

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**  
*Introduction to Law @ Levin*

IDH 2930/Section 2016  
URP 4905/Section 2016  
Spring 2020

Class Meetings: W 8 (3:00-3:50)  
Location: Holland 180A  
Instructor: Joel Black  
Office: HOL 219  
Office Hours: Holland 219: TBD  
E-mail: jblack@ufl.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Who gets rights? What is feminist legal theory, or critical race theory, and how do they work? What is property and how do you transfer it? Can you contract anything? What does it mean to be harmed, and then “made whole”? What are constitutions? This course is dedicated to exploring these questions by introducing students to legal investigations at the University of Florida’s Levin College of Law.

Spend spring 2020 meeting with and listening to Levin Law faculty talk about what they teach and study. This one credit course has no exam. Instead, it invites you to explore law in the classroom, to seek it out in readings, and to blog about what you find. We are fortunate this year to have Levin Ambassadors—current Levin Law students—read and comment on your blogs.

**LEVIN AMBASSADORS:** TBD

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students who successfully complete this course will gain a better appreciation of (at least) three main areas:

- What legal topics comprise the legal system?
- What is the role of lawyers in this system?
- What is the role of law in our society?

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

While there are no required texts for this course, presenters will ask you to read a short article, statute, or opinion before each class.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Please note that you are only allowed ONE unexcused absence. Any additional unexcused absences will result in a dramatic grade reduction of one full letter.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Special Accommodations**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Disability Resource Center at University of Florida Dean of Students Office, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/getstarted.php>. The Dean of Students Office will review the case and, if appropriate, provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Attendance:** Attendance is **MANDATORY**. Roll will (typically) be taken each class. Please notify me beforehand if you need to miss a class. You are expected to come to class on time (arriving before the class is scheduled to begin) and to stay until the end. Please let me know before class if you must leave early.

**Participation:** You are expected to come to class on time, prepared, and ready to participate. Your participation will contribute to the learning of your fellow classmates. A significant percentage of your grade will be determined by your participation.

**Late Assignments:** If you are unable to turn in an assignment on time, please contact me **BEFOREHAND** to discuss alternatives. Unfortunately, in this class late assignments will not be accepted.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

**Computer Use:** Please be advised that laptops are **NOT** allowed in this class. Take notes on whatever you feel is interesting or useful but do so only with pen and paper. Students can use electronic devices only with special permission. Students found to be using electronic devices during class time will be docked one whole letter grade. This policy is for your benefit, for the benefit of your fellow learners, and for my benefit.

### **Classroom Climate**

Equitable participation in this class requires the use of inclusive language, methods, and materials. Students are expected to use inclusive language in written and oral work, and to respect viewpoints expressed by others. At the same time, students are encouraged to identify language, methods, and materials used in this course that do not contribute to an inclusive classroom climate.

### **Academic Integrity and the UF Honor Code**

All students at the University of Florida are expected to adhere fully to University of Florida Student Honor Code, view at:  
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>. The Honor Code outlines the expectations for student conduct in regard to academic honesty. All students should review this policy. The policy places full responsibility on students to know and adhere to these standards for academic integrity. All examinations, quizzes, projects, and

assignments are subject to this policy. Maintaining strict academic integrity is a priority; all instructors will fully enforce the UF Honor Code in their classes.

### **Incomplete Grades**

An incomplete grade is described in the Undergraduate Catalog. It is the instructors' discretion as to what extenuating circumstances warrant adequate excuse for not completing required course work.

### **Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:**

This class meets once a week for 50 minutes. All students are required to attend regularly, participate enthusiastically, and read all required assignments carefully.

To help ensure this, each week I invite students to explain, in one hundred and fifty words, what point in the reading (assigned by the faculty member) best explains that week's topic, and why.

- These short pieces can be submitted to the blog, set up each week under "Discussion," on canvas.
- They are due before the beginning of class—late postings will be given a grade of zero
- Each posting is worth up to five points
- **\*\*Note:** On the occasion that I do not get a reading to you at least 24 hours before class starts, all students will receive the full 5 points.\*\*

Attendance and Participation	50%
Blog Posts	50%

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Please be advised that the following schedule should not be construed as a guarantee that all of the topics will be covered. The instructor reserves the right to modify this schedule as he deems appropriate in his sole discretion.

[01/8] – Week 1: Introduction & Overview

[01/15] – Week 2: *Double Gator Panel*—Presenter: Hannah Lajoie and Avi Naiditch

[01/22] – Week 3: *Race and Law*—Professor Quinn

[01/29] – Week 4: *Contracts*—Presenter: Professor Clausen

[02/05] – Week 5: *Criminal Law*—Presenter: Professor Wolking

[02/12] – Week 6: *Property Law*—Presenter: Professor Wright

[02/19] – Week 7: *Family Law*—Presenter: Dean Rosenbury

[02/26] – Week 8: *Constitutional*—Presenter: Professor McAlister

[03/4] – Week 9: SPRING BREAK

[03/11] – Week 10: *Environmental Law*—Professor Stein

[03/18] – Week 11: TBD

[03/25] – Week 12: *Career and Professional Development*—Ms. Lisa M. De Sanctis

[04/01] – Week 13: *Juvenile Justice*—Presenter: Professor Steinberg

[04/8] – Week 14: *Business Law*—Presenter: Professor Winden

[04/15] – Week 15: *National Security*—Professor Jamshidi

[04/22] – Week 16: Applying to Law School—UF *Admissions*—Mr. Christopher Bailey