

Legal Aspects of Evidence AJ 104

Thank you for choosing IVC! We are so happy to join you on your educational journey.

Basic Course Information

Semester:	Winter 2026	Instructor Name:	Kathy Rodriguez
Course Title & #:	Legal Aspects of Evidence AJ 104	Email:	Kathy.rodriguez@imperial.edu
CRN #:	15075	Webpage (optional):	
Classroom:	Online	Office #:	Online
Class Dates:	01/05/26-02/05/26	Office Hours:	No Office Hours for Winter/Summer session
Class Days:	Online	Office Phone #:	760-355-6245
Class Times:	Online	Emergency Contact:	760-355-6280

Units: 3	
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Course Description

This course examines the origin, development, philosophy, and constitutional basis of evidence; constitutional and procedural considerations affecting arrest, search and seizure; kinds and degrees of evidence and rules governing admissibility; judicial decisions interpreting individual rights and case studies.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Identify the historical development and the constitutionality of the rules of evidence and how it ties into the criminal justice system. (ILO2, ILO4)
2. Explain and identify the procedural rules and constitutionality for arrest, search and seizure. (ILO1, ILO2, ILO4, ILO5)
3. Identify hearsay, rules of admissibility, and the exceptions to the Hearsay Rule. (ILO2, ILO4))

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the historical development and the constitutionality of the rules of evidence.
2. Explain the procedural rules and constitutionality of arrest, search and seizures.
3. Describe the admissibility and categories of privileged communication.
4. Recognize the different requirements and responsibility of lay and expert witnesses.

5. Define hearsay, the rules of admissibility, and the exceptions to the Hearsay Rule.
6. Describe the rules and procedures used to determine the admissibility of confessions and admission.
7. Identify different kinds of documentary evidence and the rules relating to admissibility.
8. Explain the preservation and custody of physical and scientific evidence.

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

Criminal Evidence 9th edition by Norman M. Garland: Publisher: McGraw-Hill Higher Education

Print ISBN 9781264296804, 1264296800/eText ISBN 9781265289850, 1265289859

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

Out-of-Class Assignments: The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over a semester. WASC has adopted a similar requirement. Course instructional methods will include power points, discussions, chapter reviews, quizzes and tests.

What if I need to borrow technology or access WIFI?

1. To request a loaner laptop, MYFI device, or other electronic device, please submit your request here:

<https://imperial.edu/students/student-equity-and-achievement/>

2. If you'd like to access the WIFI at the IVC campus, you can park in parking lots "I & J". Students must log into the IVC student WIFI by using their IVC email and password. The parking lots will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Guidelines for using parking WIFI:

-Park in every other space (empty space BETWEEN vehicles)

- Must have facemask available
- For best reception park near buildings
- Only Park at marked student spaces
- Only owners of a valid disabled placard may use disabled parking spaces
- Only members of the same household in each vehicle
- Occupants **MUST** remain in vehicles
- Restrooms and other on-campus services not available
- College campus safety will monitor the parking lot
- Student code of conduct and all other parking guidelines are in effect
- Please do not leave any trash behind

-Parking permit is required

If you have any questions about using parking WIFI, please call Student Affairs at 760- 3556455.

THE GENERAL PLAN:

This course is designed much differently from most others you have been exposed to because you will be asked to think critically about the subject matter throughout the semester. All of your activities will focus on helping you to better understand the logic of philosophy, and to come to think like a rational philosopher. You will be asked to continually engage your mind during your studies.

While you will learn some facts about philosophy, they will be learned in the context of learning about the logic of philosophy, rather than being memorized for test time. The class will focus on figuring out things using your own mind, not memorizing what is in a textbook. You will be regularly responsible for assessing your own work using the criteria found in this syllabus. This is an eight-week course, so you will have a lot of work to do.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Always check the Announcements before you start your work online.
- If you have a question that is personal in nature, for example, a question about your grade, send me an email at Kathy.rodriguez@imperial.edu

- If you email me be sure to include your entire name, section # of the class, and the name of the class, (AJ 100).
- I will respond to all emails within 24 hours.

IMPORTANT STUFF:

Research Assignments or Book Assignments:

You will have a one-week window to submit your essay. All essays should be in 12-point type. The essay prompts will be in the Announcements and the Module. Submit your essays before the dates given in this syllabus. No late essays allowed.

Posts:

Everyone must post at least once on each module and post at least on reply to another student's post. I expect your posts to reflect your careful study of the important issues the philosophers present. There is no set length for posts, however, try to keep your posts at a minimum of 100 words per peer (2) and 300 words for your initial post. Your posts should make use of information and examples in the videos and/or in the readings. Your replies to other students should discuss the ideas presented in their posts. There is no set length for replies, but usually a paragraph will suffice. If you are not going into enough detail in your posts and replies, I'll let you know in the feedback section.

No late posts allowed. Your posts must be submitted during the time frame listed on the course schedule.

Always run your posts through spell-check before you post. Remember to check your word use and spelling with a dictionary and always use a thesaurus to achieve the precision fitting of a clear critical thinker. Posting and sending email is a formal endeavor with this professor. All forms of communication, in all my classes, require civility and respect. I will not tolerate disrespectful emails or posts, and I insist that everyone be courteous to everyone else. I will immediately withdraw from any student who does not adhere to the basics of civility required of cooperative learning. Do not hold personal conversations between each other through posts.

I will give you feedback on each of your posts and grade them on Monday following the due date. What should I do with the feedback? You can use it to improve your future posts.

Quizzes:

There will be a total of 8 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz is worth 10 points and will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and fill in the blank questions on the readings and videos.

Student Lounge:

On the course homepage there is a tab for the Student Lounge. Here, you have the opportunity to ask and answer questions about the se and about technical issues. Remember, you are part of a community of learners. As such, you are expected to help each other out as need arises. Keep in mind that an important part of college is meeting new people. So, feel free to socialize here - it's your lounge.

A = 90 - 100%

B = 80 - 89%

C = 70 - 79%

D = 60 - 69%

F = 59 or below

GRADING CRITERIA

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Assignment Descriptors	Points
1. Assignments	250 (8)
Discussions	20(4)
2. Quiz	80 (8)

3. Exams	100 (4)
4. Final Exam	50(1)
TOTAL POINTS	500

A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C= 70-79% D = 60-69% F = below 60%

PLEASE NOTE: Assignments are due on the date stated on the syllabus. No late assignments accepted. Make every effort to turn in assignments on time or you may receive a zero for those assignments. No late assignments will be accepted.

GRADING CRITERIA

What Each Grade Represents:

THE GRADE OF F:

Here are typical characteristics of the work of a student who receives an F.

A close examination reveals:

The student does not understand the basic nature of philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing, and in any case does not display the philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing skills and abilities which are at the heart of this course. The work at the end of the course is vague,

imprecise, and unreasoned as it was in the beginning. There is little evidence that the student is genuinely engaged in the task of taking charge of his or her thinking. Many assignments appear to have been done pro forma, the student simply going through the motions without really putting any significant effort into thinking his or her way through them. Consequently, the student is not analyzing issues clearly, not formulating information clearly, not accurately distinguishing the relevant from the irrelevant, not identifying key questionable assumptions, not clarifying key concepts, not identifying relevant competing points of view, not reasoning carefully from clearly stated premises, or tracing implications and consequences. The student's work does not display discernible reasoning, problem solving, and argumentative writing skills.

stated premises, or tracing implications and consequences. The student's work does not display discernible reasoning, problem solving, and argumentative writing skills.

THE GRADE OF D:

D level work shows only a minimal level of understanding of what philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing is, along with the development of some, but very little, philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing skills or abilities. D work at the end of the course, on the whole, shows only occasional philosophical reasoning skills, but frequent uncritical thinking. Most assignments are poorly done. There is little evidence that the student is reasoning through the assignment. Often the student seems to be merely going through the motions of the assignment, carrying out the form without getting into the spirit of it. D work rarely shows any effort to take charge of ideas, assumptions, inferences, and intellectual processes. In general, D level thinking lacks discipline and clarity. In D level work, the student rarely analyzes issues clearly and precisely, almost never formulates information clearly, rarely distinguishes the relevant from the irrelevant, rarely recognizes key questionable assumptions, almost never clarifies key concepts effectively, frequently fails to use language in keeping with educated usage, only rarely identifies relevant competing points of view, and almost never reasons carefully from clearly stated premises, or recognizes important implications and consequences. D level work does not show good reasoning and problem-solving skills and frequently displays poor reasoning, problem solving, and argumentative writing skills.

THE GRADE OF C:

C level work illustrates some but inconsistent achievement in grasping what philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing is, along with the development of modest critical thinking and argumentative writing skills or abilities. C level work at the end of the course, it is true, shows some

emerging philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing skills, but also pronounced weaknesses as well. Though some assignments are reasonably well done, others are poorly done; or at best are mediocre. There are more than occasional lapses in reasoning. Though philosophy terms and distinctions are sometimes used effectively, sometimes they are used quite ineffectively. Only on occasion does C level work display a mind taking charge of its own ideas, assumptions, inferences, and intellectual processes. Only occasionally does C level work display intellectual discipline and clarity. The C level student only occasionally analyzes issues clearly and precisely, formulates information clearly, distinguishes the relevant from the irrelevant, recognizes key questionable assumptions, clarifies key concepts effectively, uses language in keeping with educated usage, identifies relevant competing points of view, and reasons carefully from clearly stated premises, or recognizes important implications and consequences. Sometimes the C level student seems to be simply going through the motions of the assignment, carrying out the form without getting into the spirit of it. On the whole, C level work shows only modest and inconsistent reasoning, problem solving, and argumentative writing skills, and sometimes displays weak reasoning, problem solving, and argumentative writing skills.

THE GRADE OF B:

B-level work represents demonstrable achievement in grasping what philosophy and argumentative writing is, along with the clear demonstration of a range of specific philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing skills or abilities. Level B at the end of the course is, on the whole, clear, precise, and well-reasoned, though with occasional lapses into weak reasoning. On the whole, philosophy terms and distinctions are used effectively. The work demonstrates a mind beginning to take charge of its own ideas, assumptions, inferences, and intellectual processes. The student often analyzes issues clearly and precisely, often formulates information clearly, usually distinguishes the relevant from the irrelevant, often recognizes key questionable assumptions, usually clarifies key concepts effectively, typically uses language in keeping with educated usage, frequently identifies relevant competing points of view, and shows a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, as well as noticeable sensitivity to important implications and consequences. B level work displays good reasoning, problem solving and argumentative writing skills.

THE GRADE OF A:

A level work demonstrates real achievement in grasping what philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing is, along with the clear development of a range of specific philosophical reasoning and argumentative writing skills or abilities. The work at the end of the course is, on the whole, clear, precise, and well-reasoned, though with occasional lapses into weak reasoning. In A-level work, philosophy terms and distinctions are used effectively. The work demonstrates a mind beginning to take charge of its own

ideas, assumptions, inferences, and intellectual processes. The A-level student often analyzes issues clearly and precisely, often formulates information clearly, usually distinguishes the relevant from the irrelevant, often recognizes key questionable assumptions, usually clarifies key concepts effectively, typically uses language in keeping with educated usage, frequently identifies relevant competing points of view, and shows a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, as well as noticeable sensitivity to important implications and consequences. A-level work displays excellent reasoning, problem-solving, and argumentative writing skills. The A student's work is consistently at a high level of excellence.

Disability Statement

Imperial Valley College abides by the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits federal and state agencies or programs from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities. Students in this course who have a documented disability, that limits a major life activity which may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations should meet with a counselor in Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S) as soon as possible.

PLEASE NOTE: Assignments are due on the date stated on the syllabus. No late assignments accepted. Make every effort to turn in assignments on time or you may receive a zero for those assignments.

Finding Grades

The Grades page displays your grades for all course assignments. View the following video to see how to find your Grades. **Feedback**

- I will provide feedback to you for all assignments and graded discussions within one week of the due date.
- I will be using a rubric to grade your assignments and discussions.
- I will add comments and annotations on your submitted files.

For information on how to view your feedback, go to the following Canvas Student Guides:

Accessibility

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative

reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any

uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students, regardless of course modality.

Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through **DSPS**, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

Attendance

It is the student's responsibility to drop or officially withdraw from the class. See [General Catalog](#) for details.

Regular attendance in all classes is expected of all students. A student whose continuous, unexcused absences exceed the number of hours the class is scheduled to meet per week may be dropped. For online courses, students who fail to complete required activities for the first week and two consecutive weeks from Week 2 on may be considered to have excessive absences and may be dropped.

Absences attributed to the representation of the college at officially approved events (conferences, contests, and field trips) will be counted as 'excused' absences.

Academic Honesty

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification. ***Anyone using AI for their assignments will receive a 0 for the entire assignment. NO tolerance for AI***

Academic honesty in the advancement of knowledge requires that all students and instructors respect the integrity of one another's work and recognize the importance of acknowledging and safeguarding intellectual property. ***Anyone using AI for their assignments will receive a 0 for the entire assignment. NO tolerance for AI. All assignments must be typed into the Canvas box. No file uploads or copy and paste assignments will be accepted. Those students who do not follow the assignment submission will receive a score of zero***

There are many different forms of academic dishonesty. The following kinds of honesty violations and their definitions are not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, they are intended to serve as examples of unacceptable academic conduct.

- Plagiarism is taking and presenting as one's own writings or ideas of others, without citing the source. You should understand the concept of plagiarism and keep it in mind when taking exams and preparing written materials. If you do not understand how to "cite a source" correctly, you must ask for help.
 - Anyone using AI for their assignments will receive a 0 for the entire assignment. NO tolerance for AI
- Cheating is defined as fraud, deceit, dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.
- IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.
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Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero (0) on the exam or assignment, and the instructor may report the incident to the Campus Disciplinary Officer, who may place related documentation in a file. Repeated acts of cheating may result in an F in the course and/or disciplinary action. Please refer to the [General Catalog](#) for more information on academic dishonesty or other misconduct. Acts of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) plagiarism; (b) copying or attempting to copy from others during an examination or on an assignment; (c) communicating test information with another person during an examination; (d)

allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment; (e) using a commercial term paper service.

Additional Student Services

Imperial Valley College offers various services in support of student success. The following are some of the services available for students. Please speak to your instructor about additional services which may be available.

- **CANVAS LMS.** Canvas is Imperial Valley College's main Learning Management System. To log onto Canvas, use this link: [Canvas Student Login](#). The [Canvas Student Guides Site](#) provides a variety of support available to students 24 hours per day. Additionally, a 24/7 Canvas Support Hotline is available for students to use: 877-893- 9853.
- **Learning Services.** There are several learning labs on campus to assist students through the use of computers and tutors. Please consult your [Campus Map](#) for the [Math Lab](#); [Reading, Writing & Language Labs](#); and the [Study Skills Center](#).
- **Library Services.** There is more to our library than just books. You have access to tutors in the [Study Skills Center](#), study rooms for small groups, and online access to a wealth of resources.

Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)

Any student with a documented disability who may need educational accommodations should notify the instructor or the [Disabled Student Programs and Services](#) (DSP&S) office as soon as possible. The DSP&S office is located in Building 2100, telephone 760-355-6313. Please contact them if you feel you need to be evaluated for educational accommodation.

Student Counseling and Health Services

Students have counseling and health services available, provided by the pre-paid Student Health Fee.

- **Student Health Center.** A Student Health Nurse is available on campus. In addition, Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District provide basic health services for students, such as first aid and care for minor illnesses. Contact the IVC [Student Health Center](#) at 760-3556128 in Room 1536 for more information.
- **Mental Health Counseling Services.** Short-term individual, couples, family and group counseling services are available for currently enrolled students. Services are provided in a confidential, supportive, and culturally sensitive environment. Please contact the IVC Mental Health Counseling Services at 760-355- 6310 or in building 1536 for appointments or more information.

Veteran's Center

The mission of the [IVC Military and Veteran Success Center](#) is to provide a holistic approach to serving military/veteran students on three key areas: 1) Academics, 2) Health and Wellness, and 3) Camaraderie; to serve as a central hub that connects military/veteran students, as well as their families, to campus and community resources. Their goal is to ensure a seamless transition from military to civilian life. The Center is located in Building 600 (Office 624), telephone 760-355-6141.

Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS)

The Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) offer services such as priority registration, personal/academic counseling, tutoring, book vouchers, and community referrals to qualifying low-income students. EOPS is composed of a group of professionals ready to assist you with the resolution of both academic and personal issues. Our staff is set up to understand the problems of our culturally diverse population and strive to meet student needs that are as diverse as our student population.

Also, under the umbrella of EOPS our CARE (Cooperative Agency Resources for Education) Program for single parents is specifically designed to provide support services and assist with the resolution of issues that are particular to this population. Students that are single parents receiving TANF/Cash Aid assistance may qualify for our CARE program, for additional information on CARE please contact Lourdes Mercado, 760-355- 6448, lourdes.mercado@imperial.edu.

EOPS provides additional support and services that may identify with one of the following experiences:

- Current and former foster youth students that were in the foster care system at any point in their lives.
- Students are experiencing homelessness.
- Formerly incarcerated students

To apply for EOPS and for additional information on EOPS services, please contact Alexis Ayala, 760-3555713, alexis.ayala@imperial.edu.

Student Equity Program

- The Student Equity Program strives to improve Imperial Valley College's success outcomes, particularly for students who have been historically underrepresented and underserved. The college identifies strategies to monitor and address equity issues, making efforts to mitigate any disproportionate impact on student success and achievement. Our institutional data provides insight into the student population, who historically, are not fully represented. Student Equity addresses disparities and/or disproportionate impact in student success across disaggregated student equity groups including gender, ethnicity, disability status, financial need, Veterans, foster youth, homelessness, and formerly incarcerated students. The Student Equity Program provides direct supportive services to empower students to experience insecurities related to food, housing, transportation, textbooks, and shower access. We recognize that students who struggle meeting their basic needs are also at an academic and economic disadvantage, creating barriers to academic success and wellness. We strive to remove barriers that affect IVC students' access to education, degree and certificate completion, successful completion of developmental math and English courses, and the ability to transfer to a university. Contact: 760.355.5736 or 760.355.5733 Building 100.
- The Student Equity Program also houses IVC's Homeless Liaison, who provides direct services, campus, and community referrals to students experiencing homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act. Contact: 760.355.5736 Building 100.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to experience a positive learning environment and to due process of law. For more information regarding student rights and responsibilities, please refer to the IVC [General Catalog](#).

Information Literacy

Imperial Valley College is dedicated to helping students skillfully discover, evaluate, and use information from all sources.

The IVC [Library Department](#) provides numerous [Information Literacy Tutorials](#) to assist students in this endeavor.

Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! To continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at finaid@imperial.edu.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.

Anticipated Class Schedule / Calendar

Anyone using AI for their assignments will receive a 0 for the entire assignment. NO tolerance for AI. Students must type their assignments directly into the Canvas box. Those who upload files and/or copy and paste their assignments into Canvas will receive a score of zero for the entire assignment

*****Subject to change without prior notice*****

Date or Week	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Due Dates/Tests
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<p>Week 1</p> <p>01/05-01/11</p>	<p>Chapter 1: Introduction to the Law of Evidence and the Pretrial Process</p> <p>Chapter 2: The Trial Process</p> <p>Chapter 3: Evidence-Basic Concepts</p>	<p>Assignments and/or discussion/Quiz/Test</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>01/12-01/18</p>	<p>Chapter 4: Witnesses-Competency and Privileged Communication</p> <p>Chapter 5: Witnesses-Lay and Expert</p> <p>Chapter 6: Credibility and Impeachment</p>	<p>Assignments and/or discussion/Quiz/Test</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>01/19-01/25</p>	<p>Chapter 7: The Hearsay Rule</p> <p>Chapter 8: Opposing Party's Statements (Admissions) and Confessions</p> <p>Chapter 9: The Exclusionary Rule-Search and Seizure</p>	<p>Assignments and/or discussion/Quiz/Test</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>01/26-02/01</p>	<p>Chapter 10: Exclusionary Rule-Identification Procedures</p> <p>Chapter 11: Circumstantial Evidence</p> <p>Chapter 12: Documentary Evidence and the Right to Discovery</p>	<p>Assignments and/or discussion/Quiz/Test</p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p>02/02-02/05</p>	<p>Chapter 13: Physical Evidence</p> <p>Chapter 14: Photographic, Recorded, and Computer-Generated Evidence</p> <p>Chapter 15: How to Testify Effectively</p>	<p>Assignments and/or Discussion/Final</p>

*****Tentative, subject to change without prior notice*****