Course Description: The course presents an introduction to American law and legal process. It is for undergraduate students interested in law, science, and the administrative process, especially in regard to planning and management of land and the environment.

It assumes that students have not seriously considered the American legal system beyond the generalities presented in modern secondary school civics and political science courses on government. The course will be an excellent preparation for SENR courses “Science and Environmental Law” (SENR 7520) and “Water Law” (SENR 5451).

The course begins with a description of the concepts of law developed in the western world and uses Hammurabi’s Code, the Judeo-Christian Bible, etc. to illustrate these concepts. Material on the functions and limits of law and legal process in modern America follows. Specific topics in American legal history will be covered.

The function of the American legal process is then considered. Specific details will be presented to illustrate categories of law, agencies of law, influences on the law and the role of citizens in the process.

Throughout the course, cases, statues (laws) rules, permits etc. related to land natural resources and the environment will be used to illustrate the conceptual and process material.

Course Objective: The overall objective is to have students develop a sense of how the American legal system works. It is assumed that students come to the course with a standard, low level knowledge of the American legal system.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn the following:

- Western concepts of law and American legal history
- Functions and limits of law and the legal system
- Categories and agencies of law
- Influences on the legal process
- Structure and process for a complaint about a legal injury
- Role and process for statutes, administrative agencies, and courts
- Application of law to specific actions that affect land and its resources
- Incentives and barriers to use of science and technology in the legal process
Methods: Lectures and discussion are the method. Articles and cases provide the basis for discussions. Initially, articles and a text will be used to discuss the cultural aspects that affect environmental law. Selected cases illustrate the development of common law remedies for personal injuries from environmental disruption. Cases will also be used to illustrate the interpretation of legislation and administrative actions. Incentives for, and barriers to, the use of science and technology for environmental management are shown in several legal contexts. Major federal legislation and cases that interpret this legislation are emphasized.

Examinations, schedule and grades: There will be 3 standalone examinations. Each will count 33% of the final grade. Two points may be added to the final grade for regular class attendance. Similarly, 2 points may be added to the final grade for class participation. Grades will be distributed from A, A-, B.

Materials: Materials to be selected from:
D.J. Fiorino, *Making Environmental Policy*; Berkeley, Univ. of CA Press
Environmental Law Casebooks
Other