

e of this course is to explore "the law" in a broad sense. What is law? Why is there law? What are the roles of various actors in the American legal system, such as lawyers, judges, juries, and law enforcement personnel? Can law be used to achieve social change? To help us explore these and similar questions, we will consider insights from a wide variety of fields including legal studies, political science, sociology, psychology, criminal justice, journalism, and film.

The course has three main sections, each with its own theme. In the first section, we will examine what we mean by "the law." What is it? Where does it come from and what purposes does it serve? Why do people comply with the law – and when (if ever) should they ignore it? We will also explore some of the

expressing one's own opinions of relevant issues on the topic (while respecting other students' opinions and experiences), and asking questions when you need additional clarification.

To help generate discussion and ensure that everyone is heard from during the semester, two students will be assigned "on call" duties for each class. Every student will be "on-call" for three class periods during the course of the semester. You will have two responsibilities during your on-call day. The first will be to post a short set of questions and/or reactions you had from the readings for that day (about 200-300 words) on D2L. Did anything in the readings strike you as particularly interesting, odd, surprising, or controversial? What sort of broader questions about the law do the readings invite? You should post this reaction no later than 5PM on the day before your on-call class. Your second responsibility includes being available to answer questions about the readings and to spark discussion during the class period itself. You will have the opportunity to sign up for your three on call days early in the semester. Note that your participation outside of your on-call days will factor into your grade as well, so make sure to be prepared to discuss the readings for every class during the semester.

While















---

Legal Mobilization and the "Rights Revolution"

- (1) Charles R. Epp, "The Support Structure and the U.S. Rights Revolution," The Rights Revolution: Lawyers, Activists, and Supreme Courts in Comparative Perspective (1998)

---

Why Choose Litigation as a Political Strategy?

- (1) Paul Frymer, "Acting When Elected Officials Won't: Federal Courts and Civil Rights Enforcement in U.S. Labor Unions, 1935-85," 97 (2003)
- (2) Emily Zackin, "Popular Constitutionalism's Hard to Do When You're Not Very Popular: Why the ACLU Turned to Courts," 42 (2008)
- (3) , Footnote Four

Does Legal Mobilization Matter?

---

(1) Gerald N. Rosenberg, "Tilting at Windmills: Brown II and the Hopeless Quest to Resolve Deep-Seated Soc