



Reseda High School Law and Public Service Magnet Foundations in Law

Instructor: Mr. Alfaro
kva9643@lausd.net

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to equip students with an understanding of how and why government and laws are formed as they critically examine key concepts such as democracy, justice and rights. Students will analyze the tensions inherent on any system of government as it seeks to secure justice, strengthen their knowledge of the relationship between law and law enforcement, and prepare for active engagement in the civic process as they are also exposed to careers in law and law enforcement.

Topics of Instruction:

Unit 1: Human Nature and the Origins of Law

- Why do we have laws?
- What is the connection between laws, morality and ethics?
- How do we balance out the needs of individuals and the needs of the community?
- What careers in law and law enforcement help enforce laws?

- As demographics have changed throughout the United States, what is the role of law enforcement in maintaining law and order in the communities while trying to preserve and uphold people's rights?

Unit 2: A More Perfect Union: The Functions of a Constitution

- What is the social contract theory of government and how did this theory influence the founders of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights?
- What are the core values of the U.S. Constitution, such as popular sovereignty, the rule of law, separation of powers, limited government and the protection of individual liberties?
- What is the process for amending the U.S. Constitution?
- What professions in law and advocacy have contributed to changing the U.S. Constitution and laws?

-What is the "social contract" and what are the responsibilities of both the government and the governed?

-What is the role of law enforcement when riots take place as tensions grow between the government and its citizens? Research the latest riots that have taken place in England and how has law enforcement responded to civil unrest? Compare and contrast the Rodney King riots of 1992 with those occurring in England today.

Unit 3: How Does It All Work? The Legal System in Action

- How does the U.S. legal system work in practice?
- What are the interactions and tensions between the different branches of government?
- How can individuals and groups help shape legislation?
- What is the relationship between the values embodied by the U.S. Constitution and treatment of minorities in America?
- Who has power?

-What is your role as a citizen in promoting a fair and just legal system in the United States?

Pick one of the following amendments and research its application to individual rights with an emphasis on minorities and the role of lawyers, judges and law enforcement in carrying out justice (1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th amendments.)

Unit 4: Crime and Punishment: Issues in Criminal Justice

- What is crime?
- What are the different theories of punishment in different times and places?
- How can law enforcement be used to protect individuals and groups?
- What is the relationship between law enforcement and your community?
- How are juvenile offenders treated differently from adults under U.S. law?
- What is the role of science and technology in criminal justice?
- What role do law and law enforcement professionals play in shaping the criminal justice system?
- Forensic Science CSI

-How did the "Peelian Principles", lay the foundations for our current Modern Day Policing?

Unit 5: Lawsuits and Liability

- What is civil law and how is it developed over time?
- How does law govern relationships between people and institutions?
- How have underrepresented groups used the legal system to address wrongs and achieve justice?
- What career opportunities are there in civil law?

-Korematsu v. United States (1944) Supreme Court case.

Unit 6: I know My Rights! Civil Liberties and Human Rights

- What are civil liberties?
- What are human rights?
- What individual liberties are protected by the U.S. Constitution?
- How do courts balance individual rights with the needs of society?
- How have different groups struggled for equal rights?
- How do international treaties and intergovernmental organizations address human rights?
- What careers in law and law enforcement address issues of civil liberties and human rights?

-Examine the Miranda v. Arizona case and determine the importance of such ruling in upholding individuals' civil liberties. How does the 5th and 6th amendment affect people's civil rights and liberties?

-What is the role of the International Criminal Court in addressing human rights violations?

Unit 7: Equal Justice Under Law: Movement for Social, Political and Legal Equality

- To what extent have the U.S. Constitution and civil rights statutes protected the rights of minority groups?
- What actions are effective in achieving equal justice under the law for groups?
- How has the concept of "We the People" changed over time?
- How have actions such as nonviolent protests, resulted in change around the world?
- What role do law and law enforcement officials have in promoting justice and civil rights?

-Research the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and the application of the Constitution in addressing the rights of minority groups.

-Examine the Women's Suffrage Movement and the current gay and lesbian fight for equality under the law.

Grading

All assignments are given a points value. Your grade is based on your total number of points as a percentage of the total points possible.

90-100%=A

80-89%=B

70-79%=C

60-69%=D

59-less=F

Attendance, Cooperation and Work Habits

All students are expected to attend class daily. This class relies heavily on student collaboration, discussion and participation. Missed days will result in missed activities that cannot adequately be made up. Any class assignments that are missed due to excused absence will be made up with a written and oral report to be decided at my discretion and must be completed within three days of returning to school.

Exams must be made up the day you return to school. Missed quizzes will result in a zero with the following quiz counting double. Missing more than two quizzes in a semester will result in a written and oral report on the quiz subject matter for each missed quiz. Quiz make-ups must be turned in within one day of returning to school.

Foundations of Law Binder- Please see attachments for more details.

Cooperation and respect are expected at all times. Compliance with classroom rules is required. Deviation from behavior requirements will result in class suspension.

Assignment Types

*Oral Presentations *Projects *Laboratory Reports *Exams *Quizzes
*Reading *Research Reports *Homework *Written Practice

Homework Policy

Homework is assigned on a regular basis. You should expect to have either written homework or reading homework.

All student work must be that of the individual student. Law students must exemplify integrity in every aspect. CHEATING of any type will not be tolerated. This applies to ANY and ALL assignments. Any incidence of cheating will result in parent conferencing, a zero on the assignment (for all students(s) involved) and a "U" in both work habits and cooperation on the 5, 10, 15 and 20 week report cards.

Reseda High School ESLRS

In my class, students do much of their work in cooperative learning groups. This type of activity helps students to learn how science is really done helps students achieve the Reseda High School ESLRS:

- *Effective Communicators
- *Critical Thinkers
- *Self-Directed Learners
- *Responsible Citizens
- *Healthy Individuals

Foundations of Law
Mr. Alfaro
B21

This is supplemental to the syllabus for the class explaining what is expected of you during the school year-

I. **Folder:**

In order to have success in high school and in college students need to be organized. For this class you will need a 1 & ½ inch binder to organize all your work. Your binder should be organized with 5 tabs as followed-

- First tab- syllabus and assignment logs
- Second tab- quickwrites (graded and ungraded on occasions)
- Third tab- Handouts (there will be plenty of them due to the nature of the course)
- Fourth tab- weekly readings and essays
- Fifth tab- any other work given such as Cornell Notes, tests, etc.

Remember, binders will be checked every other week and a grade given and inputted into Jupiter Grades.

II. **Quickwrites:**

Each time we meet as a class you will be given a quickwrite relating to law issues affecting us today. You are expected to write a one page report about the prompt given to you. I will read each and every single one of your responses and give you a grade depending on how much critical thinking went into writing your responses. Each quickwrite will be worth 30 points so if you miss one, it will adversely affect your grade.

III. **Weekly Readings-**

Each week you will be assigned law related readings in which you will have to write an essay taking a pro or con stand on the issue being presented. You will also have the opportunity to pick your own topic but I need to approve it first. Each essay is worth 50 points thus you need to make sure you turn them in on time.

Foundations of Law
Mr. Alfaro
B21

Foundations of Law Binder Grade Sheet

Week of _____

Category	Points Possible	Points Earned	Comments
Assignment Log	10		
Quickwrites	30		
Handouts	10		
Weekly Readings/essays	25		
Cornell Notes, tests, returned work	10		
Organization/Neatness	15		
Total	100		
<i>Teacher's Signature:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

-----Please Tear-----

Please go over this syllabus with your parents. Sign your name and have a parent sign below. Return this portion of the syllabus to class.

I have read and understand the guidelines in the **Foundations of Law** syllabus.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

I prefer to be contacted by: (Mark all that apply.)

Parent's Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Parent's Work Phone _____

Parent's Email Address _____