**POLITICAL SCIENCE 306 – Section 01**

**AMERICAN LAW through LITERATURE & FILM**

**SUMMER II, 2023**

**INFORMATION**

**COURSE:** MTWThF, 10:40am – 12:40pm, in **BRTH #243,** and **asynchronous online**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Mikel Norris

**OFFICE:** Brittain Hall #356

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday and Wednesday, 8am -10am, and by appointment. These office hours will also be online office hours. Please contact me by email with questions, or to arrange a time we can meet via Microsoft Teams.

**INSTRUCTOR CONTACT:** [mnorris1@coastal.edu](mailto:mnorris1@coastal.edu) / (843) 349-4033

**INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to POLI 306, American Law Through Literature & Film

***Catalog Description***

POLI 306 American Law Through Literature and Film (3) (Prereq: POLI 201 or permission of the instructor)A survey of American law and the American legal system through the use of fiction (movies, novels, and plays). Emphasis will be placed on works highlighting different aspects of, and actors in, the judicial process, as well as works highlighting courts as forums for the dispensation of justice in the United States.

***Course Objectives***

1. Introduce students to important fictional works that use the law and the courts as a forum for expressing American beliefs about equality and justice.
2. Understand how particular works of fiction have actually shaped how Americans view the role of importance of law and judicial process in American society.
3. Explore the fictionalized depictions of the roles certain actors in the judicial process perform in the American legal system.
4. Compare and contrast the fictionalized with the actual role of American law, judicial process, and the dispensation of justice in the United States.

***Student Learning Outcomes***

Upon successful completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

1. Understand why certain fictional works are considered important for their interpretations of the American legal system.
2. Assess the benefits and drawbacks of using fiction to describe and explain American law.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how different actors in the judicial process work together in the American legal system.
4. Determine the usefulness of fiction as a means to understanding dispensation of justice in the American legal system.

This course will be held both **in person, and online.** Students will have the choice of either coming to class to watch movies and participating in class discussion, or watching the movies and participating in class discussion online. The choice of which is up to the student. All I care about is that **the work gets done.** I am screening all of these movies in person in our assigned classroom because watching all of the assigned movies in a condensed period of time is hard work. Scheduling the movies in person will allow students to have a regular time where they can come to campus and watch movies without having to pay for them. I will also be available in person on discussion days to talk about the movies we watch, and the books we read. Students who come to discussion days in person will not have to answer questions in the discussion forums for the movies and books we discuss.

**BOOKS & SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS**

The following required texts are available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

* ***Inherit the Wind*** by Jerome Lawrence. (ISBN: 0-345-46627-6)
* ***The Crucible*** by Arthur Miller. (ISBN: 0-142-43733-6)
* ***To Kill a Mockingbird*** by Harper Lee. (ISBN: )
* ***The Trial*** by Franz Kafka. (ISBN: 978-0-19-923829-3).
* ***The Paper Chase*** by John Osborn. (ISBN: 978-0983698005)
* ***12 Angry Men*** by Reginald Rose (ISBN: 978-0143104407)
* ***Billy Budd and Other Stories*** by Herman Melville (ISBN: 978-0140390537)

I’ve included links to all of the movies on the course Moodle page. Students can rent/buy all of the assigned movies via Amazon. The total cost to rent/buy all movies from Amazon is approximately $46.50. Of course, students are free to find other ways to access the assigned movies for this course.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

The assignments for this course are listed below:

* **RESPONSE PAPERS:**Students will turn in three (3) response papers that answer questions about assigned movies and or/readings, and how they are related to American law. The first paper is due **Friday, July 14th.**The second paper is due **Friday, July 21st.**The third paper is due **Friday, July 28th.**
* **FINAL EXAM:**The final exam will be in short answer/essay format. The date of the final examination will be **Friday, August 4th.**
* **CLASS PARTICIPATION:**Class participation will be worth approximately 50% of a student’s final grade. Participation grades will be based on 1) actual participation in discussion if a student comes to class on a discussion day, or 2) satisfactory answering of discussion forum questions for each film and book on Moodle:
* Discussion Forums: Each Discussion Forum for movies will be worth 20 points (400 points total). Students will be required to post and respond to posts for **every** question in the discussion forum related to that movie for full credit.

**GRADING**

A total of 825 points can be earned in this course. You will earn points as follows:

* Response Papers: 300 points (100 points each)
* Final Exam: 125 points
* Discussion Forums: 400 points (20 points each)

Your grade will be based on the following calculations:

* A (90% - 100%) = 743 – 825 points
* B+ (88% - 89.9%) = 726 – 742.99 points
* B (80% - 87.9%) = 661 – 725.99 points
* C+ (78% - 79.9%) = 645 – 660.99 points
* C (70% - 77.9%) = 579 – 644.99 points
* D+ (68% - 69.9%) = 563 – 578.99 points
* D (60% - 67.9%) = 497 – 562.99 points
* F (0% - 59.9%) = 496.99 points or less

**DISTANCE LEARNING AND MOODLE**

This course is an asynchronous distance-learning course. We will not meet in person. Rather, students will work through the different modules in American politics on their own time, completing different modules online by dates established by the instructor and clearly stated throughout this syllabus and on the course Moodle page.

In order to take this course you must have access to the internet and be able to access [Coastal Carolina University’s Moodle site.](https://moodle.coastal.edu) This course relies heavily on instructor videos. Students must have a device capable of displaying this content, as well as speakers or headphones to listen to this content. All of your lectures, assignments, and some of your readings will be conducted via Moodle, so it is imperative that you become familiar with it before you start the course. [Please see the Moodle resource site if you need some basic training in Moodle.](https://www.coastal.edu/scs/moodle/) There are trained staff members who can assist you with your inquiries. I am also happy to answer your questions.

There are no other extenuating software or hardware demands for this course. All materials students will need to download will be either MS Word documents, MS Excel spreadsheets, or PDF files. Students need to make sure they are able to download materials in these formats.

Moodle will open new boxes on your computer, which at times are detected as pop-ups. In order to use Moodle, you will have to **turn off your pop-up blocker on your security system in your computer.** Please be aware of these issues prior to submitting an assignment or taking a test or quiz. It is **YOUR** responsibility to familiarize yourself with Moodle and to assure that you understand its components.

If you are having problems opening items or downloading/uploading items in Moodle, try using another Internet browser. For whatever reason, Moodle sometimes does not work properly when using Google Chrome or Safari. If you use these browsers and encounter problems, try using Firefox or Internet Explorer.

**Distance Learning is great, but it’s *Different:*** Taking a distance learning class can be very appealing.  You work on your own time.  You may fast forward through areas that you easily grasp and spend more time on those in which you need assistance.  You may feel free to browse the web for more information on a topic that interests you.  I highly recommend that you work on the course on a weekly basis.  This is not a distance learning class in which you can wait until the last week of class to submit all of your assignments.  If you fail to submit your assignment by the time allotted, you will not receive credit, nor will you be able to submit the assignment.  I have organized the class in this manner to prevent you from falling behind.

**Student Responsibilities:** Students are expected to complete all readings by the end of the week in when they are assigned. Accordingly, students are expected to complete all assignments by their due dates.

**Student Code of Conduct:** Coastal Carolina University operates on a Code of Student Conductthat provides clear definitions as to what constitutes cheating and plagiarism in the classroom (physical and online). Students are expected to avoid cheating and plagiarism at all times. Students who cheat and/or plagiarize in this course will receive an **F** in this course. My cheating and plagiarism policy is spelled out in more detail in the Course Policies section of this syllabus.

[Code of Student Conduct](https://learnmoodle.coastal.edu/draftfile.php/688/user/draft/766498584/code%20of%20conduct%20%281%29.pdf)

**Digital Etiquette:** In addition to following the Student Code of Conduct, students must communicate with the instructor and with one another with respect in all digital and in-person exchanges. I expect students to act with civility, using proper tone and style. I also expect students to communicate with formality when posting on discussion forums and emailing me. I will pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. Continued violations of this digital etiquette statement will lead to reductions in your final grade.

**Instructor Responsibilities:** I will be available to address questions, concerns, etc. during in-person and virtual office hours, and also by in-person and virtual appointment. If my office hours must be changed for some reason, I will email you in advance.

The best way (and preferred way) for students to reach me is via **email.** I may not be in the office if you call, and any voice message you leave will go to my email anyway. Save yourself the extra step and time.

While I check my email regularly every day, students should **not** expect me to provide immediate response to emails sent over weekends. Instead, those who send me an email over the weekend should expect a response no later than the next Monday afternoon. I will respond to your emails within 24 hours, even if it is to let you know that I am unavailable to address your question presently and will respond as soon as possible.

**COURSE POLICIES**

[You can follow this link to Coastal Carolina University’s complete Distance Learning Policy.](https://learnmoodle.coastal.edu/brokenfile.php#/688/user/draft/595455924/distance%20learning%20policy.pdf)

**Absence Policy:**Coastal Carolina University policy dictates that students must attend 75% of their classes to receive a passing grade.  In this case, your attendance is your participation in the weekly on-line activities. An absence in a distance learning course is operationally defined as a missed online submission deadline—such as a quiz, assignment, or discussion post” (per the CCU Distance Learning Policy). Failure to complete 75% of the activities on-line will result in an F for this course.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Cheating and plagiarism are wrong and I do not like it. It is unfair to other students. Furthermore, it reflects very poorly on your character. Cheating carries with it a severe penalty, and may even lead to expulsion from the university. **DON’T DO IT**. It is wrong and will not be tolerated. Those caught cheating or plagiarizing will be brought before Student Affairs, and I will request that the student receive an **F for the course**. Harsher penalties may be levied depending on the extent of cheating and/or plagiarism. Please refer to the Code of Student Conduct for more information about cheating and plagiarism.

**Late Assignment Policy:** I will not tolerate late assignments. Students who miss quizzes or fail to post on discussion forums before their closing dates will not be able to make up the activity. Students will receive a zero for missed quizzes and a zero if they do not complete their two discussion forum posts on time. Students will receive half credit if they have posted one discussion post before the due date.

Late assignments will only be accepted if a student is “absent” on the day an assignment is due for an excused reason. Only three types of absences count as excused absences: **death of a family member, university representation, or extended illness.** Please pay attention to the last form of excused absence. Extended illness means you will miss **extensive time** due to illness. Unless this criteria is met I will not excuse a late assignment.

**Accessibility and Disability Policy:** I am committed to making all necessary accommodations for students with verified disabilities. Students with disabilities are urged to contact the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services as soon as possible – preferably within the first week of class. The Office of Accessibility and Disability Services is located in Kearns Hall #106. Their phone number is 843-349-2503, and they can also be reached at [disability@coastal.edu](mailto:disability@coastal.edu). Students must obtain the proper forms and meet with me either in person or over email to discuss appropriate provisions and accommodations.

While I am sympathetic to issues of accessibility and disability, it is the student’s responsibility to make sure proper paperwork and process is followed, and not mine. If the student does not fulfill their responsibilities and complete paperwork as mandated by the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services then I will not make special accommodations. There is a link to the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services’ website in the Student Resources section of this syllabus.

**Incomplete and Withdraw Policy:** As a rule I do not give incompletes except under extraordinary and well-documented circumstances. Students who wish to withdraw from the course must do so by **July 26th.** Your grade will be assigned as WF if you withdraw after that date. It is your responsibility to make sure you have properly withdrawn from the course if you choose to do so. If you are still on my roster at the end of the semester I will give you the grade you’ve earned up to that time (most likely an F).

**Inclement Weather and Miscellaneous Emergency Policy:** Please check Moodle and your email for information about how the course will proceed in the event the University must close due to inclement weather or some other emergency. We will redirect any learning material as needed.

**RESOURCES and SUPPORT**

[The Office of Accessibility and Disability Services](https://www.coastal.edu/disabilityservices/) – Kearns Hall #106, (843)349-2503,

[The Tutoring and Learning Center](https://www.coastal.edu/uc/lac/) – The Writing Center is in Kearns Hall #205, (843)349-2937

[Kimbel Library Website](https://www.coastal.edu/library/) – (843)349-2400

[Counseling Services](https://www.coastal.edu/counseling/) – Student Health Services Bldg. 251 University Blvd., (843)349-2305

[Technical Support from Student Computing Services](https://www.coastal.edu/scs/) – Kearns Hall #113, (843)349-2220

[List of on-campus HelpDesks and the Help Request Form](https://www.coastal.edu/forms/studenthelpdeskform/)

[Office of Academic Integrity](https://www.coastal.edu/academicintegrity/) – [aiofficer@coastal.edu](mailto:aiofficer@coastal.edu)., (843) 349-2451

[Office of the Registrar](https://www.coastal.edu/registrar/) – Baxley Hall #222, (843)349-2019

[Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](https://www.coastal.edu/financialaid/) – Baxley Hall #219, (843) 349-2313

[Student Activities and Leadership](https://www.coastal.edu/osl/leadership/) – [jcombess@coastal.edu](mailto:jcombess@coastal.edu), (843)349-2656

[Dean of Students Office](https://www.coastal.edu/deanofstudents/) – Indigo Hall, (843) 349-4161

**\*\*\*\*\*\*THE PROFESSOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER. ANY CHANGES WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS BEFOREHAND\*\*\*\*\*\***

**COURSE SCHEDULE and ASSIGNMENTS**

This course, for the most part, is **self-paced.** While this course has a course schedule when we can meet in person, this course will be **asynchronous** for students who are taking this course as a distance learning option. This means that if you don’t come to class to watch the movies and participate in the discussion forums, you will have to watch the movies, read the books, and complete assignments on your own time schedule. This can be liberating, but it is of paramount importance that you stay abreast of all of the movies and readings in the course. If you fall behind, you will most certainly have a hard time catching up. **Watching movies takes a lot of time out of your day.** Given this, I’ve provided a course schedule below based on how this course will operate **if you show up to the class in person.** If you are taking this course asynchronously, you should follow the movie schedule provided below, and complete the discussion forum posts for each movie and piece of literature by the discussion days listed below. I will note what needs to be completed and when on the schedule.

MONDAY, JULY 10………………………………………………………...**Miracle on 34th Street**

TUESDAY, JULY 11……………………………………………………………**My Cousin Vinny**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12…………………………………………………………..**DISCUSSION**

* You must complete the discussion forum posts for *Miracle on 34th Street, My Cousin Vinny,* and *The Crucible* **by the end of the day**

THURSDAY, JULY 13……………………………………………………...**Anatomy of a Murder**

FRIDAY, JULY 14……………………………………………………………………....**The Judge**

* **PAPER #1 DUE (use Turnitin Link in Moodle)**

MONDAY, JULY 17……………………………………………………………….**DISCUSSION**

* You must complete the discussion forum posts for *Anatomy of a Murder, The Judge,* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* **by the end of the day**

TUESDAY, JULY 18………………………………………………………………..**A Civil Action**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19…………………………………………………………….**Philadelphia**

THURSDAY, JULY 20………………………………………………………….**Kramer v. Kramer**

FRIDAY, JULY 21………………………………………………………………….**DISCUSSION**

* You must complete the discussion forum posts for *A Civil Action, Philadelphia, Kramer v. Kramer,* and *Inherit the Wind* **by the end of the day**
* **PAPER #2 DUE (use Turnitin Link in Moodle)**

MONDAY, JULY 24……………………………………………………………..**Erin Brockovich**

TUESDAY, JULY 25………………………………………………………………**Legally Blonde**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 26…………………………………………………………..**DISCUSSION**

* You must complete the discussion forum posts for *Erin Brockovich, Legally Blonde,* and *The Paper Chase* **by the end of the day**

THURSDAY, JULY 27……………………………………………………………...**Runaway Jury**

FRIDAY, JULY 28………………………………………………………………….**A Time to Kill**

* **PAPER #3 DUE (use Turnitin Link in Moodle)**

MONDAY, JULY 31….……………………………………………………………**DISCUSSION**

* You must complete the discussion forum posts for *Runaway Jury, A Time to Kill,* and *12 Angry Men* **by the end of the day**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1……………………………………………………**Rules of Engagement**

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2……………………………………………………**A Few Good Men**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3………………………………………………………….**DISCUSSION**

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4……………………………………………………….**COURSE WRAP-UP**

* You must complete the discussion forum posts for *Rules of Engagement, A Few Good Men, The Trial,* and *Billy Budd* by the end of the day
* **FINAL EXAM DUE (use Turnitin Link in Moodle)**

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