

Course Syllabus

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Course Description

Intimacy is at the core of everyday life. Everyone has people with whom they are closely acquainted and share bonds of affection. These relationships of care are essential to individuals, promoting their wellbeing. They are also vital to society more broadly, ensuring that people's physical, psychological, and spiritual needs are met.

Intimate relationships are deeply personal, yet they are also subject to extensive state regulation. Laws attempt to balance the desires of individuals and the needs of society. But that can often be challenging. How should the state safeguard people's ability to pursue personal happiness, while at the same time ensure that individuals behave responsibly towards others? Can the government stay out of private spaces and simultaneously protect individuals from oppression and abuse? Is it possible for the law to recognize a variety of intimate relationships without privileging some over others?

This course will take up these and other questions, asking how, when, and why the state regulates intimate relationships. Students will discuss the tradeoffs that these regulations require between the rights to privacy, autonomy, and equality. The course will consequently both provide an overview of current regulatory frameworks as well as challenge students to think about what the law should be as a normative matter. Although the course will sometimes use international law as a point of comparison, it will focus primarily on US law and policy.

Each class period will have roughly the same structure. We will generally begin with a short writing or discussion exercise. I will lead a class discussion on our assigned material and then ask a pair of students

to lead a class discussion on material of their choosing. We will spend some portion of each class practicing advocacy – by arguing for or against laws or policies (whether or not we agree with them). I will also give a few “mini-lectures” throughout the semester when necessary to provide background information. I know I’m biased, but I think you should be excited. This is going to be really fun.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Identify obvious and hidden forms of intimacy regulation;
- Articulate the legal principles and policy concerns fundamental to the regulation of intimacy;
- Critique legal frameworks regulating intimacy;
- Evaluate the social repercussions of different forms of intimate regulation;
- Effectively express your arguments concerning intimate regulation in written and oral advocacy.
- Craft a detailed written analysis of a form of intimate regulation.

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Policies & Procedures

Reading for Class

Readings for class will be posted on Canvas. You are responsible for reading (or watching/listening to) all of the assigned class material, whether or not we cover all of the material during class.

Class Discussions

This class will touch on issues about which you are likely to have strong feelings, possibly based on your personal experience, religious convictions, or political views. I expect that we will treat one another with dignity and respect in these debates, even where we disagree.

In these conversations, I know that I will likely make mistakes. If I say something that you think is misguided or offensive, please email me or meet with me to discuss it. I want to make our classroom a space for candid and honest discussions.

Class Recordings

Because of the sensitive nature of the discussions we may have, I will not make recorded classes immediately be available. Instead, I will only provide access to the recordings where necessary. Should I grant you access, you have permission to access class recordings available in Canvas solely for the purpose of participating in the course. Students are prohibited from downloading, copying, posting online, or otherwise distributing any portion of the recordings for any purpose.

Accommodations

I am committed to making our classroom a safe and accessible space for all members of our community. If you have questions about accommodations or supportive measures, including situations in which English is not your native language, please review the guidance available in Chapter 8 of the Student Handbook, or contact Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Branden Nicholson at lawstudentaffairs@wfu.edu (<mailto:lawstudentaffairs@wfu.edu>).

In addition to the formal accommodations process, please don't hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do to promote your learning experience in our class. We learn as whole people. To learn effectively you must have basic security: a roof over your head, a safe place to sleep, enough food to eat. If you're having trouble with any of those things, please talk with me or the Dean of Students office. Together we can make sure you have what you need to be successful in this course.

Computer & Technology Policies

Because of the discussion-based nature of our class, the default expectation in is that we will not be using computers. With that being said, there is no absolute ban on their use. If you choose to use your computer during class, please make sure you are staying engaged in the discussion and being respectful of those around you.

Students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT) on any assignments in this course, whether graded or ungraded.

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Grading

Your grade has five components: attendance and participation (20%), an advocacy assignment (10%), a paper presentation (10%), and a final paper (60%).

Attendance and Participation

The knowledge and skills you will gain in this course depend significantly on your participation in class. For that reason, I expect you to attend all sessions. Wake Forest Law requires students to attend 85% of all scheduled classes. As a result, a student who fails to attend 85% of classes may not receive credit for the course.

Attendance is more than showing up—it is also active participation. I expect you to keep up with reading and assignments, as well as contribute to class discussions. I will not use a “cold call” system, but rather will ask for voluntary participation.

If you need to miss a class--and you likely will, because life happens--you can make up the absence by submitting a 1-2 page response paper on the assigned readings. You may only use this makeup option once in the semester.

Advocacy Assignment

On weeks 3-11 of class, you will sign up to prepare a one to two-page written statement, in which you take a “difficult” position. You won’t know what difficult position you will be asked to take until the week before. During class, you’ll be asked to give a brief (3-5 minute) opening statement-style argument in favor of your position, and your classmates will have an opportunity to ask you questions. This is meant to be fun – and to stretch you to find ways to make arguments with which you might not exactly agree. A rubric for this assignment is available [here](#)

(<https://wakeforest.instructure.com/courses/67986/files/4462980?wrap=1>) ↓

(https://wakeforest.instructure.com/courses/67986/files/4462980/download?download_frd=1) .

Paper Presentation

During week 12, you will be responsible for posting an 8-10 minute video presentation of your final paper. You will then watch three or four of your classmates' presentations and ask them questions about their topic. The third part of the assignment will be to respond to your classmates' inquiries. This exchange will occur asynchronously and lieu of our class meeting that week. This is a great chance for you to practice making oral presentations, as well as an opportunity for you to learn from your peers. A rubric for this assignment is available [here](#).

Final Paper

Your final paper can be on any topic relating to regulating intimacy that you choose. The paper must be at least 5,000 words (including footnotes, which are not to exceed 25% of the total text).

To be eligible for full credit on your paper, you must submit a one-page paper proposal by September 22. Additionally, if you are taking the class for Lawyer IV credit, you must submit a first draft of at least 2,500 words by October 21 and participate in one individual meeting with me by November 1. Students not completing the class for Lawyer IV credit are welcome—but not required—to submit their drafts and receive feedback during these one-on-one meetings.

The rubrics for the final paper is available [here](#)

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(https://wakeforest.instructure.com/courses/67986/files/4463000/download?download_frd=1) .

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Contact Info & Office Hours

Please come by my office (Worrell 3331) with questions, concerns, or just to chat! My formal office hours are Wednesdays from 1p.m. to 2p.m., but you are also welcome to schedule an appointment for another time by emailing me at georgemp@wfu.edu (<mailto:georgemp@wfu.edu>).

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▾ Week 1: Introduction



Monday, August 26



Read: Prager (Psychology of Intimacy, ch. 1)



 Prager, Psychology of Intimacy(ch1).pdf



Watch: Robert Waldinger, What Makes a Good Life? (13 mins); PBS NewsHour, Surgeon General Discusses Health Risks of Loneliness (8 mins)



 Waldinger, What Makes a Good Life?



 PBS, Surgeon General Discusses Health Risks of Loneliness



Complete: Introductory Survey and NameCoach Entry



 Introductory Survey



In-Class Resources



 Surgeon General Report - Recommendations.pdf



▾ Week 2: Valuing Relationships



Monday, September 2



Read: Maldonado (Architecture of Desire ch. 3); Urquhart, The Case Against Marriage



 Maldonado, Architecture of Desire, ch 3.pdf



 Urquhart, The Case Against Marriage.pdf



Watch: How to Give a Great Presentation (7 mins)



 How to Give a Great Presentation



In-Class Resources



▼ Week 3: Supporting Parents



Monday, September 9



Listen: The Deep Conflict Between Our Work and Parenting Ideals (68 mins)



 The Deep Conflict between Our Work and Parenting Ideals



Read: Walsh (What do "Parents Rights" Mean Legally for Schools)



 Walsh, What Do 'Parents' Rights' Mean Legally for Schools, Anyway.pdf



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:



▼ Week 4: Protecting Children



Monday, September 16



Read: S. Lee (Family Separation as Slow Death, Part I); T. Lee (Catching a Case, ch. 6)



 Lee, Family Separation as Slow Death (Part I).pdf



 Lee, Catching a Case, ch 6.pdf



Listen: NYT, Real Teenagers, Fake Nudes (20 mins)



 NYT, Real Teenagers, Fake Nudes



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:



▼ Paper Proposals



One-page paper proposals due September 22



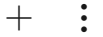
 Archetypal Legal Scholarship - A field guide.pdf



Paper Proposal



▼ Week 5: Deception Among Intimates



Monday, September 23



Watch: ABC News, Rape by Fraud? (10 mins)



 ABC News, Rape By Fraud?



Read: Hasday (Intimate Lies ch 6); Beachum (His Wife Cheated on Him); Kaur (Untangling the 50-Part...)



 Hasday, Intimate Lies, ch. 6.pdf



 Beachum, His Wife Cheated on Him.pdf



 Kaur, Untangling the 50-Part "Who TF Did I Marry" TikTok.pdf



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:



▼ Week 6: Sex Crimes



Monday, September 30



Read: Gruber (Consent Confusion, Intro & Parts I-II); Bennett (When Saying "Yes" Is Easier Than Saying "No")



 Gruber, Consent Confusion, Intro, Parts I-II.pdf



 Bennett, When Saying 'Yes' Is Easier Than Saying 'No'.pdf



Complete: Mid-Semester Feedback Form



 Mid-Semester Feedback Form



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:



▼ Week 7: Campus Sexual Misconduct



Monday, October 7



Watch: My Rapist Is Still On Campus (7 mins)




 Time, My Rapist Is Still On Campus



Read: Gersen and Gersen (The College Sex Bureaucracy)



 Gersen and Gersen, The College Sex Bureaucracy (Chron. Higher Ed).pdf



Listen: In 'Sexual Citizens,' Students Open Up About Sex, Power, and Assault on Campus (8 mins)





In 'Sexual Citizens,' Students Open Up about Sex, Power and Assault on Campus



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:



▼ Week 8: Private Sexual Regulation



Monday, October 14



Read: Murray (Consequential Sex, Parts III-IV)



Murray, Consequential Sex (Parts III and IV).pdf



Listen: How We Can End Sexual Harassment at Work (14 mins)



Carlson, How We Can End Sexual Harassment at Work



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:



▼ Week 9: Paper Drafts



Monday, October 21: No Class



Paper drafts due October 21 (optional if not completing course for LAWR IV credit)

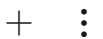


Paper Draft

Oct 21 | 0 pts



▼ Week 10: Sexual Pleasure



Monday, October 28



Read: Kaplan (Sex Positive Law, Intro & Part I); Gilden (Punishing Sexual Fantasy, Intro & Part II); Kuhn (Man Found Not Guilty)



Kaplan, Sex-Positive Law (Intro & Part I).pdf



Gilden, Punishing Sexual Fantasy (Intro and Part II).pdf



Kuhn, Man Found Not Guilty of Assault After Wife Says Injuries Were From Consensual BDSM, Not Abuse.pdf



In-Class Resources



Difficult Advocacy:






























▼ Individual Meetings



Individual paper meetings due November 1 (optional if not completing course for LAWR IV credit)



 Week 11: Commodification	 +	
Monday, November 4		
Read: Weitzer (Sociology of Sex Work)		
 Weitzer, Sociology of Sex Work.pdf		
Watch: The Laws that Sex Workers Really Want (18 mins)		
 The Laws that Sex Workers Really Want		
Listen: Mommy's Busy Right Now (11 mins)		
 Mom's Busy Right Now		
In-Class Resources		
Difficult Advocacy:		

 Week 12: Paper Presentations (asynchronous)	 +	
Monday, November 11: No Class		
Presentations due by 10am on November 11; Questions due by 10am on November 12; Responses due by 10am on November 13		



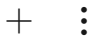
▼ **Week 13: Peer Editing**



Monday, November 18



▼ **Final Papers**



Final papers due December 4



Final Paper

Dec 4 | 0 pts

