



# SYLLABUS

## POSC 2314 Introduction to Legal Studies (Spring 2024)

**Instructor:** Nathan K. Mitchell, Ph.D.  
**Section # and CRN:** P01 – CRN = 24111  
**Office Location:** 319 Woolfolk  
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**Office Hours:** 2:00PM – 4:00PM MWF; and by [Appointment](#) on Calendly  
**Mode of Instruction:** Lecture/Face to Face  
**Course Location:** Hobart Taylor 2B210  
**Class Days & Times:** 1:00PM to 1:50PM  
**Catalog Description:** This course is designed to be an extensive examination of the structure, functions, and processes of this nation’s legal system. By the end of the course, students will have training in a wide variety of topics including the law and have the skills necessary to succeed on the LSAT or in law school. No prerequisites or corequisites.

**Required Text(s):** Jay Feinman. 2019. *Law 101 : Everything You Need to Know About American Law*, Fourth Edition. Vol. Fourth edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://search-ebscohost-com.pvamu.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=806531>. (2014 edition available at the JB Coleman Library as an eBook for free. Can purchase 2019 version Amazon.)

Colin Seale. 2020. *Thinking Like a Lawyer: A Framework for Teaching Critical Thinking*. Routledge. 978-1646320073  
<https://www.amazon.com/Thinking-Like-Lawyer-Framework-Teaching/dp/1646320077/>

**Recommended Text(s):** Mirande Valbrune, Renee De Assis. 2019. *Business Law I Essentials*. OpenStax.org, Rice University. <https://openstax.org/books/business-law-i-essentials/pages/1-introduction> (Free - Links to an external site.)

### Course Learning Objectives:

	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Program Learning Outcome # Alignment	Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment
1	Compare and contrast different areas of American statutory and British common law.	3 – Legal Issues	Critical thinking
2	Identify the relevant actors in the state, local, and national legal systems and their roles.	3 – Legal Issues	Critical thinking
3	Analyze the social implications of the law on contemporary policy.	3 – Legal Issues	Critical thinking and Social Responsibility.
4	Critically evaluate legal-based arguments and evidence.	3 – Legal Issues	Critical thinking and communication.
5	Produce a technical case brief using the FIRAC method.	3 – Legal Issues	Critical thinking and communication
6	Demonstrate legal writing and research skills through the production of a digital law project.	2-Research	Critical thinking and communications
7	Articulate an ethical code consistent with legal practices in the United States.	3 – Legal Issues	Personal Responsibility

## Major Course Requirements

### Method of Determining Final Course Grade

Course Grade Requirement		Value	Total
1)	Exams	100	20%
2)	Reading Quizzes and Homework Assignments	100	50%
3)	Mock Trial Assignment	100	20%
4)	Case Briefs	100	10%
<b>Total:</b>			<b>100%</b>

### Grading Criteria and Conversion:

A = 89.5-100    B = 79.5-89.4    C = 69.5-79.4    D = 59.5-69.4    F = 0-59.4

If a student has stopped attending the course (i.e. "stopped out") at any point after the first day of class but did not officially withdraw from the course and has missed assignments and exams, including the final exam, and performed below the grade level of a D, a grade of FN (failed-non attendance) will be assigned for the final course grade to ensure compliance with the federal Title IV financial aid regulations. In contrast, if the student has completed all assignments and exams, including the final exam, but performed below the grade level of a D, a grade of F will be assigned for the final course grade.

### Detailed Description of Major Assignments:

Assignment Title or Grade Requirement	Description
Exams (20%)	Exams will be a mix of fact patterns, multiple-choice, and short answers. They will be given online through eCourses. You will have one week to complete them.
Reading Quizzes and Homework Assignments (50%)	At least one homework assignment will be due each week. Due dates are frequently on the Monday following the date an assignment is released or distributed. A grace period of three(3) class days will be built into each assignment to account for unforeseen issues. No assignments will be taken after the grace period without documented excuses.
Mock Trial Assignment (20%)	The class will be divided into four groups to explore a real appellate case relating to forensic science and HIV. Each team will prepare a presentation of their assigned role (defense/prosecution) and present this at an in-person event in May. Each individual group member must prepare a 1–2-page single-spaced memo explaining how they would have ruled given the evidence and what they contributed to the presentation.
Case Brief (10%)	Students will use the FIRAC method to brief a case that they have not read before. A brief is a 1-2 page summary of the key facts, questions, rules of law, analysis, and conclusions of a legal ruling. Practice briefs will be assigned as homework.



### B-GLOBAL:

Students enrolled in this course will develop "global competence." Global competence is defined broadly as a set of values, skills, and behaviors that allow someone to interact appropriately with other cultures, understand world issues, and take responsible local action to address global challenges.

This course addresses **the B-GLOBAL program's global awareness and social responsibility goals**. These metrics align with existing PVAMU and state core curriculum objectives through various learning activities and the final paper/project on a global issue.

## Course Procedures or Additional Instructor Policies

**Political Science Program Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism is a serious academic crime, and the Political Science Program has a strict, rigorous enforcement policy for students who commit plagiarism. Plagiarism is using another person's or artificially generated program's words, statistics, and/or ideas as if they were your own. Plagiarism, which is formally defined in the University Rules and Procedures section of this syllabus, can come in many forms, such as directly quoting a source without quotation marks, taking another student's work, directly quoting a source without giving a reference citation, paraphrasing a source without giving a reference citation, submitting a paper two different courses without permission, and so forth. It is incumbent on students to seek help from the instructor or other University resources to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism in their work. If in doubt, CITE THE SOURCE! Any student caught committing ANY plagiarism in a Political Science course will receive one OR MORE of the following punishments, depending on the severity of the offense and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct:

1. Grade Penalty (an F for the assignment or for the course) in addition to cancellation of any extra credit points
2. Letter of Reprimand
3. Probation
4. Suspension
5. Dismissal from the Academic Program
6. Expulsion from the university.

Students must consult the University's Code of Conduct for other forms of academic dishonesty and punishments. **For the purposes of this class, you will fail an assignment the first time you commit academic dishonesty and will fail the entire class if you have a second instance.** In all cases, a second reader will be consulted before any reprimand is instituted. See the PVMAMU Statement on the Use of AI below!

**Electronic Communication Policy:** Notes and other course materials are posted on [eCourses](#). You are expected to use this website as a resource for the class. The University also maintains an email account for you. For security purposes, I will not respond to emails sent to me from addresses that do not come from your official PVAMU email address. I expect you to check your Prairie View A&M email account at least once a day. If you have problems accessing your account, call (936) 261-2525. Not having access to your Panther Email is not an excuse for missing important information.

**Make-up Policy:** You will only be allowed to make up an exam or assignment if you have a valid excuse - follow the Absence Verification Process described below. Valid excuses include *documented* illness, school or business trips, or family crises. Without proper documentation, there will be no makeup assignments. **If granted a make-up, you have a period of three (3) class days to schedule your make-up assignment or exam. After that point, the grade becomes a zero.** Please provide written documentation for why you need to make up an assignment from a university official, doctor, police officer, or coach. Student-athletes must notify me **BEFORE** they attend an event to represent the school and **MUST** be proactive in getting their assignments completed. Make-up exams may be an essay/short answer test or a modified version of the original exam. Any assigned extra credit cannot be made up.

**Grade Groveling Policy:** Students concerned about their grades should endeavor to attend all class sessions and complete all work to the best of their ability. Students **earn** high grades, based on demonstrating mastery of the subject matter and not based on what they want or need for their overall GPA. Therefore, no grade groveling will be entertained and no "do-overs" allowed.

**Attendance Policy:** For this class, students will lose a letter grade if they have more than six unexcused absences. There are many legitimate reasons to miss a class, but written documentation may be needed to excuse an absence. Please contact your instructor for advice. Life happens.

**Late/Tardy Policy:** Attending class on time is important. Class will start at the scheduled time and will end at the scheduled time. If you come to class more than 9 minutes late (in the 10<sup>th</sup> minute or later), you will be asked to leave class and you will be counted absent.

## Semester Calendar (Law101 / Business Law Essentials = BLE)

<b>Week One: 1/17-01/21</b>	<b>Course Introduction and Legal Actors</b>
Readings:	Chapter 1 – You can Understand the Law (Law101)
Assignment(s):	Introduction Assignment.
<b>Week Two:</b>	<b>Common Law and Comparative Legal History</b>
Readings:	Chapter 1 – You Can Understand the Law (Law101) Chapter 2 - Thinking Like a Lawyer
Assignment(s):	Reading Quiz on 1/25
<b>Week Three:</b>	<b>Legal Research and Writing</b>
Readings:	Using the PVAMU Libraries for Legal Research Chapter 3 and 4 – Thinking Like a Lawyer
Assignment (s):	Complete Library Assignment on Lexis Nexis
<b>Week Four:</b>	<b>Critical Reading and Legal Thinking</b>
Readings:	Chapter 5, 6, and 6 – Thinking Like a Lawyer
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Five:</b>	<b>Constitutional Law – Rights and Liberties</b>
Readings:	Chapter 3 in Law 101 Chapter 8 – Thinking Like a Lawyer
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Six:</b>	<b>Torts</b>
Readings:	Chapter 5 in Law 101. Chapter 9 – Thinking Like a Lawyer
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Seven:</b>	<b>Criminal Law and Process</b>
Readings:	Chapters 8 and 9 in Law 101.
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Eight:</b>	<b>Midterm and Review</b>
Readings:	Chapters 1-3, 5, 8 and 9 in Law 101 and Selected Readings in eCourses
Assignment (s):	Complete Midterm by March 10 at 11:55PM
<b><u>Spring Break</u></b>	<b><u>March 11 – March 17</u></b>
<b>Week Nine:</b>	<b>International Law</b>
Readings:	Chapter 13 (BLE)
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Ten:</b>	<b>Contracts</b>
Readings:	Chapter 6 in Law 101
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Eleven:</b>	<b>Test Prep</b>
Readings:	LSAT Test Prep Assignments/Questions Chapters 12 and 15 in Thinking Like a Lawyer
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz
<b>Week Twelve:</b>	<b>Employment Law</b>
Readings:	Chapter 9 in BLE
Assignment (s):	Reading Quiz

<b>Week Thirteen:</b>	<b>Environmental Law</b>
Readings:	Meyer 2017 – A Curious Person’s Guide to the EPA + Wyatt 2016 + the Endangered Species Act
Assignment (s):	Environmental Law Quiz + Movie Review
<b>Week Fourteen:</b>	<b>Moot Court Preparation</b>
Readings:	Chapter 4 of Law 101
Assignment (s):	Preparation Participation
<b>Weeks 15 AND 16: 04/30-05/08</b>	Moot Court Assignment + Final Exam (Final Exam Schedule to be Posted Later. See pvamu.edu/registrar.

## Student Support and Success

### John B. Coleman Library

The John B. Coleman Library’s mission is to enhance the scholarly pursuit of knowledge, to foster intellectual curiosity, and to promote life-long learning and research through our innovative services, resources, and cultural programs, which support the Prairie View A&M University’s global mission of teaching, service, and research. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty. [Library Website](#)  
Phone: 936-261-1500

### Academic Advising Services

Academic Advising Services offers students various services that contribute to student success and lead toward graduation. We assist students with understanding university policies and procedures that affect academic progress. We support the early alert program to help students connect to success early in the semester. We help refer students to the appropriate academic support services when they are unsure of the best resource for their needs. Faculty advisors support some students in their respective colleges. Your faculty advisor can be identified in PantherTracks. Advisors within Academic Advising Services are available to all students. We are located across campus. Find your advisor's location by academic major on the [advising website](#). Phone: 936-261-5911

### The University Tutoring Center

The University Tutoring Center (UTC) offers free tutoring and academic support to all registered PVAMU students. The mission of the UTC is to help provide a solid academic foundation that enables students to become confident, capable, independent learners. Competent and caring staff and peer tutors guide students in identifying, acquiring, and enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to reach their desired goals. Tutoring and academic support are offered face-to-face in the UTC and virtually in online sessions. Other support services available for students include Supplemental Instruction, Study Breaks, Academic Success Workshops, and Algebra Study Jam. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 307; Phone: 936-261-1561; Email: [pvututoring@pvamu.edu](mailto:pvututoring@pvamu.edu); [University Tutoring Website](#)

### Writing Center

The Writing Center provides well-trained peer tutors to assist students with writing assignments at any stage of the writing process. Tutors help students with various writing tasks from understanding assignments, brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, researching, and integrating sources. Students have free access to Grammarly online writing assistance. Grammarly is an automated proofreading and plagiarism detection tool. Students must register for Grammarly by using their student email address. In addition, students have access to face-to-face and virtual tutoring services either asynchronously via email or synchronously via Zoom. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 209; Phone: 936-261-3724; [Writing Center Website](#), [Grammarly Registration](#)

### Panther Navigate

Panther Navigate is a proactive system of communication and collaboration between faculty, academic advisors, and students that is designed to support student success by promptly identifying issues and allowing for intervention. Panther Navigate helps students by providing a central location to schedule advising appointments, view campus resources, and request assistance. Students who recognize that they have a problem that negatively affects their academic performance or ability to continue school may self-refer an academic early alert. To do so, students will log in to Canvas and click on Student Alerts on the left sidebar within a course. Students also have the option to download the Navigate Student app. Phone: 936-261-5902; [Panther Navigate Website](#)

### Student Counseling Services

The Student Counseling Services offers a range of services and programs to assist students in maximizing their potential for success: short-term individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention, outreach, consultation, and referral services. The staff is licensed by the State of Texas and assists students who are dealing with academic skills concerns, situational crises, adjustment problems, and emotional difficulties. Information shared with the staff is treated confidentially and in accordance with Texas State Law. Location: Hobart Taylor, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; Phone: 936-261-3564; [Health & Counseling Center Website](#)

### **Office of Testing Services**

The Office of Testing Services serves to facilitate and protect the administration of educational and professional exams to aid students, faculty, staff, and the community in their academic and career goals. We provide proctoring services for individuals who need to take exams for distance or correspondence courses for another institution, exams for independent study courses, or make-up exams. For a proctored exam to be administered by our office, the instructor of the course must first submit the online PVAMU Testing Services – Test Proctoring Form (this form can only be completed by the instructor) to the Office of Testing Services 72 hours prior to the first exam being administered. Once the Test Proctoring Form has been submitted, the instructor will inform their testers so they can then register for an appointment with our office on one of the selected proctored exam test dates within the testing window for the exam and pay the applicable fees. To access the OTS – Test Proctoring Form, to schedule a proctored exam appointment, or to find more information about our proctoring services, please visit the [OTS – Proctoring Service website](#). Location: Wilhelmina Delco, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Rm. 305; Phone: 936-261-3627; Email: [aetesting@pvamu.edu](mailto:aetesting@pvamu.edu); [Testing Website](#)

### **Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services. As a federally mandated educational support unit, the Office of Disability Services serves as the repository for confidential disability files for faculty, staff, and students. For persons with a disability, the Office develops individualized ADA letters of request for accommodations. Other services include learning style inventories, awareness workshops, accessibility pathways, webinars, computer laboratory with adapted hard and software, adapted furniture, proctoring non-standardized test administrations, ASL interpreters, ALDs, digital recorders, Livescribe, and a comprehensive referral network across campus and the broader community. Location: Hobart Taylor, Rm. 1D128; Phone: 936-261-3583; [Disability Services Website](#)

### **Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS)**

Distance Learning, also referred to as Distance Education, is the employment of alternative instructional delivery methods to extend programs and services to persons unable to attend classes in the traditional manner. CIITS supports student learning through online, hybrid, web-assist, and 2-way video course delivery. For more details and contact information, visit [CIITS Student Website](#). Phone: 936-261-3283 or email: [ciits@pvamu.edu](mailto:ciits@pvamu.edu).

### **Veteran Affairs**

Veteran Services works with student veterans, current military, and military dependents to support their transition to the college environment and continued persistence to graduation. The Office coordinates and certifies benefits for both the G.I. Bill and the Texas Hazlewood Act. Location: Evans Hall, Rm. 102; Phone: 936-261-3563; [Veteran Affairs Website](#)

### **Office for Student Engagement**

The Office for Student Engagement delivers comprehensive programs and services designed to meet the co-curricular needs of students. The Office implements inclusive and accessible programs and services that enhance student development through exposure to and participation in diverse and relevant social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, leadership development, and campus governance. Location: Memorial Student Center, Rm. 221; Phone: 936-261-1340; [Student Engagement Website](#)

### **Center for Careers & Professional Development**

This center supports students through professional development, career readiness, and placement and employment assistance. The center provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, resume and letter writing, and career exploration workshops and seminars. Services are provided for students at the Northwest Houston Center and College of Nursing in the Medical Center twice a month or on a requested basis. Distance Learning students are encouraged to visit the center website for information regarding services provided. Location: Anderson Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; Phone: 936-261-3570; [Center for Careers & Professional Development Website](#)

# University Rules and Procedures

## Academic Misconduct

Academic dishonesty is defined as any form of cheating or dishonesty that has the effect or intent of interfering with any academic exercise or fair evaluation of a student's performance. The college faculty can provide additional information, particularly related to a specific course, laboratory, or assignment.

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with the *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*, which can be found on the [Academic Integrity webpage](#). Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. As listed in the *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*, the University Online Catalog, and the Student Code of Conduct, the following are examples of prohibited conduct. This list is not designed to be all-inclusive or exhaustive. In addition to academic sanctions, any student found to have committed academic misconduct that is also a violation of criminal law may also be subject to disciplinary review and action by the Office of Student Conduct (as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct).

## Forms of Academic Dishonesty:

1. **Cheating:** Deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not learned, giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations. Examples: unauthorized use of notes for a test; using a "cheat sheet" on a quiz or exam; any alteration made on a graded test or exam which is then resubmitted to the teacher;
2. **Plagiarism:** Careless or deliberate use of the work or the ideas of another; representation of another's work, words, ideas, or data as your own without permission or appropriate acknowledgment. Examples: copying another's paper or answers, failure to identify information or essays from the internet and submitting or representing it as your own; submitting an assignment which has been partially or wholly done by another and claiming it as yours; not properly acknowledging a source which has been summarized or paraphrased in your work; failure to acknowledge the use of another's words with quotation marks;
3. **Collusion:** When more than one student or person contributes to a piece of work that is submitted as the work of an individual;
4. **Conspiracy:** Agreeing with one or more persons to commit an act of academic/scholastic dishonesty; and
5. **Multiple Submission:** Submission of work from one course to satisfy a requirement in another course without explicit permission. Example: using a paper prepared and graded for credit in one course to fulfill a requirement and receive credit in a different course.

**\*\*For the purposes of this class, you will fail an assignment the first time you commit academic dishonesty and will fail the entire class if you have a second instance.** In all cases, a second reader will be consulted before any reprimand is instituted.\*\*

## \*\*\*PV's General Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in the Classroom\*\*\*

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI), specifically foundational models that can create writing, computer code, and/or images using minimal human prompting, are increasingly becoming pervasive. Even though ChatGPT is one of the most well-known GAIs currently available, this statement includes any and all past, current, and future generations of GAI software. PVAMU expects that all work produced for a grade in any course, be it face-to-face or virtual, will be the sole product of a student's endeavors to meet those academic goals. However, should an instructor permit their students to use artificial intelligence as a resource or tool, students must not substitute the substance of their original work with the results of using such GAI tools. This clearly violates the [University's Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity](#) and its underlying academic values.

## Nonacademic Misconduct

The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, (2) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or (3) campus behavior that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. The Office of Student Conduct will adjudicate such incidents under nonacademic procedures.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual harassment of students and employees at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating the university's sexual harassment policy will be subject to disciplinary action. In accordance with the Texas A&M University System guidelines, your instructor is obligated to report to the Office of Title IX Compliance ([titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu)) any instance of sexual misconduct involving a student, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which the instructor becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. The faculty and staff of PVAMU actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like assistance or have questions, they may contact the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Zakiya Brown, at 936-261-2144 or [titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu). More information can be found at [Title XI Website](#), including confidential resources available on campus.

### **Protections and Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Students**

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces, among other statutes, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. This protection includes those who may be pregnant and parenting. Title IX states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting should contact the Office of Title IX for information, resources, and support at [titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu). Additional information and/or support may be provided by the Office of Disability Services or the Office of the Dean of Students.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Prairie View A&M University does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity in its programs and activities. The University is committed to supporting students and complying with The Texas A&M University System non-discrimination policy. It seeks to establish an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you experience an incident of discrimination or harassment, we encourage you to report it. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are individuals who can meet with you. The Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and can be reached at Harrington Science Building, Suite 109, or by phone at 936-261-1744 or 1792.

### **Class Attendance Policy (See the [University Online Catalog](#) for Full Attendance Policy)**

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports the full academic development of each learner, whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video and/or the Internet. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in the assignment of a grade of "F." Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University's attendance policy in each course syllabus. **For this class, students will lose a letter grade if they have more than six unexcused absences. There are many legitimate reasons to miss a class, but written documentation may be needed to excuse an absence. Please contact your instructor for advice. Life happens.**

### **Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences**

Prairie View A&M University recognizes that there are a variety of legitimate circumstances in which students will miss coursework and that accommodations for makeup work will be made. If a student's absence is **excused**, the instructor must either provide the student an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam, or other work contributing to the final grade or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor. Students are encouraged to work with instructors to complete makeup work before known scheduled absences (University-sponsored events, administrative proceedings, etc.). Students are responsible for planning their schedules to avoid excessive conflicts with course requirements. **If granted a make-up, you have a period of three (3) class days to schedule your make-up assignment or exam. After that point, the grade becomes a zero**

### **Absence Verification Process**

All non-athletic absences (e.g., Medical, Death/Funeral, Court/Legal-related, etc.) for which a student seeks to obtain a valid excuse must be submitted to the Dean of Students/Office of Student Conduct, with supporting documentation, for review and verification. Please use the [Online Reporting Forms](#) to access/complete/submit the *Request for a University Excused Absence* form for an excuse. Upon receipt, a staff member will verify the documentation and provide an official university excuse, if applicable. The student is responsible for providing the official university excuse issued by the Office for Student Conduct to the



professor(s). Questions should be directed to the Dean of Students via email: [deanofstudents@pvamu.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@pvamu.edu) or phone: (936) 261-3550 or Office for Student Conduct via email: [studentconduct@pvamu.edu](mailto:studentconduct@pvamu.edu) or phone: (936) 261-3524.

### **Student Academic Appeals Process**

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rest with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the [University Online Catalog](#) and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint.

### **Technical Considerations**

#### **Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:**

- Intel PC or laptop with Windows 10 or later version; Mac with OS Catalina
- Smartphone or iPad/tablet with wi-fi\*
- High-speed internet access
- 8 GB memory
- Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15" monitor, 1024 x 768, color
- Speakers (internal or external)
- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari, or Firefox

**Note:** Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups in the web browser preferences

\* Some courses may require remote proctoring. At this time only Chromebooks, laptops, and desktops running Windows or Mac work with our proctoring solution, but iPads are not compatible. Most other applications will work with Android or Apple tablets and smartphones.

#### **Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:**

- Sending and receiving email
- A working knowledge of the Internet
- Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
- Acrobat PDF Reader
- Windows or Mac OS
- Video conferencing software (Zoom)

### ***Netiquette (online etiquette)***

Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussion boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated. Do not use ALL CAPS for communicating to others AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING. Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you." Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post, and the message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.

### **Video Conferencing Etiquette**

When using Zoom, WebEx, or other video conferencing tools, confirm the visible area is tidy, clear of background clutter, inappropriate or offensive posters, and other distractions. Ensure you dress appropriately and avoid using high traffic or noisy areas. Stay muted when you are not speaking and avoid eating/drinking during the session. Before the class session begins, test audio, video, and lighting to alleviate technology issues.

### **Technical Support**

Students should go to [Password Reset Tool](#) if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, call the Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services at 936-261-3283 or email [ciits@pvamu.edu](mailto:ciits@pvamu.edu).

### **Communication Expectations and Standards**

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

### **Discussion Requirement**

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can occur in a seminar fashion. The use of the discussion board will accomplish this. The instructor will determine the exact use of discussion boards.

**It is strongly suggested** that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application such as Word and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized using the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, copy and paste to the discussion board.

## **COVID-19 Campus Safety Measures**

In accordance with the latest guidelines from the PVAMU Health Services, the following measures are in effect until further notice.

- Students who are ill will be asked to adhere to best practices in public health, such as masking, handwashing, and social distancing, to help reduce the spread of illness across campus.
- Mandatory self-reporting will no longer be required by students. Students will be responsible for communicating with their professors regarding COVID, similarly to any other illness.
- There will be no mandatory isolation. Students who are too ill to engage in classroom activities will be responsible for securing the appropriate documentation to support the absence.
- Students who self-isolate will be responsible for communicating with their professors and securing an excuse from Student Conduct.
- All students will have access to [TimelyCare](#), a telehealth platform that provides virtual medical care 24/7 and by appointment in the Student Health Clinic. Students are encouraged to enroll with TimelyCare at the beginning of the semester, at [timelycare.com/pvamu](https://timelycare.com/pvamu).
- Students will have access to COVID testing in the Student Health Clinic by appointment. Testing is for students who are symptomatic ONLY.

## **Legal Studies Assignment: Mock Trial Review Essay**

*Objective:* Students should demonstrate their legal writing and research skills in the production of a law review style essay and to critically evaluate legal based arguments and evidence.

*Directions:* In 3-5 double spaced pages using 11 to 12 point Arial or Times New Roman font, craft a legal argument for how you would rule in the Campbell V State of Texas case if you were the judge. You need to use at least five scholarly sources. The bulk of your sources should be from scholarly sources. The paper should be cited in Chicago Author Date or APA Author Date format. This means that you need to use parenthetical citations and include a works cited page. **NO COVER PAGE IS NEEDED.** Failure to cite within the text or to include a works cited will result in an automatic zero for the paper, regardless of the context. Quotes should be used sparingly and should be properly attributed.

### **Suggested Format:**

- *Introduction* – Your introduction should state the main issue outlined in the case, identify which side you think should win (regardless of the outcome of the mock trial case), and outline the structure of the essay.
- *Body* - The body paragraphs of this essay should provide the context and analysis of your argument. Using evidence or facts outlined in the case, legal arguments from other cases, or scholarly commentary, the paper should demonstrate a sound understanding of the case and controlling precedents. The body of the essay should make your case why you think one side won the case. The body of the paper should be argumentative, do not use the words “I believe” or “I feel”.

- *Conclusion* – The conclusion should again state which side won the case and briefly summarize why that side won. You do not have to present any new evidence here. Lastly, give a takeaway point on why this case is important or should be considered important.

Your Grade for the Mock Trial Assignment constitutes 20 percent of your final grade. The following elements will be evaluated:

- Participating in group preparation for the Mock Trial Event (25%)
- Individual Participation at the Mock Trial Event – How well did you play your role as a attorney, researcher, or juror (25%)
- Quality of legal arguments in Mock Trial Essay (20%)
- Quality of writing in Mock Trial Essay (20%)
- Quality of sources used in Mock Trial Essay (10%)