Minnesota State University Moorhead

POL 230: Introduction to the Law

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours/Week: 3

Lab Hours/Week: 0

OJT Hours/Week: *.*

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: None

The philosophy of law; its social context; justice and its implications; evolution of legal concepts and systems.

B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES: 02/25/2001 - Present

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. World legal families---common law, civil (Romano-Germanic) law, regional variations.
2. Philosophies of law---positivism, natural law, realism, sociological jurisprudence.
3. Sources of law---role of constitutions, codes and codification, judge-made law.
4. Physical persons in domestic law; judicial and corporate bodies as legal persons.
5. Legal reasoning---role of precedent, legislative history, ratio decendi, obiter dictum.
6. Private law---property, contract, tort, trade law.
7. Public law---criminal law, constitutional law.
8. Anglo-American and U.S. Legal system---organization and functions of courts, federalism, trail by jury, division of law and equity, findings of fact and findings of law, appellate courts.

D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)

1. Students shall understand the basic concepts of legal families, major legal philosophies, legal institutions, legal reasoning and specific conceptual areas of public and private law.
2. Students will begin to appreciate the deductive nature of legal reasoning, how to apply previous case precedent to current legal disputes, how legislative history informs legal decision making.
3. Students will understand the intricacies of the U.S. legal system and its interlocking state and federal courts and laws.
4. Student will compare and contrast public law and private law concepts and differences between working with codified systems vs. common law oriented subjects.

E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies

None

F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

As noted on course syllabus

G. SPECIAL INFORMATION

None noted