PLSI 315 (Fall 2006)
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (5 units)
MWF, 9:30am – 10:55am (CRN: 42948);
Location: Classroom Building, Room 104

Professor: Dominique Apollon, Ph.D.
Department of Political Science
California State University, Bakersfield
Office Hours: MW, 11:00am – 12:30pm, Tue 3pm – 6pm; or by appt.
Office location: BDC, Room A252
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Course Objectives
Our primary purpose is to examine the federal judiciary’s role in the balancing of 1) the civil rights and civil liberties of individuals with 2) competing governmental and societal interests in the American political system. As this is a course in American Politics, the approach is not primarily a legal one. Focusing on the U.S. Constitution and Supreme Court, the course provides students with a survey of the major cases and controversies relating to civil liberties/rights, including church-state relations, freedom of speech/expression, rights of the criminally accused, the death penalty, racial segregation, affirmative action, gender discrimination, abortion, and gay rights.

The goal is to help students develop a lasting understanding of the structure, organization, and operation of the federal judiciary, and its key role in American politics. After taking this course, students should also be able to define basic legal terms and concepts (stare decisis, precedent, standing, mootness, Circuit Courts, amicus curiae, vacate, etc.), describe and discuss the importance/impact of at least two or three major cases in each of the six sections of civil rights/liberties identified below, and compare/contrast jurisprudences across the Warren, Burger, Rehnquist, and Roberts Courts.

While gaining and/or improving reading comprehension skills on constitutional and judicial matters, students should also develop critical thinking skills by comparing the court’s behavior both across the examined civil liberties/rights issues, and with that of other political actors and governing institutions. Course assignments and required participation in classroom discussions are also designed to enhance students’ oral presentation and writing ability.

Required Texts

Requirements & Expectations
Most students will find the workload for this course to be particularly demanding and challenging. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings, and are encouraged to brief the assigned readings before class (a certain number of students will be required to brief at least one case before most class sessions). Regular attendance, concerted preparatory efforts and attentive class participation (including when solicited by the instructor on assigned days – more on this at first lecture) are a critical component of the overall learning environment for this course, and your grade will in all likelihood directly reflect the amount of work that you put in. As lectures, discussions, and in-class written exercises will make frequent reference to the justices’ text,…

you must bring your O’Brien reader to each class session.
**Grading**
20% - Assigned Case Briefs / Short Essays (2)
20% - Class Participation (Oral and Written)
30% - Midterm Examination
30% - Final Examination

*Note:* NO MAKE-UP EXAMS. Late Assignments, if accepted (at the instructor’s discretion), will be penalized.

**General Course Outline (Subject to change - Case lists to be announced in class)**

*COURSE INTRODUCTION; SUPREME COURT OVERVIEW I*
Week of Wed. Sept. 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Includes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPREME COURT OVERVIEW II</strong></td>
<td>Week of Mon. Sept. 18</td>
<td>Public School Prayer, Aid to Parochial Schools; Religious Displays in Public Places; Religious Peyote Ingestion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FREEDOM FROM / OF RELIGION</strong></td>
<td>Week of Mon. Oct. 2</td>
<td>Free Speech in Times of War; Obscenity; Pornography; Flag-burning; Cross-burning and Other “Hate” Speech</td>
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<td><strong>RIGHTS OF THE CRIMINALLY ACCUSED</strong></td>
<td>Week of Mon. Oct. 9</td>
<td>Unreasonable Searches &amp; Seizures; Self-incrimination; Right to Counsel; Capital Punishment</td>
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<td><strong>CATCHING UP / MIDTERM REVIEW / MIDTERM</strong></td>
<td>Week of Mon. Oct. 16</td>
<td>Racial Discrimination by States; Racial Segregation in Public Schools; Busing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAWS – PART II</strong></td>
<td>Week of Mon. Nov. 6</td>
<td>Affirmative Action; Nonracial Classifications (Gender, Sexual Orientation Poverty)</td>
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<td><strong>RIGHT TO PRIVACY</strong></td>
<td>Week of Mon. Nov. 13</td>
<td>Contraception / Abortion Rights; Right-to-Die / Assisted-Suicide</td>
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Week of Mon. Nov. 20 – **CATCHING UP / REVIEW**

**FINAL EXAM – Wednesday, November 29 – 8:00am – 10:30am**