

Kick it New School

**By Reg P. Wydeven
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This spring will mark my 10th anniversary of graduating from law school. I really enjoyed law school at Madison – I had season tickets for both football and basketball. Of course, my timing was a little off, as Coach Dick Bennett brought the Badgers to the Final Four after I graduated.

Apparently, my timing for the legal curriculum was off, too. I learned about Civil and Criminal Procedure, Torts, Constitutional Law, and Taxation – all the classics. These classes taught you to analyze factual situations, apply the relevant law and draw a conclusion as to the results. None were particularly exhilarating, but I learned how to think like a lawyer. These classes didn't prepare me for real life as a practicing attorney.

Today's law school courses groom students for practicing in today's world. Take Georgetown, for example. This year the highly-regarded law school in our nation's capitol is offering "The Law of '24'".

Based on the award winning Fox Television drama series '24', this class allows Hoya students to explore America's fictional response to international terrorism through the eyes of U.S. counter-terrorism agent Jack Bauer, portrayed by Keifer Sutherland. Here's the course description for the 2-credit class:

"Oftentimes without remorse or regard for the law, Agent Bauer is willing to do what has to be done when faced with the threat of kidnappings, assassinations, nuclear detonations, and bioterrorism on U.S. soil – despite traitors in his family, his unit, and the White House; partisan politics; sleeper cells; and hidden agendas. This course provides a detailed understanding of a very wide-range of U.S. domestic and international legal issues concerning counterterrorism in the context of the utilitarian and sometimes desperate responses to terrorism raised by the plot of 24."

The class is taught by adjunct professor Walter Gary Sharp, who knows a thing or two about terrorism. Sharp, a Naval Academy grad, is the Associate Deputy General Counsel of International Affairs at the Defense Department and a former deputy counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Course requirements include active classroom discussion and a paper of approximately 25 pages. Students are recommended to take "Introduction to International Law" as a prerequisite for the class. I wish the homework for my law courses involved watching six prior seasons' worth of DVDs. The class meets on Tuesday evenings so the students can discuss episodes from the night before.

If UW ever offers classes such as 'The Law of "Miami Vice"' or 'Criminal Procedure as Taught by T.J. Hooker', I'd consider going back for my masters degree.

If Sharp runs out of subject matter, he'll probably end up discussing the merits of a recent lawsuit filed by Dong Yanbin, a Ph.D. student at the China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing. Yanbin sued China's State Administration of Radio Film and Television, the nation's film censor, for infringing upon his consumer rights by cutting several of the sex scenes from Ang Lee's film "Lust, Caution."

Yanbin is seeking an apology and 500 yuan (\$67) in "psychological damages" from both SARFT and UME, the cinema chain showing the movie, for violating the audience's "fair trade rights" by cutting the steamy scenes.

Yanbin purportedly filed the suit because he knows that Agent Jack Bauer always says you can't negotiate with terrorists.