Fall Semester, 2021 Instructor: J. Horty

PHIL 808k: Legal Reasoning Syllabus Version #3 November 3, 2021

Logic (we may say) is generalized jurisprudence.

- Stephen Toulmin

A satisfactory theory of legal reasoning requires and is required by a satisfactory theory of law.

- Neil MacCormick

Description

This is an interdisciplinary course drawing on material from the separate fields of logic, legal theory, and artificial intelligence and law. The specific goals are: first, to understand and, I hope, advance recent work on formal models of legal reasoning; second, to explore the bearing of this work on more traditional issues in legal theory; and third, to explore the bearing of this work on a few apparently more distant topics, such as rights, patterns of reasoning in applied ethics, or the semantics of open-textured predicates.

Although the course will involve some mild logic, and there is real logical work to do for students who enjoy that way of thinking, there will also be plenty of material for students who prefer to think about problems in a different way—the emphasis will be conceptual, not technical.

Time and place

Thursday, 4:45–7:15, TWS 1100 (we'll see if we can adjust this weird time)

Contact information

Office: Skinner 1101. Office phone: I don't use my office phone. Cell phone: 301-408-8963, and you're very welcome to call my cell phone. Email: horty@umd.edu. Office hours: I'll let you know my exact office hours once they've sorted themselves out. Meanwhile, please feel free to write or call at any time if you'd like to meet.

Course materials

The readings for each topic are divided into three categories: primary readings, which you must read with some care in order to be able to participate in the class; secondary readings, which you ought to read, although it is not required; background and related material, which is provided primarily for students wishing to do research in a particular area—this is where I would start.

All primary readings will be on the course web site, as well as most secondary readings.

Course work

There are three kinds of course work:

Summaries and questions: Each week, each student in the class must turn in a brief (no more than one page, and a paragraph will do) summary of one of the primary readings—or if the reading is long, then one chapter, or section, or part—stating its primary objective or conclusion, and main argument. In addition to this summary, each student must provide one question concerning the reading you have summarized. Sometimes I will tell you which of the primary readings I want you to address with your summary and question. Your summaries and questions are due the *Tuesday* prior to class at midnight, so that I have time to read them before class. These summaries and questions are not graded, but you have to turn them in; their purpose is simply to give me a sense of how well you're understanding the material and what your perspective on it is.

Presentation: The course will be run as a seminar, and everyone attending, students and auditors, will have to help present some of the material. These presentations will be short, low-key, and likewise not graded. In addition, we will set aside time toward the end of the term for students who are taking the course for credit to introduce and lead a discussion on their paper topics. This, again, is supposed to be low-key—the point is not to create stress and havoc in your lives, but simply to give you a chance to get feedback from the class on your ideas.

Written work: The main requirement for students taking the course for credit is a single extended paper of approximately 15–20 double-spaced pages, prepared as if for submission to a journal. I will develop a list of paper topics as the term progresses, but of course, you are welcome to formulate your own, in consultation with me. We will have to agree on a topic by November 15, and you will have to turn in a draft of your paper by December 15; I will read and comment on your draft the next day, and then you will have until January 15, 2022, to turn in a final version. I'm happy to meet with you about your paper as much or as little as you'd like.

Course topics

Here is a tentative, initial list. The list may be revised during the term (be sure to check the version number on the syllabus). The plan is to get through all of the topics listed under categories 1 and 2, and then some of those from categories 3 and 4, as time permits and depending on interest.

1. Background

(a) The Hart/Dworkin debate

Primary readings: Dworkin [28], Hart [35]

Secondary readings: Raz [77]

Background, related, and additional material: Dworkin [29], Dworkin [32], Dworkin [30, Section 4], Hart [36, Chapter 6], Leiter [50], Schauer [89], Shapiro [96]

(b) Legal theorists on legal reasoning

Primary readings: Alexander and Sherwin [3, Introduction, Chapter 1–4], Schauer [94, Introduction, Chapters 1–7]

Background, related, and additional material: Alexander [2], MacCormick [55], Schauer [90], Schauer [91]

¹This length is not set in stone, but please speak to me if you would like to write a paper shorter than 15 pages or longer than 20 pages.

2. The reason model of precedential constraint

(a) Basics

Primary readings: Horty [40, Introduction, Chapters 1–2], Lamond [46]

Seconday readings: Raz [78, Chapter 10], Simpson [100]

Background, related, and additional material: Aleven and Ashley [1], Ashley [5, Chapters 2–3], Alexander [2], Burton [24, Introduction and Chapters 1–4], Eisenberg [33], Lamond [47], Levi [51, Sections I–II], MacCormick [56], Perry [70], Rissland and Ashley [83]

(b) Variations, elaborations, discussions, complaints

Primary readings: Bench-Capon and Atkinson [14], Lamond [49], Mullins [64], Rigoni [81]

Seconday readings: Horty [41]

Background, related, and additional material: Horty and Bench-Capon [42],

(c) The standard model and the a fortiori model

Primary readings: Horty [40, Chapter 3]

Background, related, and additional material: Broughton [23], Horty [37], Prakken [73]

(d) Supporting the reason model

Primary readings: Horty [40, Chapter 4]

(e) Constraining natural reasoning

Primary readings: Horty [40, Chapters 5–6]

Secondary readings: Mullins [65]

Background, related, and additional material: Prakken and Sartor [75], Prakken and Sartor [76]

(f) Dimensions and magnitudes

Primary readings: Horty [38], Horty [39]

Secondary readings: Bench-Capon [9], Rigoni [82]

Background, related, and additional material: Bench-Capon [11], Bench-Capon and Atkinson [12], Bench-Capon and Atkinson [13], Bench-Capon and Rissland [15], Bench-Capon and Rissland [15], Rissland and Ashley [84]

3. Further topics

(a) Open-textured predicates

Primary readings: Waismann [112]

Secondary readings: Cumming [26], Shapiro and Roberts [98]

Background, related, and additional material: Baker [7], Bix [20], MacCormick [57], Lyons [54], Tur [111], Schauer [92], Schauer [95], Shapiro and Roberts [97], Shapiro and Roberts [99]

(b) Analogical reasoning

Primary readings: Stevens [106]

Secondary readings: Schauer [93], Spellman [103], Spellman [104], Spellman and Schauer [105]

Background, related, and additional material: Atkinson and Bench-Capon [6] Bartha [8], Brewer [22], Lamond [48], Posner [71], Sunstein [108], Weinreb [113]

(c) Values, teleology, coherence

Primary readings: Bench-Capon [10], Bench-Capon and Sartor [16], Berman and Hafner [19], Maguire [58], Prakken [72]

Background, related, and additional material: Bench-Capon and Sartor [17]

(d) Values, reasons, balancing, proportionality

Primary readings: Alexy [4], Sartor [86], Sartor [87],

Secondary readings: Benzmuller et al [18], Maranhao et al [59], Maranhao and Sartor [60], Maranhao and Sartor [61], Sartor [88]

Background, related, and additional material: Cohen-Eliya and Porat [25]

(e) Rights

Primary readings: Liberto [52], Mullins [63]

Secondary readings: Botterell [21], Oberdiek [66], Oberdiek [67]

4. And still further topics

(a) Statutory reasoning

Primary readings: Alexander and Sherwin [3, Chapters 5–8], Schauer [94, Chapter 8] Secondary readings: Rissland and Skalak [85], Skalak and Rissland [101], Skalak and Rissland [102]

(b) Evidence

Readings: Moss [62]

Background, related, and additional material: Prakken et al. [74] (Note: This is the editors' introduction to a journal special issue on the topic—the whole issue is useful.)

(c) Legal reasoning and applied ethics

Primary readings: Iltis [43], Richardson [79]

Background, related, and additional material: DeGrazia [27], Gert et al. [34], Jonsen [44], Jonsen and Toulmin [45], Little [53], Paulo [68], Paulo [69], Richardson [80], Strong [107], Toulmin [109], Toulmin [110],

References

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