



# ECON 308 A01

## Economics and the Law

Spring Session: 2025 01 – CRN 21004, 1.5 units, 3.0 hrs, MWR 14:30-15:20 COR B135

### UVic Land Acknowledgement

*We acknowledge and respect the Lək'wəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək'wəŋən and WSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.*

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### Course Content

Law and Economics applies the methods of neoclassical economics to the study of law. The class introduces the subject through the topics of property, tort and crime. The focus is on efficiency, incentives, and information, and how these affect the objectives, structures, limits, and content of laws. Some criticisms of these methods are discussed. Selected cases and current issues are used to practice using the theoretical tools, models and concepts developed

### Learning Outcomes

By completing the course students can expect to have learned how to:

- Explain the ways economists model and measure property, torts, and crime;
- Apply basic economic concepts such as opportunity cost, information, incentives, risk, supply, demand, returns to scale, and market power to policy issues in property, tort and crime;

- Explain the influence of economic reasoning on the law, and of legal reasoning on the work of economists;
- Find and interpret published reasons for judicial decisions;

Skills you will get practice in:

- Using simple economic models to examine policy issues;
- Summarizing and evaluating research papers.
- Identifying errors in reasoning contained in policy proposals or the assessment of causal relationships.

## Course prerequisites/co-requisites

ECON 103, ECON 104 and completion of the University Writing Requirement

## Textbook and Course Readings

We will make some use of the material in

Cooter, Robert and Thomas Ulen. (2016) *Law and Economics*. 6th ed. ([Free online here](#)).

The course readings comprise selections from the textbook, research papers and online material, many in the form of published judicial reasons. All of this will be found linked to the Brightspace page. Some readings will be designated “required” and others “supplementary”. Required readings are subject to evaluation on the term quizzes and final exam. These readings are also useful for discussion questions. Supplementary readings provide deeper context and directions for further study. These will not be directly examined, but you can refer to them as you see fit.

## Brightspace

*Brightspace* is used extensively for the course. All students are expected to be fully functional with the system. The lecture notes will be posted in *Brightspace*. Please note that the lecture notes online are only outlines of the actual lectures.

All announcements will be posted in *Brightspace*. Students are advised to check it frequently.

## Grading

### Grading Scheme

Participation:	20%
Hand-in Assignments:	20%
Midterm Exam:	15%
Final exam:	45%

Hand in assignments will require you to apply the concepts discussed in class to specific examples drawn from legal cases decided in Canada and reported on [Canlii.org](http://Canlii.org). Participation will combine the results of weekly “knowledge check” on-line quizzes and brief discussion questions written in class. The midterm exam will test your understanding of definitions and your ability to apply concepts to specific cases. The final exam will be similar to the midterm, covering material from the whole course.

### Mandatory/Essential Course Components

Students who have completed the following **course requirements** will be considered to have completed the course:

- two or more homework assignments
- the final exam

Failure to complete one or more of these elements will result in a grade of “N” regardless of the cumulative percentage on other elements of the course. N is a failing grade

### Grading Scale

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F or N
90-100	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	65-69	60-64	50-59	0-49

Students should review the University’s more detailed [summary of grading](#).

### Missing Assessments

Should students encounter a situation where they miss an exam or cannot submit an assignment at its due date, they may qualify for an academic concession. Students are required to indicate the specific grounds on which they are requesting an academic concession and to provide a justification outlining the impact of the circumstances on their ability to complete course requirements. Concessions must not significantly alter the assessment of overall performance in the course and will not alter the required components of the course, as described below under the heading grading. Please let me know as soon as possible if you need an in term academic concession. For in-course extensions, please follow the instructions on the [Undergraduate requests for academic concession](#) webpage. In case you miss the final exam, fill in a [request for a deferral](#).

Students are advised not to make work or travel plans until after the examination timetable has been finalized. Students who wish to finalize their travel plans at an earlier date should book flights that depart after the end of the examination period. Students do not qualify for an academic concession if travel plans conflict with the examination.

### Course Policies

This course adheres to the [Undergraduate Course Policies](#) of the Department of Economics that deal with the following issues:

- Academic concessions
- Academic integrity (plagiarism and cheating)

- Attendance
- Grading
- Inclusivity and diversity
- Late adds
- Late assignments
- Repeating courses
- Review of an assigned grade
- Sexualized violence prevention and response
- Students with a disability
- Term assignments and debarment from examinations
- Travel plans
- Waitlists

The following policies are explicitly included because of their importance:

## Waitlist Policies

- Instructors have no discretion to admit waitlisted students or raise the cap on the course.
- Students on the waitlist should discuss with the instructor how to ensure they are not behind with coursework in the event they are admitted.
- Registered students who do not participate as specified in this outline during the first 7 calendar days from the start of the course may be dropped from the course.
- Registered students who decide not to take the course are responsible for dropping the course and are urged to do so promptly out of courtesy toward waitlisted students.
- Waitlist offers cease after the last date for adding courses irrespective of published waitlists.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students are expected to observe the same standards of scholarly integrity as their academic and professional counterparts. A student who is found to have engaged in unethical academic behaviour, including the practices described in the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) in the University Calendar, is subject to penalty by the University.

Review [What is Plagiarism](#) for the definition of plagiarism. Note: Submitted work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.

## Student Code of Conduct

The Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences Faculties have adopted this [Student code of conduct](#). Please, review.

## University Policies

- University Calendar - Section "[Information for all students](#)"

- [Creating a respectful, inclusive and productive learning environment](#)
- [Accommodation of Religious Observance](#)
- [Student Conduct](#)
- [Non-academic Student Misconduct](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Diversity / EDI](#)
- [Equity statement](#)
- Discrimination and Harassment [Policy](#)
- [Policy on Human Rights, Equity and Fairness](#) - The University is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

## Sexualized Violence Prevention & Response

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. Students are encouraged to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting [www.uvic.ca/svp](http://www.uvic.ca/svp). If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Contact [svpcoordinator@uvic.ca](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca).

## Resources for Students

[UVic Learn Anywhere](#) - UVic Learn Anywhere is the primary learning resource for students that offers many learning workshops and resources to help students with academics and learning strategies.

[Centre for Accessible Learning](#) - Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, you are free to approach me; however, you must register with the [Centre for Accessible Learning](#) (CAL) for formal arrangements to be made. The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

[Centre for Academic Communication](#) - Offers coaching on [academic integrity](#), including preventing accidental plagiarism. Provides support to students with time management, reading, writing, speaking, understanding academic expectations, and other aspects of academic communication as well as creating academic posters, blogposts, PowerPoint slides, and e-portfolios.

[Health Services](#) - University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.

[Support Connect](#) - a 24/7 mental health support service for students

- Toll-free (calls from North America): 1-844-773-1427
- International collect calls: 1-250-999-7621

[Counselling Services](#) - Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.

[Indigenous Student Services](#) - Indigenous UVic students have access to many sources of support on campus. Before, during and after your time at UVic, you are encouraged to explore programs and services available to you, such as [Indigenous counselling services](#) and the [Elders in Residence](#), as well as non-academic programs that may be of interest to you.

[International Student Support](#) - The University of Victoria offers a number of resources to support international students as they pursue their studies. UVic's [International Centre for Students](#) is the primary office supporting international students on campus at the university-wide level and provides various supportive program through the [UVic Global Community Initiative](#), including a Mentorship Program and Conversation Partner Program.

For academic advising-related questions, students in the Economics Department are also encouraged to meet with the Economics Undergraduate Advisor (Brooklynn Comish-Trimble, [ecadvice@uvic.ca](mailto:ecadvice@uvic.ca)) as well as an academic advisor in the [Academic Advising Centre](#) early in their studies to help map out a plan to declare a major and complete university program requirements. Other resources include the [Centre for Academic Communication](#) and the [Math and Stats Assistance Centre](#).

The International Student Liaison in the Economics Department is Dr. Paul Schure who can help you connect with other international and domestic students in the Department. His email address is [schure@uvic.ca](mailto:schure@uvic.ca). Please, reach out if you are interested.

## Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future.

When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to the [CES log-in](#). You will use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be completed on your laptop, tablet or mobile device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.

- What strengths did your **instructor** demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?
- Please provide specific suggestions as to how the **instructor** could have helped you learn more effectively.
- Please provide specific suggestions as to how this **course** could be improved.

In addition to this I will occasionally survey your opinion on various aspects of the course. The Brightspace page under Administration provides a link to a confidential feedback form where you can anonymously offer any thoughts about the course.

## Course Structure

The course structure is tentative and depends on progress and class interest. The accurate schedule will be maintained on the Brightspace Page. The following table is the current plan.

Topic	Chapter	Week	Approximate Due Dates and Exam Information
Introduction	-	1	
Canadian Legal System	3	2	
Property	4	3	Assignment 1
Torts I	6	4	
Torts II	6	5	
Torts III	6	6	Assignment 2
Criminal Justice in Canada	-	7	
Reading Week		8	
Economic Theories of Crime	12	9	Midterm February 27
Marginal Deterrence	13	10	Assignment 3
Capital Punishments	13	11	
Mandatory Minimums	13	12	Assignment 4
Self-Protection	13	13	Classes end on April 3

## E-mail Correspondence

Emails should be limited to critical matters, such as inability to attend class, an exam, or prolonged illness, and should include the course name and number in the subject line. Questions on course material should be asked during office hours or in class. The standard format for writing a letter must be used. This means it should begin with a salutation (e.g. Dear....), include full sentences and it must conclude with a signature that includes your **full name and V#**.

## Use of AI

We will discuss the use of Generative AI throughout the course, but please note that on graded material the use of Generative AI requires explicit permission. If you are in doubt, ask me and prepare to explain how this tool is assisting and not replacing the development of your own understanding, and how its use is improving rather than obscuring my ability to assess your understanding.