

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science 363

Law and Public Policy

Description of Course

This course treats political aspects of the judiciary as an institution, the dynamics of the process of judicial decision-making, and a conceptual framework for understanding the political consequences of judicial decisions. Application is made to policy areas, utilizing case law, statutory law, and commentary as sources. Topical areas for study will include racial equality in public education, housing, and civil rights; the administration of criminal justice; poverty and law; rights of women; environmental protection law; and urban planning and development. The primary emphasis will be on constitutional issues.

Course Assignments

This course requires that the student assimilate assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions. Oral reports by students on their analysis of court cases, statutes, and reading is expected. A bonus of 5 points on the final grade will be given to those students who consistently participate in class discussions.

Each student will be assigned to a task force in one of the policy areas for the purpose of developing an annotated bibliography. Each task force will decide on a division of labor within the group. Each student will sign his or her name to the part of the written report for which he or she was responsible for producing.

Evaluation of Student's Learning

The grade assigned to a student will be based on his performance. The relative weight of the course requirements is as follows:

Three one-hour tests	70%
Annotated bibliography	30%
Class participation bonus	5%

The grades of A, B, C, and D are assigned on the basis of averaged numerical scores:

- A - 90-100
- B - 80-89
- C - 70-79
- D - 60-69

The Role of the Instructor

By means of the lecture method the instructor will analyze readings assigned to the student. He will react with his own analysis to student recitation when necessary or helpful. Class discussion

will be encouraged. He will invite specialists working in the communities surrounding the College to present case studies in specific policy areas.

The Role of the Student

The student will analyze lectures and reading assignments in preparation for three one-hour tests. The three one-hour tests will be partly open-book essays and partly short answer tests.

Each student will indicate interest in, and be assigned to, one of the policy areas for the purpose of developing an annotated bibliography. Correct composition and lucid language is expected and required.

Outline of the Course

Unit I - The Judiciary as a Political Institution	Jan. 22-26
II - Judicial Decision-Making Processes	Jan. 29-Feb. 2
III - The Impact of Supreme Court Decisions:	
A Conceptional Framework.....	Feb. 5-9
TEST.....	Feb. 12
Unit IV - Policy Areas:	
Racial equality in education, housing,	
health.....	Feb. 14-28
Administration of Criminal Justice.....	Mar. 2-21
Poverty and Law.....	Mar. 23-April 4
TEST.....	April 6
Constitutional Rights of Women.....	April 9-13
Environmental Protection.....	April 16-25
Urban Planning and Development.....	April 27-May 4

open book essays and/or short answer test.