Political Science 202  
**Contemporary American Political Issues: Courts and Social Change**  
Spring 2004  
MW 8:00-9:15  
Cornerstone 139  

Instructor: Stephen Meinhold, Ph.D.  
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**Course Description:**

This course is a special topics section of Contemporary American Political Issues focusing on the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). The class will introduce you to the organization and functions of the American Legal System and then present the question: Can courts bring about social change? We will try to answer this question by studying the *Brown* decision as a social and legal phenomenon and comparing the issue of school desegregation to other contemporary political issues.

**Textbook:**


**Assignments:**

- Read all assigned material.  
- Attend class.  
- Complete three exams.  
- Write a five page essay about *Brown*.

**Grading:**

- Exam 1 – 100 points  
- Exam 2 – 100 points  
- Final Exam – 100 points  
- Essay – 50 points

**Total Points Possible** – 350

Grade Scale - A, 350-315; B, 314-280; C, 279-245; D, 244-210; F, 209-
Course Schedule:

**January**
12-14  Course Introduction, Neubauer and Meinhold – Chapter 1  
*Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)* (online)  
*Brown v. Board of Education (1954)* (online)  
19-21  Neubauer and Meinhold – Chapters 2 and 4  
19   No Class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday  
26-28  Neubauer and Meinhold – Chapters 3 and 13

**February**
2-4  Neubauer and Meinhold – Chapters 14 and 15  
4   Exam #1  
9-11  Neubauer and Meinhold – Chapter 7  
16-18  NPR Resource Site Materials  
23-25  NPR Resource Site Materials

**March**
2-4  Rosenberg (entire book)  
8-10  No Class – Spring Break  
15-17  Rosenberg (entire book)  
22-24  Rosenberg (entire book)  
24   Exam #2  
29-31  Rosenberg Revisited (readings TBA)

**April**
5-7  Rosenberg Revisited (readings TBA)  
12-14  Rosenberg Revisited (readings TBA)  
19-21  Brown and Beyond (readings TBA)  
26   Last Day of Class

**May**
4   Final Exam – 8:00-11:00