

Graduate Seminar on Legal Education and Legal Scholarship
3000.01
2010-2011

Term I: Thursdays, 11-1, room 304
Term II: Thursdays, 11-1, room L406 (Glube room)

Professor Sheila Wildeman

Office # 414
Phone: 494-1022
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30 -2:30pm
or by appointment
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Course Description

This seminar is a required class for students in the LLM programme. It is also open to JSD students. Its purpose is to explore various issues in legal education and legal research from a comparative perspective. In the first part of the course classes are devoted to an examination of the purposes of legal education and the various ways that legal education is structured and carried out in different jurisdictions. The remainder of the course is spent examining different methodological and ideological approaches to legal research, with special emphasis on how each of the seminar participants would see his or her development as a legal scholar.

The Graduate Seminar aims to provide LL.M. students with an opportunity to meet together to discuss matters of interest to academic lawyers. It will offer you a forum to discuss your research with one another. The focus of the Graduate Seminar this year will be on legal scholarship, and during the term we will have a number of visitors who will speak about various aspects of legal scholarship. They will provide you with a chance to analyse and consider your own current research projects and your general development as a legal scholar within the context of current debates about "Western" legal scholarship generally.

Evaluation

There are several components for the evaluation of your performance in the Graduate Seminar.

i) Book Review (10%)

In order to encourage you to further develop your academic writing skills you are asked to prepare a relatively short, 10 page double spaced book review of Law and Learning. This will be due on or before 12:00 noon on Monday, Oct. 4th.

ii) Library Research Assignment (10%)

To enable you to become familiar with the library you must complete a research assignment. This is due on or before 12:00 noon on Weds., October 13th.

iii) Reaction Papers (20%)

Graduate legal education entails a relatively steep learning curve and a significant degree of self-direction and self-reflection. To enable both you and me to be as conscious as possible of your individual academic development, it is proposed that you produce a series of reaction papers, focusing on the experiences, opportunities and challenges of advanced legal research. Four instalments, each of approximately 7 pages, are required. Together, these will trace the trajectory of your graduate school orientation as you formulate your academic objectives and integrate these into your wider career aspirations.

Each paper will involve an open-ended attempt on your part to reflect on what we cover in the course. That said, I ask that you devote 1-2 pages of each paper (roughly 1/3 of the word count) to identifying a specific claim or argument made in one of the course readings, and giving a specific response to that (*i.e.*, either a counter-argument or supporting argument). Ideally, you will focus upon a claim or argument that you find particularly problematic or particularly useful, viewed from the vantage of your own ongoing thesis or coursework projects, or more broadly, your developing reflections upon your role as an academic lawyer / legal scholar.

Reaction papers will be due on or before 12:00 noon on the following dates: Monday, September 27th; Monday, October 25th; Monday, November 15th; and Monday, January, 17th, 2010.

iv) Methodological Prospectus/Review Essay (40%)

A major focus of the graduate seminar is to help you engage in reflection on how you propose to pursue your research project. In this light the first term focuses on visitors who share their methodological approaches with you. In the second term the ball passes to you.

Thesis students will be required to complete a methodological prospectus of approximately 18-23 pages. In the prospectus you need to identify the following: a precise legal issue and why you decided to focus upon it in depth; in a general manner, the academic commentary surrounding the issue and the debates in which the issue had figured; the philosophical or jurisprudential significance of the issue; and, most significantly, what approach(s) to the issue you intend to undertake and why you made the intellectual choice(s) that you did. In developing your methodological prospectus it is expected that you will be working closely with your thesis supervisor. It is due at or before 12:00 noon on Thursday, February 17th, 2011.

Course work students are required to submit a Review Essay of approximately 18-23 pages in which they focus on the scholarship of one academic legal scholar in the general area of law in which most of your course work is taken. I need to approve of the choice of author and the bibliography by November 19th, 2010. The purpose is to engage rather deeply with one academic's thoughts over a period of time and in range of publications, and thus to better understand the process of becoming a scholar. The Review Essay is due on or before 12:00 noon on Thursday, February 17th, 2011.

v) Class Presentation (10%)

As mentioned under (iv) each student is required to complete a methodological prospectus/review essay. In the course of the second term each student will be required to lead a 40 minute session in which s/he presents an outline of his/her project to the other students for feedback.

*I encourage each of you to bring a favourite snack (not a meal) to share with the rest of the class on the date of your presentation. (No marks accorded to snack satisfactoriness).

vi) Class Participation (10%)

As the graduate seminar is a small group, ongoing class participation is essential.

All assignments must be typed.

Graduate Writing Support Initiative

The LL.M. programme requires that students become more than just consumers of legal scholarship, but also producers. To assist students to develop advanced legal writing skills, Mr. David Dzidzornu will be available to work with each individual student, to a maximum of ten hours.

Students requiring further assistance are encouraged to visit the Dalhousie Writing Centre (www.writingcentre@dal.ca).

Plagiarism

All students in this course must read

- the University policies on plagiarism and academic honesty referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the plagiarism.dal.ca website, and
- the Law School policy on plagiarism, as set out in
 - the law school regulations (online at http://law.dal.ca/Current_Students)

Any paper or assignment submitted by a student at Dalhousie Law School may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the law school, or even revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. Prior to submitting any paper or other assignment, students should read and familiarize themselves with the policies referred to above.

Ignorance of the policies on plagiarism will not excuse any violation of those policies.

Students with Special Needs/Requests for Accommodation

As part of my non-teaching responsibilities, I act as the Faculty Advisor to students with special needs. Graduate students with special needs must self-identify to me and to the Co-ordinator of Graduate Studies (Professor Richard Devlin) if they have any in-class or study concerns or needs.

Students with special needs who wish to request accommodation regarding aspects of evaluation must make the request in writing to the Graduate Studies Committee. Academic regulations require such requests to be made as soon as possible and, in any event, no later than the date on which the paper or other assignment is to be submitted. For information about accommodation, students should speak to the Co-ordinator of Graduate Studies. Material for the Graduate Studies Committee can be given to Michelle Kirkwood.

Materials

Reading packages for every seminar will be distributed in class, and thereafter available from the Materials Room (room 121), approximately one week in advance of the scheduled class.

Appendix ASchedule of Assignments

Mon Sept 27	Reaction Paper 1
Mon Oct 4	Book Review
Weds October 13	Library Research Assignment
Mon October 25	Reaction Paper 2
Mon November 15	Reaction Paper 3
Mon January 17	Reaction Paper 4
February 18	Methodological Prospectus Review Essay

ALL ASSIGNMENTS should be submitted in electronic form to me (sheila.wildeman@dal.ca) *and also* in hard copy to Michelle Kirkwood (room 410). You run the risk of a late penalty if I do not receive your electronic submission and no hard copy has been submitted.

Graduate Seminar 2010-11
Professor Sheila Wildeman
Tentative Schedule

TIME (Term I): Thursdays 11:00 - 1:00 (Note schedule change week of Oct. 18)
LOCATION: Room 304

Sept. 9	Welcome and Introductions	S. Wildeman
Sept. 16	History of Legal Education I / Introduction to Method	S. Wildeman
Sept. 23	History of Legal Education II / Surviving & Thriving in Grad School / Intro to Library	S. Wildeman, TBA
Sept. 30	Legal Method(s)	S. Wildeman
Oct. 7	Doctrinal Scholarship	H. Kindred
Oct. 14	Legal History	B. Laurence
*Fri. Oct. 22		
1-3*	Comparative Law	A. Chircop
Oct. 28	Legal Theory	R. Devlin
Nov. 4	Interdisciplinary Approaches	M. Doelle
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day – University Closed	
Nov. 18	Law and Economics	S. Bradley
Nov. 25	Feminist Method/Voice Scholarship	S. Wildeman
Dec. 2	Policy Scholarship	J. Downie

JAN – FEB DATES TBA (Student presentations)

The seminar will conclude on or before the date that the final assignment is due (Thurs. Feb 17, 2011).