

## **Law and Civil Rights**

**Instructor:** Dr. Nadeen Kharputly

**Office hours:** Mondays 12:10pm-2pm (and by appointment) in Social Sciences Building 252

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Any changes to this syllabus will be announced in class and via e-mail.

### **Course description:**

This class will examine law and civil rights as an ongoing series of attempts to seek justice over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. We will challenge assumptions that the civil rights movements of the 1960s are complete and that we live in a post-racial society; we will examine the efforts of individuals of that era as a continual process. We will draw parallels between the icons of the 1960s and notable figures today. We will understand how legal and civil rights injustices of the 20<sup>th</sup> century set precedents for injustices today. Overall, the goal of the class is to complicate our understanding of the law and civil rights in the modern U.S.

### **Ground rules:**

We are discussing complex, difficult, and very necessary topics, and while differences in opinion are expected and welcome, please be sure to voice your responses generously. This is a space where every student has the opportunity to learn in an open and supportive environment, and in order to maintain this co-operative space, everyone in this class is expected to be as open-minded and gracious as possible. Personal attacks and hate speech will not be tolerated. Please go over the Principles of Community to ensure that you adhere by the expected guidelines:

(<https://ucsd.edu/about/principles.html>)

### **Learning outcomes:**

By the end of this class you will be able to:

- Identify central arguments in the texts we read and examine them from multiple angles
- Take and defend a particular position while considering the viability of other positions
- Talk about the issues presented in this class in an academic manner and engage in thoughtful, sensitive debate with peers
- Apply the concepts and readings we discuss to everyday examples

### **Class readings and other requirements:**

Bring the readings of the day with you to each class. You will not be asked to purchase any texts. All required readings – PDFs and links to articles – will be available online on TritonEd. Please access links listed on the syllabus via TritonEd as they may have changed in the meantime.

Bring writing tools with you to each class – pen and notebook, laptop, or tablet (no cell phones) – you will be asked to undertake in-class writing exercises throughout the quarter.

### **Class etiquette:**

Please devote the 50 minutes of class to listening attentively to everyone in this space. We are covering difficult topics so your full attention is required.

Be mindful of the space you take up – make sure you respond to the questions posed during our

discussions directly and efficiently, and do not forget that your classmates need to be able to participate as well.

Laptops are permitted for referring to the texts and taking notes only. Any distracting behavior – attempting to text discreetly, browsing through social media, etc. - will be cited, and you will be marked as absent for the class. Fiddling with technology is rude and distracting, both to me and your peers. If you are dealing with an emergency that requires you to be on your phone, please do not come to class. When you are not taking notes, please have your laptop screens down to fully engage in our space and listen to your peers with respect.

### **Communication:**

I encourage you to attend office hours whenever you need to talk through ideas and issues, even early on in the quarter. Please check your e-mail at least once a day to keep up to date with any possible changes to our schedule. Expect responses to your e-mails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours over the weekend. Courteous correspondence is expected—e-mails must begin with a salutation (“Dear>Hello Dr. Kharputly”) and end with your signature (Sincerely/Thanks, [your name]”).

Make sure you read over the syllabus and any instructions I have shared via e-mail or TritonEd carefully before you ask any questions. I will not respond to e-mails asking me what my office hours are, for example, or looking for any information that is readily available on the syllabus.

### **Course requirements and percentage of final grade:**

#### 20%    *Participation and attendance*

This includes *regular attendance* and *active participation* in class. A large portion of your grade relies on participation and attendance, so any absences can quickly take a toll. Please check in with me **immediately** if you anticipate any difficulties with regular attendance. This is not a class where you can come in and check out – your participation and critical engagement will be assessed carefully.

You may have two unexcused absences, no questions asked. Additional unexcused absences will affect the attendance portion of your grade. Please make the arrangements to procure necessary documentation for medical issues and/or disabilities as soon as possible.

Perpetual tardiness will also affect your attendance. One or two late arrivals is of course understandable, but a consistent inability to arrive to class on time will affect the attendance portion of your grade.

It is your responsibility to make up for your absences: reach out to a classmate to see what you missed. If you have additional questions after you have caught up, you’re welcome to reach out to me. E-mailing me to ask if you “missed anything in class” serves no purpose; the answer is always yes, and it is your duty to catch up.

#### 20%    *Weekly photo share*

By midnight at the end of each week (Sunday) you will share a photograph relating to the theme

of the week. Additional instructions will be provided ahead of time. These will be graded pass/half/fail.

20% Midquarter self-evaluation and preliminary bibliography (due 11/4 by 11:59pm)

A 3-5 page assignment. Not only to reflect on your progress thus far, but this should help you explore your final project. Further instructions will be sent ahead of time. You will receive a letter grade for this assignment.

30% Final assignment (due 12/10 by 11:59pm)

A bibliography of readings for a topic of your choice with a narrative description justifying your selections. Further instructions will be sent ahead of time. You will receive a letter grade for this assignment.

10% Self-evaluation (due 12/10 by 11:59pm)

At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a short evaluation of your learning outcomes. This will be graded pass/fail.

*All assignments must be turned in in order to pass this class.* This includes the weekly shares and self-evaluations.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

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### Week 0: Course introduction

#### **Friday, September 28**

Introduction

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### Week 1: Civil Rights today

#### **Monday, October 1**

Fredrick C. Harris, "The Next Civil Rights Movement?" *Dissent Magazine*, Summer 2015  
<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/black-lives-matter-new-civil-rights-movement-fredrick-harris>

#### **Wednesday, October 3**

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "Civil-Rights Protests Have Never Been Popular: Activists can't persuade their contemporaries—they're aiming at the next generation," *The Atlantic*, October 2017  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/10/colin-kaepernick/541845/>

#### **Friday, October 5**

Dean Spade, "Law," in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, 2014

Watch in class: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story," TED Talk, July 2009

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript)  
In-class community building exercises

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Week 2: Civil Rights today

**Monday, October 8**

Key figures of the Civil Rights, then and now  
[no reading for today – get started on *The New Jim Crow*]

**Wednesday October 10**

Michelle Alexander, Chapter 5 from *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (2010)

**Friday October 12**

Alexander continued

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Week 3: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X

**Monday October 15**

Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” April 16, 1963

**Wednesday October 17**

MLK Jr., “Beyond Vietnam – A Time to Break Silence,” April 4, 1967

**Friday October 19**

Malcolm X  
In-class screening of excerpts from his speeches, including his eulogy for Ronald Stokes (May 5, 1962)

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Week 4: Malcolm X and James Baldwin

**Monday October 22**

Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” (1964)

**Wednesday October 24**

James Baldwin  
In-class: excerpts from *I Am Not Your Negro* (2017)  
In-class: Excerpts from *A Criminal Power: James Baldwin and the Law* (2012)

**Friday October 26**

James Baldwin, “My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew” from *The Fire Next Time* (1963)

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## Week 5: Japanese American Internment

### Monday October 29

In-class exercises for mid-quarter evaluation

### Wednesday October 31

Podcast assignment: listen to *Radiolab Presents: More Perfect*, “American Pendulum I” (September 30, 2017)

<https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/american-pendulum-fred>

### Friday November 2

In-class: look at USC Digital Library - Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive, 1941-1946 <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll75>

In-class: look at Japanese American National Museum: Collections Online

<http://www.janm.org/collections/>

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## Week 6: Legalized Islamophobia and the War on Terror

### Monday November 5

Amaney Jamal, “Civil Liberties and Otherization of Arab and Muslim Americans,” from *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects* (2008)

### Wednesday November 7

Khaled Beydoun, “The Roots of Modern Islamophobia” from *American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear* (2018)

### Friday November 9

NO CLASS – Dr. Kharputly at the American Studies Association conference

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## Week 7: Illegality and civil rights

### Monday November 12

NO CLASS – Veteran’s day

### Wednesday November 14

Mai Ngai, “Deportation Policy and the Making and Unmaking of Illegal Aliens,” from *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (2004)

### Friday November 16

Ngai continued

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## Week 8: Illegality and civil rights continued

### **Monday November 19**

Jose Antonio Vargas, "My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant," *New York Times*, June 26, 2011

[www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/.../my-life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/.../my-life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant.html)

Excerpts from *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* (2018)

### **Wednesday November 21**

Vargas continued

### **Friday November 23**

NO CLASS – Thanksgiving holiday

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## Week 9: Marriage equality

### **Monday November 26**

Obergefell v. Hodges

Molly Ball, "How Gay Marriage Became a Constitutional Right," July 1, 2015

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/gay-marriage-supreme-court-politics-activism/397052/>

### **Wednesday November 28**

Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission

### **Friday November 30**

Marriage equality discussion continued

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## Week 10: Conclusion

### **Monday December 3**

In-class exercises for final project and self-evaluation

### **Wednesday December 5**

Q&A session for final bibliography project

### **Friday December 7**

Conclusions

### **Additional information:**

The university's statement on academic integrity must be reviewed before turning in any assignments: <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>.

Plagiarism consists of but is not limited to the following: presenting another person's ideas or

language as if they were your own, copying (words AND ideas) from the Internet, and failure to acknowledge and properly cite the sources of the ideas presented. Re-using language from a paper you have previously written for another class is unacceptable. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please check in with me ahead of time. It is your responsibility to be aware of all of this; lack of awareness is no excuse.

***Any instances of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment (and possibly the class) and a referral to the Academic Integrity Office.***

Please let me know as soon as possible if you need accommodation for disability purposes or religious reasons so that we may make alternate arrangements ahead of time. It is best to get accommodation from the Office for Students with Disabilities (located behind Center Hall, 858-534-4382) as soon as possible so that we can work together to ensure that your needs are met in the event of an emergency.

**Majoring or minoring in Ethnic Studies:**

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a university or college requirement. Students have taken three or four classes out of *interest* yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, education, public health, social work, non-profit work and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Monica Rodriguez, Ethnic Studies Program Advisor, via email at [ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu](mailto:ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu)