

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
WOMEN AND THE LAW - LS / WGS 370 01, 3 credits (Human Rights Issue)
Winter 2016

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Days Class Meets: Tuesday and Thursday
Time Class Meets: 11:30 AM to 12:45 PM
Location of Class: 205D DeVos Center
Office Hours: Monday from 5 to 6 PM;
Tuesday and Thursday 1 to 3:30 PM and
other times by appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: Overview of legal limitations on sex discrimination in the United States and efforts to end discrimination; marriage and divorce; relationships outside of marriage; reproductive rights and biological factors impacting these rights; violence against women; and employment discrimination focusing on gender-based influences that contribute to these human rights violations. Part of the General Education Human Rights Issue. Offered winter semester.

II. PREREQUISITES and/or CO-REQUISITES: Junior standing

III. INTRODUCTORY PROSE. This course teaches the General Education learning objectives that correspond to the Human Rights Issue, as well as collaboration, problem-solving, and integration, as outlined in the General Education Handbook. As a General Education Human Rights Issues course, this section may be assessed and evaluated according to the approved General Education Course Assessment Plan.

General Education Issues course skill requirements:

1. *Collaboration* is the process of working together and sharing the workload equitably to progress towards shared objectives.
2. *Problem solving* is the process of designing and evaluating strategies to answer open-ended questions or achieve desired goals
3. *Integration* is the process of synthesizing and applying existing knowledge, past experiences, and other perspectives to new, complex situations.

Human Rights Issues Course Knowledge Goals

All courses in the Human Rights Issue help students to learn:

1. How the course relates to issues and questions regarding human rights
2. How complementary and competing perspectives covered in the course contribute to the ongoing discussion about human rights

IV. OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. *Identify* the basic components of the U.S. legal system and describe their functions (*knowledge*).
2. *Demonstrate* the ability to write a brief analyzing a court decision, present that analysis in class orally, and predict its application to facts (*application*).
3. *Identify* the historical and social underpinnings of the treatment of women in U.S. law specifically addressing the impact of social structures, culture systems, and values in gender based violations of human rights (*knowledge*).
4. *Compare* and *contrast* the role of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment with the protections offered by federal and Michigan civil rights legislation (*analysis*).
5. *Identify* and *describe* diverse feminist philosophical and ideological approaches to understanding the legal position of women in the U.S. legal system (*knowledge*).
6. *Identify* legal issues related to women under current consideration by the courts and the legislatures, and describe the divergent nature of their roles, including how gender biases contribute to human rights issues (*knowledge*).

7. *Identify and examine* how sex and gender impacts/influences the legal system's approach to and resolution of principle human rights issues in the areas of sexual harassment, reproductive rights, violence against women, family law, criminal law, education, athletics, and related human rights, legal, social, ideological and cultural issues (*application*).
8. *Identify* issues of legal professional responsibilities related to course content, including issues of equity, ethics, human rights, and cultural competency (*knowledge*).

V. BLOOM'S TAXONOMY LEVEL AND DOMINANT CURRICULUM "THREADS": While the current course will draw from across "Bloom's Taxonomy" of learning, it will nevertheless dominantly draw from the levels of "Knowledge", "Comprehension", and "Application." In addition, dominant curriculum "threads" to be assessed throughout this course will be student writing and demonstrating the ability to work productively as part of a group.

Class Date	Assignment from text	Student assignments/Topics
1. 1/12	None	Overview/administrative Matters/ Human Rights Issue
2. 1/14 & 1/19	Appendices B and D; handouts Ch. 7 – <i>Courts</i> (PDF file on Bb)	US legal system and legal analysis Human Rights
3. 1/21	Ch 1, <i>Muller v. Oregon</i> , pp. 23-25 and <i>Goesaert v. Cleary</i> , pp 27-28	Case briefing and analysis
4. 1/26, 1/28 & 2/2	Ch 1, pp 1-36	Historical context and feminist legal theories
5. 2/9 & 2/11	Ch. 2, pp 37-76	Constitutional protection of equality
6. 2/16	Review first test	
7. 2/18	First Test	
8. 2/23 & 2/25	Ch 3, pp 77-133	Equal employment opportunity
9. 3/1 & 3/3	Ch 4, pp 134-199	Working conditions/Compensation
<i>Spring Recess: March 6-13</i>		
<i>March 11 at 5 p.m. is GVSU's withdrawal deadline to receive a grade of "W"</i>		
10. 3/15 & 3/17	Ch 5, pp 200-249	Equal educational opportunity
11. 3/22	Review	
12. 3/24	Second Test	
13. 3/29 & 3/31	Ch 6, pp 250-264; 267-275 and handout of redacted case <i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i> , 135 S Ct. 2584 (2015)	Family
14. 4/5 & 4/7	Ch 7, pp 322-354	Reproduction
15. 4/12 & 4/14	Ch 8, pp 385-403; 416-420	Sexuality and sexual violence
16. 4/19	Ch 9, pp 426-460	Feminism in the Twenty-first Century
17. 4/21		Review final exam
18. 4/27	Wednesday, noon to 1:50 PM	Final Exam

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION: All tests that are not taken and all assignments not turned in will be given a grade of zero when your final grade is calculated. In order to receive a "C" in this course a student must demonstrate by their tests, class assignments, written and oral presentation of summary analysis of research article, and class participation that they understand 75% of the course material. The grades will not be curved. It is possible for every student to receive an "A."

1) There will be three written examinations; each will account for 20% of your final grade, for a total of 60%.

2) Ten percent of your grade will be based on an individually written summary of a single academic article examining the problem/issue identified by your assigned group within the group's defined problem. Each student will engage in

independent research to locate an appropriate article that will include gender concerns with legal implications to be used in the group assignment that will be shared with the class as part of the group's presentation.

3) Group members will collaborate in creating a single, presentation that integrates each student's individual, and unique, research result that examines the group problem/issue as a unified discussion of the problem/issue that proposes solution(s) to the problem. Each student must (as part of their group) present the results of the individual research to the class during the time frame when the topics will be covered in the course syllabus. The individual member's contribution to creating and making the presentation will be worth 10% of the final course grade. Another 10% of the course grade will be based on the group's collaborative process in integrating the individual contributions of each member from diverse perspectives demonstrating the entire group's engagement in understanding and solving the problem/issue selected by the group as their research topic. All students will be held responsible for the content of each group's presentation. **Failure to submit the individual written assignment will result in a grade of zero for the presentation assignment even if the information has been presented to the class by the other group members. Students who do not participate in the group presentation will receive a zero for the group assignment portion of their grade for this assignment, unless they can document a good reason for not being able to participate in the presentation.** More specific instructions for this assignment will be provided separately.

4) Ten per cent of the grade will consist of class participation, including discussion of case briefing assignments that are provided for class sessions. Before the first examination each student will retrieve one of the cases assigned for case briefing that has been redacted in the text from either an electronic or print source **and** submit both a hard copy of the full case opinion and a written brief analyzing the case. **The written case brief will submitted no later than in class on the day scheduled for review for the first examination.** Each student will also be expected to sign up to lead the discussion of several of the assigned cases that will be covered in class after the first test

Additional assignments and group activities will also be given during class time. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to obtain these assignments from your instructor, the course web site, or a fellow student. Every student will be expected to respond to questions during class and participate in class discussions.

GRADE SCALE: 95-100 = A, 92-94 = A-, 89-91= B+, 85-88 = B, 82-84 = B-, 79-81 = C+, 75-78 = C, 72-74 = C-, 69-71 =D+, 66 - 68 = D, 65 and below = F.

Summary of expected course work: * all course requirements must be completed to earn a successful grade for the course.

Exams (3 exams = 20% each)	60%
Written work – individual summary & case brief	10%
Individual oral presentation and participation in group assignment	10%
Group project	10%
Class Assignments, case briefs of court opinions, and class participation	10%
	100%

5) **CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Ten per cent of your grade consists of class participation and the completion of any assignments that are given during class sessions. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to obtain any assignment from your instructor, the course web site, or a fellow student.

- a) Cell phones, pagers, and other personal communication devices are to be turned off during class time unless a waiver of this requirement is obtained from the instructor in advance.
- b) Class participation is an important part of the learning process. Students are expected to come to class prepared to share questions and thoughts relating to the assigned topics. Some topics may be covered in class primarily through the use of group discussion as opposed to lecture by the instructor. All class members are expected to contribute to a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
- c) To receive an "A" for class participation you must attend class regularly, according to my records (students are expected to sign the attendance sheet during class, complete assignments given in class (including any class assignments that are to be completed outside of the classroom), and be involved in

group discussions. Every student will be expected to respond to questions during class. If you have a life event that regularly, for good reason that can be documented, interferes with your class attendance you should initiate a discussion with the instructor to try and resolve the attendance issue. Assigned reading should be completed before each class session. **Class discussions will begin where the text leaves off and textbooks are to be brought to each class.** The text includes problem questions to help reinforce the material covered in each chapter. If you miss a test, you should contact the instructor as soon as possible to explain your absence and make arrangements to make up the examination. **Any examination not made up before the next class session may not be taken in the same form.** If the school should cancel classes on the day of a test because of the weather or for any other reason, the test will be given on the next scheduled class date.

- d) All members of the class will be treated in a respectful and courteous fashion. Failure to do so will result in a downward adjustment of the class participation grade. Conduct during class involving such things as consistently talking with fellow students while others are speaking, improper use of electronic communication devices and/or other behaviors that are distracting to either fellow students or the instructor during class time will result in a failing grade for class participation, if not corrected after instructor warning. Using computers in class to engage in email communication, Text Messaging or other forms of electronic communication during class discussions and lectures will also negatively impact this grade, if discovered. It will also result in a loss of the future ability to use an electronic device in class for note taking in this or any course taught by this instructor. Each student may be asked complete a self-evaluation form evaluating their own performance on this aspect of their course grade including timely arrival to each class session and attendance during the entire class period, which would then be one factor in the assignment of the final grade for class participation.

VIII. AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE: Students having difficulty with the course should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have a need for disability-related accommodations, please inform me and the Office of Disability Support Services at 200 STU (331-2490). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if the requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation in accordance with federal, state, and university guidelines

FIRE EMERGENCY RESPONSE: Immediately proceed to the nearest exit during a fire alarm. Do not use elevators. More information is available on the University's Emergency website located at <http://www.gvsu.edu/emergency>.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES RESOURCES: Patricia Bravender is the criminal justice librarian and she can provide you with individualized research assistance for all of your classes. Her office is in the Steelcase Library on the DeVos Campus downtown and she can be reached at bravendp@gvsu.edu or 331-7338. The criminal justice library subject guide (<http://libguides.gvsu.edu/cj>) contains links to all of the criminal justice databases and other specific resources for criminal justice students, including crime statistics and the legal studies library subject guide provides the same type of information for legal studies related databases (<http://libguides.gvsu.edu/lc>).

You may also find help at the **Knowledge Market** which offers one-stop support for library research, writing, and oral presentations. Three academic support services – University Libraries, the Fred Meijer Center for Writing and Michigan Authors, and the Speech Lab – are available in one convenient location to give you feedback and resources. The consultants in the **Knowledge Market** help students brainstorm and develop topics, learn more efficient strategies for completing assignments, and practice and improve library research, writing, and speech skills. For information about the **Knowledge Market** or to make an appointment, visit www.gvsu.edu/library/km.

VIII. TEXT(S)

Required Text(s):

Lindgren, J., R., Taub, N., Wolfson, B.A., & Palumbo, C. M. (2011). *The Law of Sex Discrimination*. Belmont, CA. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Book Chapter: *Courts*, PDF file posted to Course Bb site (2014)

Recommended Text(s):

Oran, D. (2008) *Oran's Dictionary of the Law*. Albany, NY; Thompson Delmar Learning. (A different legal dictionary may be substituted for this one and it may also be accessed in an electronic format on the Grand Valley Library Guide at: <http://libguides.gvsu.edu/content.php?pid=11942&hs=a>). The "Law and Legal Studies Guide" includes a link to law dictionaries that will be useful to you in this class and others.

Go to: www.gvsu.edu/library/ and select library guides to access these resources. The information there will also be helpful for your research assignment and case briefing assignments.

IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Assumed by GVSU and this professor, is that each student possesses an exceptional level of academic integrity. Section 223.00 & 223.01 of the *Student Code* are reproduced below for your reference.

SECTION 223.00 INTEGRITY OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES: Truth and Honesty. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind. Instructors, for their part, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged. Compliance shall include compliance with the following specific rules:

- a) No student shall knowingly, without authorization, procure, provide or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment.
- b) No student shall, without authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.
- c) No student shall, without authorization, allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.
- d) No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own.
- e) No student shall submit work that has been previously graded, or is being submitted concurrently to more than one course, without authorization from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it .

SECTION 223.01 PLAGIARISM: Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, speeches or the writings of others students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment also is considered plagiarism. Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

CAUTION: This course is intended for educational purposes only. The information is not meant to be legal advice, nor should it be used as such.

THE LAST DAY STUDENTS MAY WITHDRAW FROM THIS COURSE WITH A GRADE OF "W" IS Friday March 11, 2016 by 5:00 p.m.

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain*
(In other words, a level-by-level approach to understanding how you think!)

Benjamin Bloom created this taxonomy (organization of categories) to understand the level of abstract thinking required in various educational settings. *During the course of the semester, course content, exercises, assignments and tests will move through these levels from knowledge to analysis.* In other words, this class is structured to develop and test your critical thinking skills about the material. (Note that the taxonomy works from the bottom up. That is, the higher you go on the chart, the more developed the level of critical thinking.)

What does this mean for you as a student in this course? (1) *It is very important that you gain the foundational knowledge for the course.* Each unit will build on old knowledge and introduce new knowledge. If you don't understand a core concept, see me! Don't get lost or left behind because you were afraid to ask. *There are no stupid questions in this class!* (2) *Participate in the class exercises and assignments.* I develop these to help you use your knowledge and develop your thinking skills through case scenarios, problems, and focused activities. *This isn't just busy work!* Believe it or not, there's a method to the madness! (3) *Review the test study guides to see what level of thinking I will expect on each topic.* If I ask you to identify something, I will be asking you to tell me what you know. If I ask you to define something, I will be asking you to show me what you comprehend (understand). If I ask you to compare and contrast two ideas, I am asking you to analyze the material in terms of similarities and/or differences. If I am asking you to integrate or assess, I am asking you to synthesize and evaluate. *As you will see, test questions often are similar to in-class activities or assignments, another good reason to make sure that you participate and ask if you have questions!*

Bloom's Taxonomy

6. EVALUATION	Students can use previously learned standards/criteria to determine the worth or merit of a complex product.	Compare and discriminate between ideas, Assess value of theories, presentations, Make choices based on reasoned argument, Verify value of evidence, Recognize subjectivity	Assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize
5. SYNTHESIS	Students can create an original and complex product out of a set of simpler components.	Use old ideas to create new ones, Generalize from given facts, Relate knowledge from several areas, Predict, draw conclusions	Combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, build, solve, perform, establish, predict, produce, modify, plan, formulate, design, invent, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite
4. ANALYSIS	Students can take a complex set of material and break it down into its component parts and/or explain why a complex set of relationships is organized as it is or what caused it to be or predict from the present to the future.	Seeing patterns, Organization of parts, Recognition of hidden meanings, Identification of components	Analyze, breakdown, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare and contrast, select, explain, infer, show how, draw a diagram, deduce
3. APPLICATION	Students can apply previously learned material such as concepts, rules or generalizations to newly taught material.	Use information, Use methods, concepts, theories in new situations, Solve problems using required skills or knowledge	Apply, classify, find, choose, compute, sort, generalize, organize, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover
2. COMPREHENSION	Students can express previously learned material in their own way.	Understanding information, Grasp meaning, Translate knowledge into new context, Interpret facts, Compare, Contrast, Order, Group, Infer causes, Predict consequences	Summarize, define, put in your own words, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend, summarize, translate, illustrate, restate, demonstrate
1. KNOWLEDGE	Students can recall, reproduce or recognize previously learned information as it was taught to them.	Observation and recall of information, Knowledge of dates, events, places, Knowledge of major ideas Mastery of subject matter	List, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, underline, place in order, reproduce, recognize, recall, name, who, when, where, etc.
LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	GOAL	SUGGESTED ACTION VERBS/QUESTION CUES

Adapted from Bloom, Benjamin S. 1984. *Taxonomy of educational objectives*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Pearson Education