deductive standards”). Note: These designations have little to do with Inductive or Deductive Reasoning which you may be familiar with. I have grouped these together for your convenience.

“Inductive” Standards:

1. Clarity: This is the ability to make information meaningful by providing examples, illustrations, analogies, or metaphors. Something that can help make complicated or abstract data more concrete. Examples that come from everyday life will be most intuitive and best understood by the audience. 1 point will be given (up to 5) for each clarification strategy you effectively use in your presentation. Various strategies will be discussed in class or via handout.

2. Depth: These are strategies that add detail to a group’s from sources outside the textbook. For example, is further explanation given outside of what is in the book? Has the group found further material to help explain the case? For instance, they may have found the full text of the case on the Internet, or some other relevant article about the case, or even a related case to compare with. Has this material been integrated into the presentation? 1 point is given for each significant added strategy used to add depth.

3. Breadth: This standard relates to the part of thinking called “point of view”. Alternate points of view give better overall understanding of the complexity of a case or issues. For example, points of view can be not only be from the views of the parties to a controversy, but also from secondary views, such as moral, economic, cultural, environmental, political, social, etc. 1 point (up to 5) is given for each relevant point of view, or bias, in the presentation.

4. Significance: This standard relates to the implications or consequences of the holding (conclusion) in a particular case. Implications are the potential effects that logically follow from a certain line of thinking. Consequences have already happened in similar cases. 1
point is given for each logical implication or stated consequence flowing from conclusions stated in the presented case. These should be labeled correctly.

“Deductive” Standards:

5. Accuracy: Accuracy is the ability to correctly state the facts that are provided in each case. Were the parties properly identified? Who are the Plaintiff and Defendant, or Appellant and Respondent? Was the court hearing the case correctly identified? What was the correct procedural history leading to the current case? Was it a state or Federal Court? Was it an intermediate appellate court, or a supreme court? Were the rules or law properly identified and stated? Was the reasoning of the court accurate? Was the conclusion reached by the court correctly stated, etc. For Accuracy, a team starts with an assumption of 5 points, but 1 point may be deducted for each significant inaccuracy stated by the group, or one of its members. If you are not sure whether an inaccuracy exists, listen to the discussion or any correction the instructor might make during or after the presentation.

6. Precision: This has to do with finer details. Has the group identified an area where more specificity might be required? Have they given the further data needed? For example, if you are discussing a concept composed of several elements or parts, stating those parts would add precision to your presentation. Again, we assume a score of 5, and deduct 1 point if there is good reason to believe some important element, fact or data was overlooked.

7. Relevance: Has the group identified how their case was connected, or related to, the chapter the case is in? How is it related to the class as a whole? How is it related to other life situations? Deduct 1 point for not showing the connection between the case and a chapter, rule or principle addressed in the text or class.

8. Logic: The logic of the presentation allows the audience to follow the logical progression of the case analysis. The “logic” of any subject area includes all 8 of the elements of thought. That is, purpose, question or issue, concept (rule of law), information (facts), assumptions, interpretation and inferences, points of view, and implications or consequences. The lack of one or more of these elements directly impairs the logic of the presentation. Deduct 1 point (up to 5) for element of thought omitted, or incorrectly stated.

9. Organization/Efficiency: This is the ability to create a presentation that “flows” in such a way that avoids redundancy, or over-utilization of print that tends to create a drag on the presentation. Plan for your presentation to be around 10-15 minutes. Allow some time for editing of your presentation before it is given in order to better stay within this suggested timeline. If you believe your case warrants more time, please see the instructor.

10. General Interest Standard: (5 points)

The last criteria for group assessment is general interest. This standard which will assess how well the presentation captured class interest and thinking. As we have stated, good thinking produces good questions. A group’s ability to elicit and respond to good questions from the audience can be correlated with general interest. I will presume that your presentation will be of general interest and deduct points to the extent that it is not. This may be evidenced by the inability to stimulate audience attention and questions, and/or the inability to adequately address questions posed by the instructor.
I- Chapter Log In Information for the Mann and Roberts supplement book:

1. STEP ONE - ACCESS TO THE CHAPTERS:

You can access the website and print the chapters from the computer labs on campus, at both the main campus and the Kent campus. The school’s technical department has already installed the “unsealer” software, and you can go directly to the website to access your digital content.

You should also be able to access the website and print the chapters from your own computer. The computer you use will need the correct viewer software. In order to view the eBook and eChapter you need to purchase, you must first download and install the viewer or “unsealer” software. The viewer software uses a Digital Rights Management (DRM) program to protect copyrighted content. This software prevents book content from being copied, forwarded, shared, or used in an unauthorized manner. Installing the viewer software should be a quick and easy process. Go to this link for more instructions on how to download the viewer software: http://www.ichapters.com/market/faq.html. Be sure you do this BEFORE you access your digital content for the first time. This iChapters Walk-Through provides information provided by the publishing company to help you with the downloading for both a Windows machine and a Macintosh machine:

iChapters Walk-Through

Please make sure that you meet all of the minimum requirements for your system by going to the following website: http://www.ichapters.com/market/faq.html

** Adobe Reader 9 is currently not supported by the Unsealer. If you need to install Adobe Reader 8 please go to the following website to install this version: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html **

After purchasing your chapters please do the following to install and open your chapters.

Windows Machine

**You must be an Admin on your computer in order to install the Unsealer, if you are not please contact the administrator and get the permissions added**

1) Go to http://www.ichapters.com and click on the eBook Access link that is on the bottom of the screen.
2) Select the “Install Unsealer” button under the Step 1 heading.
3) A new window should pop-up and make sure that platform reflects your operating system (if using Vista you will have to select that option). Within the window select the Download button. If prompted to “Save” or “Run” choose Run.
4) Make sure that all Windows Office and Adobe applications are turned off before installing. Once it finishes downloading it should automatically start the installation file. Follow prompts given by the installer.
5) Once installed go back to the Sealed Content page and click the “Sealed Media Check System” button. If you are using Internet Explorer as your web browser then you should see a tropical fish. If you are using a different web browser then you will receive a message telling you to view the page in IE.
6) Go to the My Stuff link on the top of the page and login if you are not already. Within this page will be your chapters/eBooks or anything you have purchased.
7) You will click on the “Open” button next to the chapter title on the right. If a page appears saying that the Unsealer plug-in could not be detected and you saw the fish please click on the button “Don’t Ask Again” and open the chapter again.
8) If you are prompted for a username/password you will enter in the same information you used to sign into iChapters.com (most likely your e-mail address as your username). Also, check-mark the Login Automatically box so that you can view your chapters offline for 60 days.