PHILOSOPHY OF LAW
Syllabus Spring 2012

Professor Amy Benjamin
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Office hours: by appointment

Course description: This course will begin by reviewing the nature and sources of law. Yet it will do so not as part of a purely academic exercise but in order to answer some very practical philosophical questions. This course blends a study of moral philosophy, history, and purely legal concepts into an investigation that will help us understand real-world events and issues.

Grading policy
Class participation/attendance: 20%
Paper or other assignment: 20%
Mid-term: 20%
Final: 40%

Schedule of classes

Week 1
13 February - Overview of course
    Reading: Course Reader, Readings 1-3

Week 2
20 February – “What Is Law?”
    Reading: Course Reader, Readings 4-11

Week 3
27 February – “What are the sources of law?”
    Reading: Course Reader, Reading 4-11

Week 4
5 March – “Public Religion: A Recipe for Disaster”
    Reading: Course Reader, Readings 12-13

Week 5
12 March – “The Common Law versus Civil Law Criminal Trial”
    Reading: Course Reader, Reading 14

Week 6
19 March – “The Limits of the United Nations”
Reading: Course Reader, Readings 15-18

Week 7
26 March – Midterm Exam (in-class; closed-book)

Week 8
2 April – “The Laws of War”
   Reading: Course Reader, Reading 19-20

Week 9 – Spring Break – no classes

Week 10
16 April – “Just and Unjust Wars”
   Reading: Course Reader, Reading 21

Week 11
23 April – “Nuremberg”
   Reading: Course Reader, Reading 22

Week 12
30 April – “Nuremburg”
   Reading: Course Reader, Reading 22

Week 13
7 May – “Law versus Justice”
   Reading, Course Reader, Readings 23-29

Week 14
14 May – “Choice as a moral/political/constitutional value”
   Reading: Course Reader, Readings 30-34

Week 15 – Final Exam