

Selected Course Descriptions/Information for Fall 2021

This document provides a description for some courses (like seminars) that are not described in the online course catalog, or for which we'd like to provide you some additional information.

Seminar Descriptions

919. Employment Discrimination, Professor Oswalt (3 credits). The best way of understanding how the law regulates discrimination in the workplace is to explore where the regime falls short. The traditional Civil Rights Act framework is best suited to catch overt prejudice, but if in many modern settings discrimination does not actually operate that way, what good is the statute? This is the core challenge of discrimination law today. It is also the organizing principle for the seminar, where we will consider the question from a variety of angles, including historically and through the lens of implicit bias, social closure, privilege, non-disclosure/disparagement agreements, covering, and code-switching.

920. Illinois Evidence, Professor McAdams (3 credits). Illinois codified its law of evidence for the first time in 2012. The Illinois Rules of Evidence followed the basic structure of the Federal Rules of Evidence but incorporated existing Illinois common law where it was divergent from the federal rules. Several of the Illinois differences are quite significant, especially in criminal cases. The seminar will explore the Illinois evidence variations. Students will research and write a paper discussing both the differences in approach and how those differences impact trial strategy and practice. The successful completion of the basic course in Evidence is a prerequisite.

926. Gender, Sexuality and the Law, Professor Arriola (3 credits). This course introduces students to critical thinking and writing using the lenses of gender theory and history, queer theory, critical race and other forms of intersectional analysis. We'll explore a broader use of the term "gender" as a category of analysis. The course therefore looks at the historic issues surrounding women and sex discrimination, to the evolution of the law to address discrimination against GLBTs, to the struggle for the freedom to be oneself free from binary gendered definitions of personhood. Students will have several weeks of readings and discussion, in small or paired teams and will turn in 1-page weekly writings of applied analysis. Students are then guided in the production of a 30-page researched and footnoted legal writing in the form of an essay or law review type draft.

930. Environmental Law, Professor Maher (3 credits). Environmental issues involve multiple aspects of state, federal and local statutes, ordinances, regulations – and most common laws. This seminar provides a summary and discussion of environmental issues that practicing attorneys would experience. The summary includes state/federal regulations, compliance, liability, prohibitions, requirements, and potential recoveries, including possible insurance coverage for clean-up costs. Students will select specific topics for their papers, with writing guidance and supervision from the instructor. The result will be publishable-quality papers on the students' choices of topics in environmental law.

981. Critical Race Theory Mini-Seminar, Professor Falkoff (1 credit). This course will introduce students to Critical Race Theory (CRT), a set of ideas and scholarly practices that has its origins in law schools in the 1970s. Broadly speaking, CRT scholars and activists study and seek to transform relationships among race, racism and power. Unlike traditional civil rights discourse and its incremental approach to progress, CRT questions premises like the existence neutral principles of constitutional law. It has been an influential movement in law and other fields (including education), but it has always been controversial. We will study some of the foundational texts of the movement and read some scholarship by current CRT-oriented academics. There will be no tests, quizzes, or papers. In order to foster conversation, enrollment will be limited. The course is worth one credit and students will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. Successful completion of the course will not qualify a student for upper-level writing credit.

Notes on Other Courses

710. Legal Analysis: Skills & Strategies (2 credits). Those students who have the ten lowest cumulative GPAs in their class at the end of the spring semester of the second year of law school are required to enroll in the Legal Analysis: Skills and Strategies course during the fall or spring semester of their third year of law school. All students who are graduating in December of their third year must take the course in the fall semester of their third year. The remaining slots in this limited enrollment course will be open to all members of the third-year class. If the class is over-subscribed, enrollment preference will be given to students ranked in the bottom half of their class at the end of the spring semester of their second year of law school.

This course focuses on instruction designed to help students improve their test-taking skills for each of the three components of the bar examination: multiple choice questions, essay questions and the Multistate Performance Test (MPT). Basic skills such as outlining, memorizing, organization and analysis will be reviewed and assessed. Other skills, including time-management and self-assessment, will also be addressed. This course is pass/fail.

725. Trial Advocacy (3 credits). This course meets twice a week. There are two sections of the course. All students in each section will be enrolled in a common classroom session that is taught on Tuesdays at 10:30 to 11:20 a.m. When you enroll, you must select one weekly courtroom session—*either* the section that meets on Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:50 p.m. *or* the section that meets on Thursdays from 6:00 to 7:50 p.m. Please be sure to add your name to the waitlist if enrollment fills up! There is an excellent chance we will open up another section *if* there is an appreciable number of students who are on the waitlist.

Mandatory Bar Courses

As noted in the cover email, all students who possess a grade point average below 2.60 at the end of the spring semester of their 1L year must take and pass six “bar courses” prior to graduation:

- Business Associations I (offered in fall and spring);
- Criminal Procedure: Police Investigations (offered in fall);
- Evidence (offered in fall and spring);
- Family Law (offered in spring);
- Secured Transactions (offered in fall); and
- Trusts & Estates (offered in spring).

This requirement must be met by students who matriculated in fall 2017 and later.

Upper Level ASP

Second-year students with cumulative first-year GPAs between 2.2 and 2.4 and students on academic probation or subject to discretionary enrollment that mandate participation are required to participate in the upper-level Academic Success Program, which is designed to furnish additional training by giving students the opportunity to improve fundamentals such as outlining and note-taking skills and by providing individualized feedback on practice exam questions. The upper-level ASP consists of weekly sessions during the first semester of second year and is administered and taught by the Legal Writing/ASP professors.

Upper-level ASP will meet online on Wednesdays at 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. You will not register for upper-level ASP, but you will be notified about your required participation in it.