

Street Law Class Syllabus

Name _____

Teacher : Ms. Doane

E-Mail Address: doanes@portlandschools.org

Office Hours: Room 211, 2nd block (9:15-10:30) and after school (2:00-2:45)

Course Description:

Street Law is a semester long social studies elective that serves as an introductory course to law and legal systems in the United States. Units will include...

Introduction to Law

Constitutional Law

Criminal Law and the Criminal Justice Process

Civil Law (Torts, Contracts and Family Law)

Like any introductory course, Street Law is a survey. We will touch on broad and specific legal topics to give students a better understanding of law and how it affects you in **real life**. We will use case studies, individual research, group discussion / debate, guest speakers and mock trials throughout the course in order to reach our goal. We will also venture out into the Portland legal community to see law in action. Dueling opinions and lively debate should be the norm in this course making the class fun, enriching and meaningful.

Standards from the Portland Public Schools Social Studies Standards:

Content: Civics and Government

- U.S. Government Demonstrate an understanding of the basic structures and processes of U.S. government.
- U.S. Political System Demonstrate an understanding of how to participate in the U.S. political system.
- Rights and Responsibilities Demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of a citizen in a democratic republic.

Application:

- Writing Integrate information from diverse sources into a coherent understanding of an idea, event or issue.
- Argument Research, formulate and defend a position on a current social studies issue.

Major Assessments:

- 4 Unit Tests
- 4 Short Essays
- 2 Mock Trial Participation Evaluations
- 2 Research Projects (MLA Format)
- 2 Group Presentations

Homework:

- Homework will be assigned on a daily basis (listed on the board below the quote of the day).
- Assignments will be 30 to 45 minutes in length and will be checked for completion and quality of work the following day.
- No homework is accepted late.
- Students will also be expected to work on long-term projects outside of class.

Attendance and Make-up Work:

Attendance is a crucial aspect of this honors course. Frequent absences will hinder your ability to learn and collect evidence of learning and will therefore reflect negatively on your grade. The district attendance policy will be followed...

“A student who is absent for 10 days or more in a semester course shall result in a loss of credits toward graduation.”

- Make-up work will only be accepted in the case of a documented excused absence.
- Following an excused absence, students will have **5 days** to make-up any work missed or to arrange for the make-up of a test.

Notebooks:

- Every student should have a **3-ring binder** (neatly organized) and a **spiral notebook**.
- Notebooks will be checked randomly for organization and neatness.
- Every student is expected to bring their notebook as well as text to class everyday.

Acceptance of Late Long Term Assignments:

- Late long term assignments will be accepted without penalty when a student has made arrangements with Ms. Doane **before the due date** and is able to show evidence of partial completion.

Expectations and Class Rules:

- Students are expected to bring their notebooks, iPads, a writing utensil and an open mind to class everyday.
- Students have 5 minutes passing time between classes. You are expected to be in the room in your seat when that 5 minutes ends. Your first two tardies will be forgiven. Afternoon detention will be assigned after that.
- Smart devices should be used appropriately during class. Any electronic devices that are not used appropriately will be confiscated and given to Mr. Pierce or Mr. Shibles.
- In order to ensure clear communication, eyes must be visible. Therefore, no sunglasses, hoodies or brims facing forward.

Street Law Course Outline (Text used: *Street Law : A Course in Practical Law*)

I. Introduction to Law

Text: Chapters 1-6

Topics:

What is law?

How does the U.S. legal system compare to other legal systems?

How is law created?

Overview of U.S. judicial structure

Film: Documentary: O.J. Simpson Case

Assessments:

Unit test

Short Essay

II. Constitutional Law

Text: Chapters 36-45

Topics:

What is constitutional law?

U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights

Function of the U.S. Supreme Court

Individual research: landmark Supreme Court case

Group and individual presentations: Rights and freedoms protected by the U.S. Constitution

Film: *Separate But Equal (1991)*

Assessments:

Unit test

Short Essay

Case Brief

Rights and Freedoms Powerpoint Presentation

III. Criminal Law and the Criminal Justice Process

Text: Chapters 7-17

Topics:

What is criminal law?

Group research: criminal justice process phases

Group presentation: criminal justice process phases

Individual research: True crime in the U.S.

Mock Criminal Trial: *State v. David Jones*

Film: Documentaries:

Ruben "Hurricane" Carter

Jeffery Daumer

Assessments:

Unit test

Essay

Group presentation criminal justice process phases

Research paper on true criminal

Mock trial evaluation

IV. Civil Law (Torts, Contracts and Family Law)

Text: Chapters 18-35

Topics:

What is civil law?

Torts

Contract law (focus on consumer and housing)

Family law

Mock Civil Trial: *Vickers v. Hearst*

Film: Documentaries:

Hot Coffee

Family Law in America

Assessments:

Unit test

Essay

Mock trial evaluation