



Washington
University in St. Louis

SCHOOL OF LAW

CRIMINAL LAW
COURSE EVALUATION – SUMMARY

Spring 2022

Course Number: 502V

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

Below are ratings and illustrative quotations from student evaluations of this course.

Instructor Evaluation: This rating combined prompts about the instructor’s commitment to the course, effectiveness as a teacher, ability to create a classroom environment conducive to learning, and ability to facilitate learning outside of class. The students’ average rating of the overall quality of this instructor—on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning “Excellent”—was 4.95.

Course Evaluation: The students’ average rating of the overall quality of this course—on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning “Excellent”—was 4.84.

Illustrative quotations: The following are overall and then more detailed quotations about the class or instructor.

Overall quotations about the course or instructor:

- “This man is literally the best teacher I have ever had . . . I would take every single one of his classes.”
- “I think he is undoubtedly the best educator I have ever had.”
- “Professor Kaufman is hands down the best professor I have ever had, or ever might have, at WashU Law.”
- “Professor Kaufman is the best professor I’ve had here.”
- “Professor Kaufman is easily the best professor I’ve had here.”
- “Professor Kaufman has easily been the best professor that I’ve had at WashU Law.”
- “Professor Kaufman is the best professor at WUSTL.”
- “I have never met a more dedicated and engaging professor than Professor Kaufman.”
- “An organized, thoughtful, genius.”
- “Magnificent. Kaufman is the professor I will talk about for years to come. When people ask me how my 1L law school year went I will respond with ‘It was tough, but my crim law professor was amazing.’”
- “I can’t emphasize enough how much I enjoy learning from Professor Kaufman. He is the best professor – in both teaching ability and personableness – I’ve had so far at WashU.”
- “Professor Kaufman is the best professor I have had since I started school here.”
- “Professor Kaufman has been perhaps the most committed, engaging, and enjoyable instructor I’ve had the pleasure of learning under thus far.”
- “Professor Kaufman is truly amazing in his effectiveness, such that I would even rank him as one of the best, or even the best, professor that I have had in law school, and certainly one of the best professors that I have had in my education generally.”
- “One of the best professors I have ever had the honor of having as my teacher!”
- “If I could rank Professor Kaufman on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being excellent, he would earn an 11. He is one of the best professors I have ever had and someone with whom I hope to stay in touch as I continue through law school. His genuine cheer lights up the classroom, and his excitement to teach this course and

to help the students learn can readily be felt by everyone in the room. . . . Professor Kaufman is above and away one of the best I have ever had in my life.”

- “Professor Kaufman was probably the most fundamentally kind professor I have had since starting law school. From that kindness, it is evident that he is not only committed to the course but committed to our well-being and success as students.”
- “One of the best professors I have had at WashU.”
- “Professor Kaufman is one of the best professors I have had at WashU so far. His mix of kindness and structure within class was the perfect balance to keep us engaged and keep conversations flowing. I learned so much in this class and I am truly grateful to this school for putting me in this class with him.”
- “If I could give Professor Kaufman a score higher than 5, I absolutely would. I have never met a more engaging, dedicated and intelligent professor who is more invested in his students’ success than just purely lecturing. Class, even such as criminal law, which can be controversial, has been so engaging and effective in teaching us about society and the criminal justice system. . . . He even goes out of his way to get the correct information/ background information about a case that the book has failed to mention. I truly believe only a few professors would take the time to do this for their students and I am glad to say Professor Kaufman is one of them. He has truly impacted my time at WashU.”
- “He is the most effective teacher I have had in class thus far.”
- “Professor Kaufman is a very articulate, caring, and enthusiastic teacher. Each class was a joy to attend and he was able to nurture the class to share some very insightful discussions on some very hard topics.”
- “Professor Kaufman was by far my most effective, engaged, and responsive professor this semester. I absolutely always felt comfortable to speak up in class, ask questions, and I learned so much.”
- “He had the utmost respect for us, and it was reciprocated right back at him. His environment for teaching should be in a case study titled ‘how to be an effective law school professor.’”
- “His student rapport is better than any of the other professors whom I have had so far. . . . His whole demeanor is one of attentiveness and respect towards all students.”
- “Professor Kaufman clearly enjoys speaking with his students and has been the most singularly impactful professor on my brief legal journey. He has guided students with real personal advice and career experience that have helped me determine my trajectory through law school and into my career beyond, while also providing a trusted professor who empathizes and understands the difficulties of law school.”
- “Obviously an expert in the field, brings our attention to a lot of the nuances inherent in the actual practice of criminal law.”
- “I learned the most in this class out of any doctrinal 1L course due to Professor Kaufman’s teaching style.”
- “I think his class is the most inclusive I’ve ever had.”
- “By far the most engaging classroom environment out of my 1L classes.”
- “Professor Kaufman truly believes in setting his students up for success and I loved learning from him.”
- “I would not change one single thing about this class.”
- “PROF KAUFMAN ROCKS”
- “Professor Kaufman, you were an incredible teacher. Thank you for caring so much about our education and just us as people.”

More detailed quotations about the course or instructor:

- “Professor Kaufman is an expert in this field and deftly answered difficult and salient student questions without implicitly injecting his own perspective. He is a master at facilitating respectful dialogue and discussion in class even when perspectives are diametrically opposed.”
- “He was so dedicated to our criminal law education and you could tell how much he cared.”
- “He is incredibly engaging and clearly looks forward to teaching this course as much as his eager pupils are in learning the doctrine from him. His preparations for class was par excellence and his teaching method demonstrated the utmost delicacy and resolve to effectively teaching the information while highlighting its pitfalls.”
- “Professor Kaufman was one of the best two professors I had this year at creating an open discussion every day for students to be able to share their views.”

- “He did a great job of contextualizing certain social issues, including focusing on historical racism, and giving us information beyond the coursebook.”
- “The environment of my criminal law class was one of eager participation and engagement unlike any other course I’ve taken. Professor Kaufman had an excellent rapport with students, answering their questions and critically examining the student’s points without condescending or otherwise invalidating the positions of students. This course has discussed the intersection of real societal issues and the law more so than any other course and left students with the feeling that not only were issues of race and sex relevant and integral to the study of criminal law, but that, unlike the comparatively dismissive approach to these subjects in other courses, discussion thereof is a necessary component of the course for a complete understanding of the doctrine.”
- “He makes us all excited about criminal law; even those of us who had no interest in criminal law are now considering it. He engages the class and makes learning fun. Even though we’re reading really hard material, he is able to bring it to life and encourages us to examine our own beliefs and where criminal law should go going forward. I’m truly excited to attend Criminal Law every day.”
- “I think he was able to teach crim law in such a useful way. We covered a lot of really hard and heavy topics and I cannot imagine covering sexual assault law with any other professor. The respect and understanding he brought to the classroom was unmatched. I really can’t say enough about him as an educator and person. . . . I have spoken to numerous people in my section and we are all so glad to have had him. He has single handedly changed my standard for what quality teaching looks like. His class really made me feel like I made the right choice pursuing law school.”
- “Professor Kaufman is more than willing to meet after class to explain concepts. He also stops if he sees us in the hall and chats for awhile! He makes us all feel really comfortable coming to him with any questions or concerns we might have. He responds to emails right away and is always willing to book a meeting or meet during office hours.”
- “SUPER approachable and flexible outside of class. I was able to visit office hours several times and benefit from additional explanations. Also, providing us with a daily class debrief email was very effective and I enjoyed the wrap up each day and access to slides.”
- “Professor Kaufman treats all students with respect and always supports learning, even when it feels like we’re asking ‘dumb’ questions. He set the tone for the class at the beginning of the semester and it has led to lively, respectful conversations between classmates. In fact, our entire class has noted how close we feel after taking his class and how grateful we are he fostered an environment where we all feel like we have meaningful insight to give. Criminal Law is a class where it’s hard to strike the balance of respect for people in the cases and being able to have an objective view of the material. Professor Kaufman excelled at striking this exact balance. If only all the professors at our school were more like Professor Kaufman!”
- “Professor Kaufman created a safe environment for students in a subject that does not always feel safe for everyone—it showed in the productiveness and decorum of our class discussions.”
- “I didn’t come into law school caring too much about the subject but he made me care and want to learn more about it.”
- “He has a passion for teaching and his excitement is infectious. His humility is something special for someone as accomplished and knowledgeable as he is.”