



Law, Criminal Justice, and Society  
LCJS-1320 (Civil Rights Law)  
Fall 2025  
Thursday 6-830p.m.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE Please read the following ENROLLMENT ALERT carefully:**

**Effective Spring 2022, this course (LCJS 1320) replaces LEGLST 1340 INTRODUCTION TO CIVIL RIGHTS.**

**If you have previously taken LEGLST 1340, you should NOT enroll in this course. If you believe otherwise, please contact your advisor about course repeat limitations/rules.**

**This enrollment alert also appears in the PeopleSoft "Class Notes" for this course.**

### **Professor Contact Information**

Marty Harris  
[MAH736@Pitt.edu](mailto:MAH736@Pitt.edu); [MH@TLawF.com](mailto:MH@TLawF.com)

412.588.0030 (Office)

Emails and/or phone calls should be answered within three business days. Some emails (such as absence notices) will not be answered.

Office Location: 445 Fort Pitt Boulevard, Suite 220 Pittsburgh PA 15219

Office Hours: Thursday 5:00-6:00p.m.; 8:30-9:30p.m. Location determined upon request for appointment.

## **Course Description**

In the United States of America, our civil rights are determined by the Common Law, the Constitution, Federal Statutes, State Statutes, and the respective Courts. This class is an introduction to the Civil Rights we share in the Country, with an emphasis on those that are most likely to impact you in your day to day lives; both in school and in your future careers. This is a discussion-based class. This is because our civil rights came to be primarily through discussion and debate. Professor Marty is a practicing trial lawyer who is on the cutting edge of civil rights law. As such, this class is about your Ideas and Concepts more so that a rote recitation of endless pre-planned lectures to be memorized for an exam.

## **Course Pre-requisites**

There are no pre-requisites for this course. Anyone may register for the course. However, it may be helpful to have taken courses in Logical Reasoning, Philosophy, Political Science, etc.

## **Course Objectives**

The primary objective of this course is to empower you to recognize potential civil rights violations and know the necessary steps to protect yourselves. To accomplish this, you will be taught to read, analyze, and speak plainly about judicial decisions and legislation as well as analyzing and creating fact patterns to demonstrate civil rights law concepts. By the end of the course, you should be able to spot the flaws in mainstream judicial reporting (e.g. Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, etc.).

## **Course Materials**

Specific Court Decisions and Materials will be circulated by Professor Marty. These include seminal cases in civil rights law such as *Edwards v. Arizona*, *Terry v. Ohio*, and *Graham v. Connor*. This will also include Model Jury Instructions and Commentary from various Advisory Committees. The readings will be posted to Canvas weekly. These are to be read prior to the class meeting.

## The Course

See the [University of Pittsburgh Academic Calendar](#) for important dates like the final dates to add and drop or withdraw from courses.

All readings for the class are expected to be completed prior to the class.

**This is primarily a discussion class because you must be the primary agent to protect yourself. So you must get comfortable having important discussions!**

This class will require you to read, and more importantly think about what you read. Students are to be prepared to respond to questions about the topics detailed throughout the syllabus.

If you have a question during class, chances are someone else has a similar question. Raise your hand and ask it. If you have particular questions about a particular topic that you are struggling with, we can discuss them after class or via email. In extremely rare circumstances for particularly dense material (e.g., substantive due process), Professor Marty may distribute notes.

Please note, this class is not a high school class where you are told the answers to then regurgitate information later. There are no PowerPoints. To that end, use of AI for class work is strictly forbidden. Any students caught using AI will fail the course. The use of generative AI writing tools (such as ChatGPT, GrammarlyGO, GPT-3, GPT-4, BERT, or others) is prohibited in this class. Assignments for the course have been designed to help you develop as a writer without the use of these technologies. You will generate ideas, read, revise, and write on your own and/or in consultation with peers, me, or Writing Center tutors and you will not use AI at any stage of your writing process. You are the author of your work for the course and authorship means you take responsibility for your words and claims. Any use of AI technologies in your work will be considered an academic integrity violation and addressed accordingly: <https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code>. Please see me if you have any questions about this policy.

## Grading

Throughout the semester there will be 1 essay, 1 test, 1 exercise, and 1 final project. You will also be graded on class attendance, discussion, and Quality Contributions (which function as extra credit). While it is highly unlikely for the assignment/due dates to change, should they need to be adjusted, you will have at least a week's notice.

The essay will be early in the semester, September 18th, 2025. The prompt for the essay will be given on September 11, 2025. It is required, but it will not be graded on the answer you give, rather it will be graded on the quality of the reasoning you give for your answer, as well as on your ability to follow instructions. This will be a letter grade worth 10% of your final grade.

The test will also be on October 16th, 2025. It is required, and will consist of standard multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer type queries. Everything we discuss in class is fair game for the test. This will be graded on the accuracy of your answers. This will be a numeric score translated into a letter grade. This will be worth 15% of your final grade.

The exercise will be near the middle of the semester. It will be assigned on October 30, 2025 and due on November 6, 2025. You will be provided with real court materials (in cases that have already resolved) and will, based on those materials, act as a judge and decide the issue presented by the exercise. This will be a letter grade. This will be worth 20% of your final grade.

The final project will due by the end of the last day of class. The project details will be given on November 13, 2025. Questions about the projects will be answered during the last class on December 4, 2025. The project will be due by 11:59p.m. on the last day of the final exam period. This will be a letter grade. This will be worth 25% of your final grade.

As a discussion-based class, any student's poor attendance negatively impacts everyone in the class. You may be absent three (3) times for any reason, subject to emailing notice of the absence (but not the reason for the absence) to Professor Marty. The notice of absence must be sent to each of the email addresses identified in this syllabus prior to the start time of the class session. At the end of the semester, Professor Marty will review the weekly sign-in sheet against the email records. Even though absent, you are responsible for the material covered in class. Excusing additional absences

beyond the three (3) free ones are determined on a case-by-case basis. This will be a letter grade. No absences = A+. 1-3 Absences = A. Each additional absence not excused beforehand will result in the loss of a letter grade for attendance. This means you can have a total of six unexcused absences before getting an F for your attendance grade. Unexcused absences beyond these six will begin to cost a final letter grade. This means you can have a total of ten (10) unexcused absences before failing the course. This will be worth 30% of your final grade.

As a discussion-based class, Students are to share their thoughts, feelings, and arguments about the discussion topics detailed throughout the syllabus. Professor Marty's role is to contribute to the discussion as "part" of the class (while of course moderating as necessary). There will inevitably be some students who speak a lot and some who hardly speak at all. That is OK. Throughout the semester all students will grow in their confidence to speak up and try things in class. This course is a laboratory of ideas so no one should be afraid of being wrong and embarrassed. No one will unfairly criticize you, but another student or me challenging your position is not considered unfair criticism. In a class with few "rules" this is the one Professor Marty will instantly enforce: no one may be attacked for their ideas. However, attacking a person for their idea is not the same thing as challenging a person's idea. You will be expected to challenge each other, *including Professor Marty*, during our class discussions. Often, Professor Marty will purposefully say something incorrect to spark and/or guide discussion and debate.

We are all adults. We all already know how to be respectful to one another and I expect that ability to be exercised at all times towards everyone in the room.

Discussions allow students to earn "Quality Contributions" during class discussions. Quality Contributions will be identified by Professor Marty and recorded by the individual student, which can improve your final grade. Quality Contributions are ideas, questions, arguments, etc. that transcend the direct application of the lesson, topic, or discussion and/or offer a new perspective on an old concept. Quality Contributions are responsive and logically thought out; in the context of the class where questions will come, indirectly, from the readings. Quality Contributions are thoughtful and engaging and relevant to the readings for the day's class and/or to another participant's contribution. The best answers will connect the questions asked

with the readings. **The accuracy of your answer is far less important than the quality of your thought process leading to the answer.**

## Course Schedule

Week 1: August 28, 2025- Introduction to the Course, and Each Other. Tracing Ancient American Civil Rights from The Magna Carta to the United States Constitution. Defining Civil Rights. *The Magna Carta*.

Week 2: September 4, 2025- Structure and Function of the United States Judiciary. A Contemporary Understanding of the Bill of Rights. Exploration of the Various Sources of American Civil Rights.

*The Add/Drop deadline is listed for September 5, 2025.*

Week 3: September 11, 2025- The First Amendment. *Butler v. Michigan*; *Texas v. Johnson*; *303 Creative, LLC v. Elenis*; *Counterman v. Colorado*. **Note: The Essay prompt will be assigned at the end of this class meeting.**

*The Extended Add/Drop deadline is listed for September 12, 2025.*

Week 4: September 18, 2025- **Essay Due.** The Second Amendment. *District of Columbia v. Heller*; *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*; *Range v. Garland*.

Week 5: September 25, 2025- The Thirteenth Amendment and Employment Civil Rights. *Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins*; *McDonnell Douglas v. Green*; *University of Texas Southwest Medical Center v. Nassar*; *Fuentes v. Perskie*; *Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Co. v. White*.

Week 6: October 2, 2025- The Fourth Amendment. *Terry v. Ohio*; *Franks v. Delaware*; *Graham v. Connor*; *Pierson v. Ray*; *Pearson v. Callahan*.

Week 7: October 9, 2025- The Fourth Amendment (continued). **Note: Due to a potential Court Appearance (Jury Trial) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, this meeting may be conducted via ZOOM. Details as to this class meeting will be finalized on October 7.**

Week 8: October 16, 2025- **Test.** The Fifth Amendment. *Miranda v. Arizona*, *Edwards v. Arizona*; *Howes v. Fields*; *J.D.B. v. North Carolina*; *Berghuis v. Thompson*; *Missouri v. Seibert*; *Davis v. United States*; *Stansbury v. California*; *Colorado v. Connelly*

Week 9: October 23, 2025- The Sixth Amendment. *Gideon v. Wainwright*; *Faretta v. California*; *Batson v. Kentucky*; *Strickland v. Washington*; *Andrus v. Texas*; *Ramos v. Louisiana*

Week 10: October 30, 2025- The Seventh Amendment. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*; *Bell Atlantic v. Twombly*; *Celotex Corp. v. Catrett*. **Note: The Exercise will be assigned at the end of this class meeting.**

Week 11: November 6, 2025- **Exercise Due.** Discussion and Debate of the Exercise. The Eighth Amendment. *Weems v. United States*; *Coker v. Georgia*; *Graham v. Florida*; *Timbs v. Indiana*; *Rhodes v. Chapman*; *Hudson v. McMillian*; *Farmer v. Brennan*; *Taylor v. Riojas*; *Wilson v. Seiter*.

Week 12: November 13, 2025- The Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. *Moore v. Dempsey*; *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*; *Mullane v. Central Hanover Bank & Trust Co.*; *Goss v. Lopez*; *Moore v. City of East Cleveland*; *Lawrence v. Texas*. **Note: The final project details will be assigned at the end of this class meeting.**

Week 13: November 20, 2025- Misc. Civil Rights (Student Choice). Questions about the final project will be answered in this class meeting.

**NOTE: November 27<sup>th</sup> is Thanksgiving Break. There will NOT be a Class Meeting.**

Week 14: December 4, 2025- **Last class meeting.** Any other questions about any topic will also be answered at this meeting.

**FINAL PROJECTS DUE AT 11:59P.M. ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025.**

**Final Grades will be Posted by 11:59p.m. on DECEMBER 16, 2025.**

Course and University Policies

### ***Academic Integrity Policy***

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to



participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the [Academic Integrity Guide](#) for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the [Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial](#).

### *Disability Services Policy*

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and [Disability Resources and Services](#) (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, [drsrecep@pitt.edu](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu), (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

### *Statement on Classroom Recording*

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor, **and must provide notice to all of the students BEFORE RECORDING**. Any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

### *Copyright Notice*

Course materials may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials. See [Library of Congress Copyright Office](#) and the [University Copyright Policy](#).

### *Accessibility*

Canvas is ADA Compliant and has fully implemented the final accessibility standards for electronic and information technology covered by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. Please note that, due to the

flexibility provided in this product, it is possible for some material to inadvertently fall outside of these guidelines.

### *Diversity and Inclusion Statement*

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: <http://diversity.pitt.edu/affirmative-action/policies-procedures-and-practices>.

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing [titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu). Reports can also be filed online: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/make-report/report-form>. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

All members of the University are expected to treat one another with respect. As an institution of higher education, the University of Pittsburgh has the obligation to combat all forms of bias, as these are detrimental to the mission of providing an equal educational opportunity. Please be respectful of your fellow students and use language appropriate to public, academic discourse. Students are asked to accept the obligation to live by these common values and commit themselves to principles of behavior that contribute to a civil campus environment and to support this behavior in others.

**In this class, I expect all students to speak their truth. In doing so, be ready to defend your positions. Lively debate is encouraged and critical to class participation, yet,** civility in our discourse and our disagreements is absolutely required. Bullying, hazing, obscene, or hate speech is not acceptable. **Tolerance of others includes, race, religion, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, sexual identity, abilities, etc.**

**and differences of opinions.** On the other hand, please understand that statements by others that are inconsistent with your beliefs (no matter how strong or sincere) are not necessarily speech that should be prohibited, rather such statements are an opportunity for you to defend and/or adjust your current beliefs.

### *Nonstandard Grades (G Grade)*

The “G” grade is applied only when students who have been attending a course and making regular progress are prevented from completing the course by circumstances beyond their control, such as a major medical emergency. These grades will only be given in very rare documented circumstances governed by the current CGS student handbook and University G Grade Policy

### *Religious Observances*

In order to accommodate the observance of religious holidays, students should inform the instructor (by email, within the first two weeks of the term) of any such days which conflict with scheduled examinations or assignment due dates. The instructor will contact the student to confirm alternative arrangements.

### *Military Personnel and Veterans*

Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.

### *Health and Wellness*

If you find yourself experiencing negative feelings associated with the content of this class or any other source, be aware that free counseling and emergency crisis services are available to all students through the University Counseling Center (UCC). Pitt students in need of psychological help can contact the counseling center at 412-648-7930. For more information, please visit the [University Counseling Center](#). Also, crisis support is available after-hours and on weekends by calling Campus Police at 412-624-2121.

***GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT STUDENT NEEDS AND ACCOMMODATIONS***

**I recognize that many of you may have particular challenges like employment, health, extracurricular activities, family obligations, and the like. I will try to accommodate you as best I can. I can accommodate you better if you advise me of these challenges sooner rather than later.**