

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

LAW CENTER

CRIMINAL LAW COURSE EVALUATION – SUMMARY

Summer 2021

Course Number: Law 5303

Professor: Zachary D. Kaufman, J.D., Ph.D.

Below are ratings and illustrative quotations from student evaluations of this course, which was taught online in 3-hour evening sessions over the course of 4 weeks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Course Evaluation: This rating combined prompts about how much the student learned relative to other law courses, whether the course will make the student a better lawyer, whether the student would recommend the course to other students, the amount of reading and preparation the course required, and the difficulty of the course's subject matter. The students' average rating of the overall quality of this course—on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning "Outstanding"—was 4.74.

Instructor Evaluation: This rating combined prompts about whether the instructor was well prepared, demonstrated respect for all students, effectively communicated information, and was available for individual assistance. The students' average rating of the overall teaching effectiveness of this instructor—on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning "Outstanding"—was 4.84.

Illustrative quotations: The following are quotations (including capitalizations) from the descriptive portion of the evaluations:

- "Prof. Kaufman is hands down the best professor I've had in law school so far. He is prepared, efficient, warm and available, and he clearly wants his students to succeed both in the classroom and beyond. He is also highly organized yet very adaptable to his students' needs and not rigid in his methods at all. His Powerpoint presentations are easy to follow, and he makes great use of the breakout rooms to facilitate lively discussions. The time flies by in his class, which I cannot say for any other class I've taken. I highly recommend Prof. Kaufman."
- "Prof. Kaufman is the best professor I've had so far at UH. He provokes thought, demands participation and is respectful but challenges opinions to ensure they are at least thought out."
- "Professor Kaufman is an outstanding professor. He conducts class in a hyper-engaging way that makes the concepts tangible and keeps all of our attention. He presented policy issues as well as the black letter law in a clear and useful manner."
- "Kaufman's awesome"
- "Prof. Kaufman is a super available, respectful, understanding, smart, responsive, hard-working and inspiring professor."
- Professor Kaufman "is one of the most influential professors and lawyers I have come across thus far. The influence comes from the degree of professionalism, compassion, expertise, and transparency."
- "Professor Kaufman was by far the most organized professor I have had. He ensures the material covered is relevant and useful."
- "Professor Kaufman is highly prepared for every class session and highly methodical and conscientious in his approach to pedagogy. He has an impressive ability to manage class progression through the assigned material while simultaneously allowing unstymied feedback and contribution to class sessions."
- "Great class!"

- “This has been a great class . . . Professor Kaufman does an excellent job of teaching; you can tell this is something he takes seriously. He was available during office hours to provide insight and suggestions as to my career goals and helped me to consider new possibilities (topics for journal notes, international treatise work, government jobs, etc.). I also appreciate that Professor Kaufman was very mindful of the diversity in our class . . .”
- “Professor Kaufman really cares about criminal law and it shows . . . He is very respectful to us and is overall really nice . . . Truly great experience . . .”
- “Professor Kaufman brought a tough course to life through his extensive knowledge, diligent planning, and Socratic method of teaching. At all times, Professor Kaufman was supportive of our attempts to articulate our thoughts and ideas. I feel that this class not only deepened my understanding of criminal law but helped me practice my oral advocacy skills—which is hard to achieve in a virtual world. Professor Kaufman cares for his students’ well-being more than most and I am grateful to have had him for this course.”
- “It was a great class. Thank you, Professor Kaufman.”
- “Professor Kaufman did a great job teaching a tough course in a virtual world.”
- “Professor Kaufman is extremely passionate about the fields of criminal and international law. He teaches in a way that pushes every student to do better and learn more. However, he does it in a way that is extremely kind and compassionate . . . He pushes his students to think beyond the textbook and to question their own viewpoints. He sets a standard of professionalism and kindness in his course, and I am extremely grateful for this. He is a professor who says he cares and actually means it. I would recommend Professor Kaufman’s course to any law student who would like to be challenged and learn a substantial amount from a genuine criminal justice advocate.”
- “Professor Kaufman did an excellent job creating an engaging learning environment, and I am particularly impressed he was able to do so given the inherently controversial topics that come up in discussions of criminal law. He was respectful of all students, and receptive to feedback. My favorite part of his class, however, was the organization and structure. Professor Kaufman presents the material in a very organized fashion and consistently stays on track with the syllabus. The consistency of his class, from the syllabus to the way he structured his class discussions, greatly helped me to stay engaged with the material.”
- “Professor Kaufman really cares about his students and their success. He has been an amazing instructor and approached very difficult topics in a manner that made us all feel safe. He challenged us to think outside of our comfort zone. I very much enjoyed this class . . .”
- “Prof. Kaufman is obviously passionate about teaching, the course, and his research. He was responsive to student feedback. He was respectful of opposing viewpoints, while encouraging students to think critically.”
- “Professor Kaufman was very prepared for class every day and was extremely organized in everything that he does . . . I really appreciated his sensitivity when there were certain topics that could bring up past issues for students. He is a very likeable professor and I would take another class with him.”
- “Professor Kaufman made a course I was already excited to take more interesting than I imagined. He also provided the opportunity for us to offer our suggestions on issues and think critically about where we stood. I hope I have the opportunity to take more courses with Professor Kaufman in Criminal and International Law.”
- “Criminal Law subject matter was difficult to learn about. I think this course would have been much more difficult without the framework Professor Kaufman consistently gave . . .”
- “Prof. Kaufman was always prepared and covered every assigned reading. He is very organized and attentive to how he communicates his instruction. He is also very respectful of students. He creates a safe space for meaningful participation and conversation.”