Course Name: International Criminal Law

Course Catalog Number: 8634I

Catalog Description of Course: International criminal law is focused on punishing individuals for violation of crimes are so serious that they can be considered crimes committed against the entire international community. The international community can prosecute these crimes at the national level, or in a foreign jurisdiction under principles of universal jurisdiction. In some cases, the international community may establish a special international tribunal. Whichever country or international tribunal prosecutes, it must first ensure that it has jurisdiction. If it does, then it must determine the elements of the offense under international law prosecute following international norms of due process.

Professor: William Worster

Essential Prerequisites: n/a

Desirable Prerequisites: Criminal Law, International Law


Collection of materials to be provided.

Recommended: n/a

Method of Grading & Appraisal of Student for Grade: The course is graded based on a written final exam

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles and rules of international criminal law with precision;

2. Interpret (sometimes conflicting) international legal sources and apply the law to new factual scenarios;
3. Identify the legal interests of others and argue in favour of a particular position; criticize the legal argument of the opposing side and persuade a decision-maker.

May be used to fulfill the following requirements of the degree or an emphasis: International Law

Relevancy of Course for Career Purposes: A study of international criminal law is important for an understanding of some of the most dynamic and evolving aspects of international law today. War crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are routinely in the news surrounding by highly charged rhetoric. The student will be well served to better engage in the legal community by having a more sophisticated understanding of these, often politicized, issues, especially as lawyers in general may be looked to for leadership and education in this area.

However, this area of law may have more direct application. A student may wish to practice law in an international context, for example, at an international court or tribunal enforcing international criminal law. In addition, certain areas of US domestic law incorporate international criminal law: for example, constitutional law (law of immunity of foreign officials), military law (international humanitarian law and war crimes), civil rights (commission of torture at home or abroad), immigration law (expulsion due to human rights abuses or commission of crimes against humanity), and perhaps even corporate law to a greater extent in the future (corporate responsibility for complicity in crimes against humanity)

Relevancy of Course for Mo/Multi-State Bar Examination: While international law does occasionally appear on the bar exam, and knowledge of international criminal law could contribute to better understanding of certain constitutional issues (ex post facto law, double jeopardy, etc.), the course largely is of limited relevance for the bar exam.