Intro to Law

Instructor: Christy Buss
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Class Time: Wednesdays, 1:00–1:50 PM EST
Course Length: 32 weeks

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the American legal system and the major areas of law that shape everyday life. Students will learn how courts function, how legal disputes are resolved, and how different areas of law regulate conduct, protect rights, and organize society.

Over the course of the year, students will study both public and private areas of law, including criminal law, torts, contracts, property, constitutional law, business law, and more specialized fields such as intellectual property, administrative law, environmental law, and immigration law. The course is structured to give students a broad overview of the legal landscape while emphasizing the reasoning and principles that underlie each area of law.

This class is designed to be **high input and low output**. Students will spend most of their time engaging with readings, short videos, and class discussions. The goal is to build a strong conceptual foundation in law rather than to emphasize frequent written assignments or tests.

By the end of the course, students will have a clearer understanding of how the legal system works, how different areas of law interact, and how legal reasoning shapes decisions in courts, businesses, and public life.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will:

- Understand the structure of the American legal system.
- Learn the major areas of public and private law.
- Develop basic legal reasoning and analytical skills.
- Recognize how laws affect individuals, businesses, and governments.
- Gain familiarity with legal vocabulary and concepts used in courts and public life.

Course Structure and Philosophy

Moth classes are designed to be **high input, low output**. The emphasis is on reading, listening, thinking, and discussion rather than frequent graded assignments.

Each week:

- Students will complete assigned readings or videos.
- Students will post a short response to a weekly discussion question.

- Students will reply to at least one classmate's post.
- Students will attend the live class ready to discuss the material.

Responses are meant to demonstrate engagement and thoughtfulness rather than formal writing skills. Parents who would like to add a heavier writing component are welcome to work with the instructor to create additional assignments.

Texts and Materials

There is **no required textbook** for this course.

All readings, case excerpts, and videos will be provided by the instructor through the online classroom.

Topics Covered

Throughout the year, students will study:

- Foundations of law and legal history
- The court system, legal practice, and procedure
- Evidence and trials
- Criminal procedure and criminal law
- Torts
- Contracts
- Property law
- Intellectual property
- Family law
- Business organizations
- Antitrust law
- Tax, trusts, and estates
- Bankruptcy
- Labor and employment law
- Constitutional law
- Administrative law
- International and comparative law
- Law and economics
- Legislation and the lawmaking process
- Professional responsibility and legal ethics
- Trial advocacy, mediation, and dispute resolution
- Environmental law
- Sports law
- Data privacy and artificial intelligence law
- Immigration law

Weekly Work

Each week students will:

1. Complete assigned readings and/or videos.
2. Post a short response to a discussion question before class.
3. Reply to at least one classmate's post.
4. Attend the live class prepared to discuss.

Projects

Students will complete **two projects** during the year:

- **Mid-year project (Week 16)**
- **Final project (Week 32)**
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Projects are flexible and may include:

- A short research paper
- A video presentation
- A mock trial or legal analysis
- A creative project (comic, podcast, infographic, etc.)

Students will work with the instructor to choose a format that matches their interests and strengths. Projects can be as intensive as the families choose.