

CESAR CHAVEZ HIGH SCHOOL
Department of Social Sciences
Term: Fall Semester

Introduction to Law

Course Syllabus

Class Meeting Times:

Period 1 (7:16 – 8:49) Period 2 (8:54 – 10:27) Period 3 (10:32 – 12:05)

Full Name of Instructor: Christopher Tyler

Office Phone: 1-209-933-7480 # 38954

- My phone does not have voice mail. If you need to reach me please call between 6:30 A.M. – 7:00 A.M. or from 12:05 P.M. – 3:15 P.M. or e-mail me (I check my e-mail a minimum of twice a day)

Office E-mail: ctyler@stockton.k12.ca.us

Class Location: E121

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 2:15 P.M. – 3:15 P.M.

I. Course Description

- Street Law is a practical program of legal education designed to engage high school students in a critical examination of their legal responsibilities and rights. In this elective course students have the opportunity to conduct discussions, research, and debate with their classmates about practical legal problems, contemporary legal issues, and the ramifications of breaking the law. The ultimate goal of the program is to provide students with a sense of belonging in society through empowerment with knowledge of the law by providing students with a non-adversarial view of the law. This course is based on your textbook *Street Law*, which works to provide an understanding of the fundamental principles of authority, fairness, justice, and responsibility that underlie our legal system. By demystifying the law, this course aims to help young citizens develop a positive attitude towards the law and reduce juvenile delinquency.
- Additionally, this course will enhance the student’s development in other subjects here at Cesar Chavez High School by way of identifying, analyzing, and explaining the ways in which Americans have used social norms and laws to communicate and express points of view, utilized problem solving skills, experimented with new ideas to improve society, and relied upon research, reason, and truth to nurture the individual and our role in the greater society.

II. Instructional Philosophy

- This course will prepare students for post-secondary law and government courses and other high school Social Studies courses. In addition, a proficient understanding of America’s principals and legal system will assist the student in applying good citizenship skills in American Civil Society.
- Students will be required to complete challenging and meaningful assignments. In order to prepare for course assessments and high stakes exams and to demonstrate critical thinking skills, students will complete rigorous reading, writing, and research assignments to prepare for active classroom discussion, delivery of presentations, and completion of daily work. Each unit students will create a portfolio of work including reading and writing assignments, responses to

primary and secondary sources, analysis of data-based graphs, tables or charts, visual documents such as maps and creative drawings, and comparative analysis and connections with current events and their legal consequences will occur in class every day. Often students will use technological tools in order to create word processing documents, obtain vivid images from American History, and design multi-media presentations.

- Students are expected to retain organized records of their work throughout each unit.
- Assessment methods will include exams, quizzes, projects, presentations, and oral and written assignments.

III. Course Goals

- 1) To provide a practical understanding of law and the legal system useful to students in their everyday lives.
- 2) To improve understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our Constitution, laws and the legal system.
- 3) To promote awareness of current legal issues and controversies.
- 4) To encourage effective citizen participation in our legal system.
- 5) To bring about greater justice, tolerance, and fairness.
- 6) To develop a willingness and an ability to resolve disputes through informal and, when necessary, formal resolution mechanisms.
- 7) To improve basic skills including critical thinking and reasoning, communication, observation, and problem solving.
- 8) To examine and clarify attitudes toward the role of law, lawyers, law enforcement officers, and the legal system play in our society.
- 9) To expose students to many vocational opportunities within the legal system.

IV. Course Content

- **Unit 1 – Introduction to Law & the Legal System**
 - What is Law? Lawmaking; Advocacy; Settling Disputes; The Court System and Lawyers
- **Unit 2 – Criminal Law & Juvenile Justice**
 - Crime; Criminal Law; Crimes Against Person/Property; Defenses; Criminal Justice Process: The Investigation, Proceedings, & Trial, Sentencing; Juvenile Justice; Terrorism
- **Unit 3 – Tort Law**
 - Civil Wrongs, Intentional Torts; Negligence; Strict Liability; Torts; & Public Policy
- **Unit 4 – Consumer & Housing Law**
 - Contracts, Warranties; Credit and Banking; Being a Smart Consumer; Cars; & Housing
- **Unit 5 – Family Law**
 - Marriage; Parents & Children; Foster Care; Adoption; Separation; Divorce; Custody & Government Support
- **Unit 6 – Individual Rights & Liberties**
 - Constitutional Law; Freedom of Speech, Press, and Religion; Due Process; Right to Privacy; Discrimination; Workplace Responsibilities, & Immigration Law

V. Required Textbooks

- Arbetman, L. & O'Brien E. (2005). *Street Law: A Course in Practical Law*. New York: McGraw Hill

VI. Other Materials

- College ruled notebook (spiral notebook recommended)
- Pencils or Pens

VII. Classroom Regulations

- Listen and adhere to what you are instructed to do

I will always give you instruction on what is expected of you

- Come to class on time.

Standing outside the door and rushing in after the last bell has begun to ring will constitute a tardy. You must be INSIDE the door when it begins ringing to be counted on time.

- Use civil speech and body language.

Unkind teasing and impolite behavior is unacceptable.

VIII. Steps in order if Regulations are Not Followed

- 1) Warning
- 2) Parent Contact
- 3) Class Suspension

IX. Course Requirements

- Notes (100 pts per exam) –
-There are approximately six exams total in this course.
- Homework Assignments (50 pts each)–
-On average you will receive homework twice in a week.
- Weekly Warm ups (10 pts per day)
- Each day you will have a warm up. These are kept on the same paper throughout the week and handed in each Friday. If you miss a day you are responsible for getting the warm up from a peer or seeing me before school, during lunch, or after school to make it up.
- Projects (800 pts each)
- There are several projects you will be completing throughout the semester. Ex:
American Justice Project
- Quizzes (100 pts each) –
-Generally there will be three to five quizzes each week.
- Exams (800 pts each) –
-There will be approximately twelve exams over the course of the semester.
- Current Events (50 pts each)
- Once a week we will be discussing current events. They will be focused on the American Legal System.
- Review Games (100 pts each)
- Prior to each exam, there will be a review. The class will be broken up in groups. You will each be given 100 points to start. It is your group's duty to earn more correct answers than incorrect answers in order to surpass the 100 points the game is worth.

X. Course Requirements Explained

- **Notes** – I DO NOT collect your notes. Each day you will notice that I walk around the room constantly. I am always paying attention to what you are doing. If you are politely engaged in the course, then you are earning these points. If you are off task, then you are losing points. I will make a note of your name to myself and begin deducting points. If you are aware you are not paying attention, then you can safely be assured you are not receiving credit.
- **Homework Assignments** – I typically assign homework twice a week. The reason for the homework assignments is to supplement what you learned in class that day. I DO NOT give busy work. If you are asked to do an assignment, either in class or at home, there is a reason. There are some really tricky concepts in the course and I want to make sure you are learning them to the best of your ability.
- **Weekly Warm Ups** – Each day when you walk in you will always notice two things. There is a tentative schedule on the board that outlines your week in this course and the other is the warm up on the screen. Every day there is a warm up you are to begin as soon as you get in your seat and have your notebook out. I like to have different warm up styles so as to keep things new and interesting. There are five different styles. The format for each is located on a separate sheet conveniently attached at the back of this syllabus, prior to the parent contract. You will be given an appropriate amount of time to complete the warm up. I cannot give you an exact time because some formats take longer than others. For example, review questions are faster to complete than a video clip analysis.
- **Projects** – There are several projects you may get to do in this course. Instructions for each project will be given by me in detail when we are about to begin them.
- **Quizzes** – My quizzes are either three, five or ten questions in length. They are designed to assist me in seeing if you comprehend the material well or if you are having difficulty. I NEVER do “pop” quizzes. You will always be warned of when a quiz is coming up so that you have an appropriate amount of time to review material. Fair warning, if I ever show a large piece of a movie (there are typically two films you will see and analyze over the course of the semester) you can be assured a quiz will follow.
- **Exams** – My course is heavily oriented on exams. The reason for this is due to the fact that when you leave high school in a few short months, no matter where you go; you will be judged based on exam scores and not on homework. All branches of the military, law enforcement, community college, universities, trade schools, tech schools, cosmetology schools, even fast food restaurants now, will have you taking exams that determine your future. I want to prepare you for this as best as possible. I completely understand if you suffer from test taking anxiety so as a result I have taken a couple of steps to assist you in feeling confident before taking any of my exams. The first thing I do is a review game prior to each exam where we cover the material that was presented in the unit. The next is that on Wednesday afternoons I have a study session that will meet from 2:15 – 3:15 in my room.
- **Review Games** – Prior to each exam I do a review game to cover all the information presented in the unit. Here is how a review will begin: 1. Come into the room and begin your warm up like any other day. 2. You will be broken into groups. 3. Each team is given 100 points to start. This means that you begin with 100 of 100 points for this assignment. 4. You group will be issued ten questions total and you will have 30 seconds to respond. For each question correctly answered you will receive + 10 points and for each incorrect response your team will loose – 10 points. Thus if your team studied for the exam very well and got all ten questions correct you will have

earned 200 pts out of 100. Meaning each person in your group just got 100 pts E.C. However, if your team did not study at all, you can receive 0 pts of a 100 point assignment.

XI. Evaluation and Assessment

The evaluation and assessment criteria for each assignment are detailed in this syllabus and through explanations provided in class. Whenever possible, rubrics will be provided. Points for each required assignment are specified in the “Requirements” section of the syllabus. **You must attain a D or better to pass this course.**

A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 - 79%
D	60 – 69%
F	< 59%

XII. Citizenship:

A = High Maturity Level

- Shows a high degree of self control
- Is very self-disciplined
- Is an asset to the class
- Has an exemplary attitude towards school

B = Grade Level Maturity

- Shows some degree of self control
- Is self-disciplined
- Contributes to class
- Has generally a good attitude toward school

C = Satisfactory Maturity

D = Needs Improvement – Relative Immaturity

- Little self control
- Little self discipline
- Does not contribute to the class in a positive way
- Does not demonstrate a positive attitude towards school

F = Unsatisfactory- Does not attempt to show or demonstrate appropriate maturity/self control

XIII. Course Policies

- Attendance is a vital part of this experiential-based learning environment. Absences and tardies will affect your grade. Please see me immediately if you anticipate any difficulties in fulfilling your attendance requirements. I always attempt to assist students regarding work that they missed due to absences and get them caught up to speed. It should be noted that, **per school policy, 15 or more unexcused absences will result in you receiving an immediate letter grade of “F”.**
- Cell phones, PDAs, pagers, and beepers ideally should be turned off.
- All assignments for the course are to be completed and submitted on time in order to receive credit.
- WASC guidelines for assignments are a two-hour minimum outside of class for every hour in class, so plan your time accordingly. It is your responsibility to read over your notes and the chapter outside of class.
- Unless specified otherwise, the style standard by which formal writing assignments will be evaluated is the APA Style Guide. Unless otherwise specified, please type assignments using a 10 to 12 point font size.
- All students enrolled in this course are bound by the Academic Integrity and Dishonesty Policy including plagiarism, fabrication, academic dishonesty, and cheating (printed in the Cesar Chavez High School Student Handbook). Students who engage in academic dishonesty may automatically receive an "F" in the course.
- You are responsible for retaining syllabi and all course assignments and records. These can be helpful in the event of possible grade questions and/or changes.
- Food policy. I fully believe in being fair with students. My food policy is as follows: whatever I am doing you are allowed to do. If you are in class and see me eating a granola bar then you are allowed to eat a snack. If you see me drinking a coffee you are allowed to drink anything. Now the bad news, I RARELY, if ever, eat or drink anything other than water during class time.

Mr. Tyler's WarmUp Formats

MONDAY

Video Clip Format:

Day:

Date:

Title:

Description:

Law Portrayed:

TUESDAY

Cartoon Format:

Day:

Date:

Description:

Joke:

WEDNESDAY

Review Questions Format:

Day:

Date:

Question #1: (Write it down)

Answer:

Question #2: (Write it down)

Answer:

THURSDAY

Quote Format:

Day:

Date:

Quote: (write it down)

Speaker:

Meaning:

FRIDAY

This Day in History (Law Style) Format:

Day:

Date:

Event:

Significance:

Student Questionnaire

This is your first homework assignment in this course. You are to write down the question and then answer it on a separate sheet of paper. Your second homework assignment is to get the parent/student contract signed and returned.

Goals

- What career is your goal?
- How do you plan to get to where you want to be 5-10 years from now?

Family and Home Environment

- Do you take the school/city bus? If Yes, which bus?
- What language do you speak at home?
- Who do you know, other than a teacher, who has gone to college?

Personal Information

- What are you are most proud of?
- What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

Attitudes towards school

- What is your favorite thing about school?
- What is your least favorite thing about school?
- What school clubs do you belong to?
- What school sports are you involved with?

Writing (writing prompts)

- If I could go anywhere, I would...
- I learn the most when the teacher...
- I learn the most when I...
- After high school, I will probably...
- Three adjectives others might use to describe me are...

Parent Contract

Introduction to Law: Fall Semester

Teacher: Mr. Tyler

I _____, the parent/guardian of _____ have read over this course syllabus with my son or daughter and understand what is expected of my child and how the course is planned and points are awarded. Additionally, if I have any comments, questions, or concerns I am aware that I may contact Mr. Tyler during his office hours of Monday through Friday from 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM.

Parent/ Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Period Number: _____

(Optional)

I would like to be e-mailed after each exam that is taken in the course so that I know my child's grade for that exam and in total. The following e-mail address is the one I wish to use to have Mr. Tyler send me my child's results and status:

(Optional)

I would like to be called after each exam that is taken in the course so that I know my child's grade for that exam and in total. The following phone number is the one I wish to use to have Mr. Tyler contact me about my child's results and status:
