1.0 Course description information

1.1 Catalog description: This course presents the fundamental principles of criminal and civil law that have relevance to the practice of social work. Topics include the legal system; legal research methods; professional ethical/legal responsibilities and liabilities; family law; elder law; criminal law; juvenile law; personal injury law; employment discrimination law; capacity to make contracts and wills; rights of institutionalized patients; and rights of handicapped children to an education.

1.2 Prerequisites of the course:
Undergraduate: SOWK 3320 prior to or concurrent.
Graduate: SOWK 8130 prior to or concurrent, or BSW degree.

1.3 Overview of content and purpose of the course: This course presents the fundamental principles of criminal and civil law that have relevance to the practice of social work. Students will learn about legal and ethical principles relevant to social work, documentation, legal research, advocacy, cooperation with legal professionals, and supporting clients involved in civil or criminal proceedings.

1.4 Unusual circumstances of the course: This course is offered as SOWK 4800 for undergraduate students. This course is offered as SOWK 8806 for graduate students.

2.0 Course justification information

2.1 Anticipated audience/demand:
Undergraduate: This course meets the requirements for minority or social work elective, and is intended for upper division undergraduate social work students.
Graduate: This course is a social work elective in the MSW program.

2.2 Indicate how often this course will be offered and the anticipated enrollment:
This course is expected to be offered on a rotating basis – usually once every 1-2 years.
Undergraduate: Enrollment is anticipated to be 20 students.
Graduate: Enrollment is anticipated to be 5 students.

2.3 If it is a significant change to an existing course, please explain why it is needed: The course objectives have been revised to meet accreditation standards.
Course objectives and assignments are now linked with CSWE EPAS competencies and practice behaviors. The bibliography has also been updated.

### 3.0 Objective information

#### 3.1 List of performance objectives stated in learning outcomes in a student’s perspective

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the legal principles that have relevance to social work, including an understanding of compliance with laws in the areas of health, education, and juvenile proceedings for social workers.
2. Integrate legal and ethical tenets with roles and intervention strategies, including the legal duties of social workers, the implications of the rules of evidence, and the varying roles of social workers in the legal process, including giving expert testimony.
3. Explain the relevance of using legal information to enhance interventions, including documentation, legal research, advocacy for legal reforms, cooperation with legal professionals, and supporting clients involved in civil or criminal proceedings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Objectives</th>
<th>EPAS Competencies</th>
<th>Generalist Practice Behaviors</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify the legal principles that have relevance to social work, including an understanding of compliance with laws in the areas of health, education, and juvenile proceedings for social workers.</td>
<td><strong>Comp #3</strong> Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.</td>
<td>Gen 3.1 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.</td>
<td>Readings Mid-term exam, Class participation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Comp #5</strong> Advance human rights and social and economic justice.</td>
<td>Gen 5.1 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Gen 5.2 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. Gen 5.3 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.</td>
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<td><strong>Comp #9</strong> Respond to contexts that shape practice.</td>
<td>Gen 9.2 Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Integrate legal and ethical tenets with roles and intervention strategies, including the legal duties of social workers, the implications of the rules of evidence, and the varying roles of social workers in</td>
<td><strong>Comp #2</strong> Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
<td>Gen 2.1 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice. Gen 2.2 Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/ International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in</td>
<td>Readings Mid-term exam, Class participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objectives</td>
<td>EPAS Competencies</td>
<td>Generalist Practice Behaviors</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
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<td>the legal process including giving expert testimony.</td>
<td><strong>Comp #8</strong> Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.</td>
<td>Gen 8.1 Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being. Gen 8.2 Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Explain the relevance of using legal information to enhance interventions, including documentation, legal research, advocacy for legal reforms, cooperation with legal professionals, and supporting clients involved in civil or criminal proceedings.</td>
<td><strong>Comp #1</strong> Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.</td>
<td>Gen 1.3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries. Gen 1.4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong> <strong>Mid-term exam, Class participation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Comp #6</strong> Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.</td>
<td>Gen 6.1 Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry. Gen 6.2 Use research evidence to inform practice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Comp #8</strong> Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.</td>
<td>Gen 8.1 Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being. Gen 8.2 Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 4.0 Content and organization information

### 4.1 List the major topics central to this course:
- The legal system
- Legal research
- Juvenile law
- Family law
- Elder law
- Family dispute mediation
- Law of professional records
- Privileged communication
- Professional malpractice
- Unifying ethics and the law
- Rights of institutionalized patients
- Rights of handicapped children to an education
- Expert testimony
- Criminal law
- Personal injury law
- Employment discrimination law
- Capacity to make contracts and wills

Typical schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 5/16 | • Introduction to course  
• Introduction to the legal system  
• Legal research | Chapters 1-2  
Handouts |  |
| 2 5/23 | • Privileged communication  
• Confidentiality and consent  
• Law of professional records  
• Professional malpractice | Chapters 3-4 |  |
| 3 5/30 | • No class (Memorial Day) | --- |  |
| 4 6/6 | • Unifying ethics and the law  
• Professional malpractice | Chapter 5 |  |
| 5 6/13 | • Child welfare law  
• Protecting children | Chapters 6-7 |  |
| 6 6/20 | • Juvenile justice system  
• Juvenile law | Chapter 13 |  |
| 7 6/27 | • Midterm exam  
• Rights of handicapped children to an education  
• Employment discrimination law | Assigned articles  
Midterm exam |  |
| 8 7/4 | • No class (Independence Day) | --- |  |
| 9 7/11 | • Family law  
• Family dispute mediation | Chapters 9-10 |  |
| 10 7/18 | • Rights of institutionalized patients  
• Elder law  
• Capacity to make contracts and wills | Chapters 18-19  
Assigned articles |  |
| 11 7/25 | • Criminal law  
• Personal injury law | Assigned articles |  |
| 12 8/1 | • Testifying in court  
• Writing reports | Chapters 14-15 |  |
| 13 8/8 | • Final exam  
• Conclusions and summary of course  
• Discuss final papers  
• Course evaluations | ---  
Final exam  
Final papers due |  |

5.0 Teaching methodology information

5.1 Methods: Each class session will involve a lecture and discussion. Materials from selected legal cases will be analyzed for social work implications.
5.2 Student role: Students are to participate actively in all discussions, attend class, and prepare written assignments.

6.0 Evaluation information

6.1 Describe the typical types of student projects that will be the basis for evaluating student performance:

Undergraduate:
- Complete two multiple-choice and/or essay “sectional” examinations. There will be one mid-term and one final examination. The examinations are tailored to assess progress throughout the semester.
- Write a 7-10 page paper on an issue of legal significance and how it pertains to social work practices.

Graduate:
- Complete two multiple-choice and/or essay “sectional” examinations. There will be one mid-term and one final examination. The examinations are tailored to assess progress throughout the semester.
- Graduate: Write a 10-15 page paper on an issue of legal significance and how it pertains to social work practices (minimum of 10 reference sources).

6.2 Describe the typical basis for determining the final grade (e.g. weighting of various student projects):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UGrad</th>
<th>Grad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance &amp; Meaningful Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3 Grading type:

- A+ = 98% or Above
- A = 94 to 97.9%
- A- = 91 to 93.9%
- B+ = 88 to 90.9%
- B = 84 to 87.9%
- B- = 81 to 83.9%
- C+ = 78 to 80.9%
- C = 74 to 77.9%
- C- = 71 to 73.9%
- D+ = 68 to 70.9%
- D = 64 to 67.9%
- D- = 61 to 63.9%
- F = 60.9% and below

7.0 Resource material information

7.1 Textbook(s) or other required readings used in course:

7.2 Other student suggested reading material:

*Journal of Law and Social Work.*
7.3 Current bibliography and other resources:


**Classic resources**


**8.0 Other information**

**8.1 Accommodations statement**
Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with UNO Disability Services and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact UNO Disability Services (EAB 117, Phone: 554-2872, TTY: 554-3799) or go to the website: [www.unomaha.edu/disability](http://www.unomaha.edu/disability)

**8.2 Plagiarism/academic integrity**
In this course, you will submit written work in which you make use of information and ideas found in print or online sources. Whenever you use material from another writer, it is important that you quote or paraphrase appropriately and *cite the source*. Never let it appear that ideas and information gleaned from other sources are your own.

The UNO Academic Integrity policy defines plagiarism as “presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting . . . academic work in whole or in part as one’s own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.”

Failure to cite sources appropriately is plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will not be accepted. Consequences for plagiarism are up to the discretion of the instructor; they may range, for example, from rewriting all or part of a paper to a grade of F for the course. Students who plagiarize more than once are subject to disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the university.

UNO Faculty Senate, March, 2010
Additional note on plagiarism/academic integrity from the UNO School of Social Work:

The School of Social Work views plagiarism as a very serious offense. The NASW Code of Ethics includes a high value on integrity and the importance of behaving in a trustworthy manner (see NASW Code of Ethics, www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp, 4.04 and 4.08). In addition, the Publication Manual of the APA (2010) states, “Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotation marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author, you need to credit the source in the text” (p. 15).

The School of Social Work will hold a Level 2 or 3 Student Review for any student who is alleged to have plagiarized or cheated in any of their academic courses.

8.3 Procedures regarding student grades/papers

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 requires that student grades not be published in a personally identifiable fashion. Therefore, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, students must provide a self-addressed adequately stamped envelope for papers, projects, or exams that were not returned to them in class. Any remaining papers, projects or exams will be kept by the instructor for 3 months after the semester ends, at which time they will be shredded.

8.4 Resources for students:

- UNO Counseling Center, http://counseling.unomaha.edu
- UNO Speech Center, http://www.unomaha.edu/speechcenter
- UNO Writing Center, www.unomaha.edu/writingcenter
- Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue, http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl

11-11-2011