



“Law and Resistance”

CRN 87591
Fridays, 9:30 - noon
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Spring 2019

POLS

660



This graduate course looks at the role of law in contemporary social movements, specifically those that arose as forms of resistance to neoliberal and populist politics. We will test one of the central assumptions in sociolegal studies – that law is a primarily conservative tool dominated by elites and privileging the status quo by sapping energy from political organizing – by examining innovative legal strategies used by movements organizing around:

- immigration reform
- animal rights and legal personhood
- reproductive justice
- climate change and water rights
- transgender rights
- disability rights and eugenics
- human rights mobilization by NGOs

We will learn from foundational texts in law and social movement literature to develop new understanding of the ways that these movements use the law: what is gained and what is lost when framing their issues as legal demands? Other topics include the use of social media, cause lawyering, the power of legal analogies, and the role of techno-scientific knowledge in the Courts.