

# **An Introduction to American Law**

## **Abstract**

Course Type: compulsory, elective, optional

Pre-requisites: English (Upper Intermediate)

This course will give you a glimpse into six different areas of American law: Tort Law, Contract Law, Property, Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, and Civil Procedure. Students will gain insight into the complexities and dilemmas that arise from the application of law in different settings, and what is distinctive about American approaches.

This course will cover the basic ideas and principles behind core elements of U.S. law, including Tort Law, Contract Law, Property Law, Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, and Civil Procedure.

Throughout the course, you will be introduced to some of the great philosophical questions of the law:

How is the law used to help people achieve their goals?

How is the law used to protect people? From each other? From the state?

What is the line between conduct that we wish to discourage and conduct that we make criminal?

What is the difference between the rights created by contracts and rights created by property?

Which of our agreements is legally enforceable and why?

# Syllabus

## 1. Course Description

- a. Title of a Course: An Introduction to American Law
- b. Pre-requisites: English (Upper Intermediate)
- c. Course Type: compulsory, elective, optional
- d. Abstract:

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## 2. Online platform: Coursera

3. Course link: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/american-law>

4. Language of instruction: English

## 5. Course Plan

## **Tort Law**

What is our liability when we injure another, either intentionally or negligently? Tort Law derives from the common law treatment of injuries to others.

## **Contract Law**

Contract Law is the law of our agreements with others, at least those which we intend to be legally enforceable. You will be introduced to some of the basic principles, and the key question of which promises are enforceable in law.

## **Property Law**

The law governing property and ownership forms a fundamental building block of any legal system. This lecture introduces you to the law of things.

## **Constitutional Law**

Constitutions both create governmental power and regulate it. This lecture introduces key features of the United States Constitution, including both structural features and protection of individual rights.

## **Criminal Law**

This lecture will introduce you to criminal law as a device for defining and controlling harmful behavior. Attention is given to the theoretical justifications for and the effectiveness of punishment, the foundations of culpability, the basic principles of criminal liability, and the definition of offenses and defenses.

## **Civil Procedure**

This lecture introduces you to the importance of the rules that govern the litigation of disputes and the way in which procedure inevitably affects substantive rights.

### 6. Reading List

- a. Required (web-site, hyperlink)

### 7. Forms of Control:

- a. Current control: tests during the course (80% Final grade)
- b. Intermediate control: interview with the teacher (20% Final Grade)

Students in an oral examination situation are also expected to deliver answers which are followed by the following qualities:

-audibility and clarity, pitch, proper articulation;

-fluency, appropriate forms of language including addressing the examiner, clarity of expression;

-appropriate content (proper coverage of legal issues, relevance of law in their responses, emphasis, anticipating or responding to other side; at least certain justification of the argument which has been supported).

8. Grading System: Fin. = Curr.\*0,8 + Accum.\*0,2

9. Methods of Instruction:

-use of on-line educational technologies,

-use of accumulative system of control.

10. Special Equipment and Software Support:

a. Microsoft Windows 7 Professional RUS