

Prof. Amanda Shanor
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(pronouns: any)

Class Meetings -003: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:45-3:15pm, JMHH F50

Class Meetings -004: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:30-5:00pm, JMHH F50

Student Hours: Wednesdays 2-3pm by zoom or email me to set up a meeting!

TAs: Rheem Brooks (rheemrb@pennlaw.upenn.edu)
Sarah Gordon (srgordon@pennlaw.upenn.edu),
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Course Description and Objectives

This course is a critical introduction to the institutions and key concepts of American law. It is widely understood that legal rules govern the conduct of large classes of people and provide incentives for how they should act in the future—shaping institutions and influencing issues from economic prosperity to climate change to racial justice. Law allocates power and distributes resources.

This course is designed to integrate the various fields of law in a fashion that emphasizes common themes and problems. The first half of the course focuses on private law—including the law of property, contract, and torts. The second half explores public law in the modern administrative state. This includes an extended look at U.S. constitutional law.

This approach aims to help students become comfortable approaching an array of legal problems and legal developments. Our readings, and my ambition, are oriented around a key objective: to develop in you the capacity for inquiry, critique, and problem solving associated with the American legal tradition.

My Course & You

You are important to me. Not only as a student, but as a person.

I want to get to know each of you and your interests and passions. I also want you to know that I understand that this is a tumultuous moment in history. Please always reach

out to me if you have questions, concerns, or if there's anything we can do to support you. I want this course to bring ideas, excitement, and joy to your life.

Materials

My goal is to make the course as accessible and affordable as possible. Most if not all assigned readings, videos, etc. can be found on the course's Canvas web site (most under the library reserves tab or linked from the syllabus page) or via a straightforward web search. Please let me know if you ever have problems accessing course materials.

Tentative assignments are listed at the schedule at the end of the syllabus. I may change or add to the readings /videos over the course of the semester, especially if there are significant or interesting legal developments. If so, I will let you know in class and post the updated assignment on Canvas. We may also have occasional visiting lecturers from the legal or business worlds.

Course Structure

The class will meet in person twice a week. Law is a discursive, collaborative endeavor – and a goal of the course is to teach the communicative skills of law. It's therefore important that you come to class and participate!

Grading and Assignments

The most important thing you can and should do for this class is to do the readings and think critically about what you read. It's key that you complete the assigned readings *before* class on the day shown!

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following:

- Quizzes (20%)
- Participation (15%)
- Midterm group project (30%)
- Final exam (35%)

Quizzes (20%)

At every class for which readings/videos are assigned, there will be a 45% chance of having to take a short (5 minute) in-class quiz that tests your knowledge of the day's readings. Whether or not you have a quiz will be determined by a random number generator.

These quizzes are designed to ensure that you have carefully read and considered the assigned readings. Most of the quizzes will require you to summarize, analyze, or apply one or more of the readings. Each quiz will be graded on a scale ranging from 0 to 2. **Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.**

Life happens! Once in the semester if you can't finish the day's readings or attend class, you can email me at least one hour before the start of class, and you will not need to take the quiz if one occurs.

Class Participation (15%)

Law is a communicative and collaborative endeavor. My goal is for you not only to learn, explore, and consider the ideas covered in this class—but to learn how to think, critique, strategize, and problem solve in the ways characteristic of American law, policy, and scholarship. That is, to learn some of the ways of thinking, norms, and practices key to success in law, which are useful far beyond it as well.

The course will combine lectures, “cold calling” (the teaching method commonly used in American law schools), and group discussion. Cold calling ensures we hear from a diversity of people and viewpoints. I want to hear from all of you!

Midterm Group Project (30%)

I will provide more information about the midterm project as it approaches. It will be a group project—likely a mock oral argument of a current or foreseeable U.S. Supreme Court case—on a cutting-edge legal issue and involve written and oral presentation components. It will also give you an opportunity to connect, work with, and get to know other class members.

Final Exam (35%)

I will provide more information about the final exam as it approaches. It will include types of questions common to law school exams (including issue spotters, short answer, and essay questions).

Grading Criteria

All assignments and class participation will be graded on seven criteria:

- *Creativity and insight.* Your ideas are original, engaging, and evince compelling insight.

- *Analytical rigor.* Your ideas are presented in an analytically rigorous manner.
- *Depth and quality of analysis.* You demonstrate thorough reading/research, incisive thinking, and thoughtful consideration.
- *Integration with course content.* You use, apply, and extend concepts covered in the class.
- *Organization and structure.* You employ a logical, clear framework.
- *Legal norms.* You display an increasing ability to talk, think, and problem solve like a legal actor.
- *Style.* You write and verbally present using appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, and the like.

Device & AI Policy

When we are in person, electronic devices are **not** permitted in class. Research shows that students learn better without them (even if you just take notes), and in my experience discussion is richer. If an emergency or a disability require that you have a laptop or connectivity, please talk with me before class.

You may also consider sharing notes among yourselves, and you are welcome to coordinate on electronic note-taking, so that one person takes notes on a laptop for the group.

I'm happy for you to use AI to help you generate ideas, but your work in this class must be your own. You are therefore **not** permitted to use AI to write any assignments for this class. At least as of now, AI will also do poorly on law-related assignments. The course materials, your professor, and your TAs are also far more reliable resources for explaining important legal concepts.

Student Hours

You are important to me. Please come by at least one student office hours session (Wednesdays 2-3pm ET) or email me to chat sometime during the semester. I'd love to get to know you, what you're interested in, and what matters to you.

To make student office hours more accessible, and less intimidating (I'm very nice, I promise!), I plan to hold most of them over zoom. That will hopefully allow you to drop in more easily and often, and to stay for as long or short as you'd like.

I would also love to get together and talk with you individually and/or in-person if you'd like. Please just email me to set up a time.

Informal Get-Togethers & Field Trips

Let's get a coffee or a meal! My TAs will also put together at least one social gathering for the class, TBA.

Instructor Biosketch

Amanda Shanor is an Assistant Professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania who teaches and writes about constitutional law, particularly the freedom of speech. Shanor's research explores the changing meaning of the First Amendment and the forces that affect it; democratic theory and illiberalism; and the intersection of constitutional law, economic life, and equality.

Prior to joining the academy, Shanor was a practicing lawyer in the National Legal Department of the American Civil Liberties Union who worked on the organization's Supreme Court litigation and national strategy. This included *Masterpiece Cakeshop*, a case involving a bakery that declined to sell a wedding cake to a gay couple. Shanor was previously a fellow at Georgetown University Law Center's Center on National Security & the Law who litigated constitutional and national security cases including *Humanitarian Law Project v. Holder*.

Shanor's scholarship has been published in the *Columbia Law Review*, the *New York University Law Review*, *Northwestern University Law Review*, the *UCLA Law Review*, the *Emory Law Review*, the *Wisconsin Law Review*, the *Harvard Law Review Forum*, and the *Yale Law Journal Forum*, among others. Shanor is a regular contributor to legal blogs, including SCOTUSBlog, and is the co-author of a textbook on counterterrorism law. Shanor teaches first-year Constitutional Law at Penn Law and has also taught at Yale and Georgetown law schools. While an academic, Shanor has continued to litigate, file amicus briefs, and advise and moot advocates on speech, equality, and other constitutional issues, including in *303 Creative v. Elanis*, *Bostock v. Clayton County*, and the SEC's proposed climate disclosure rule.

Previously, while a fellow at Georgetown Law, Shanor litigated a number of constitutional and national security cases with Professor David Cole, including *Humanitarian Law Project v. Holder*, a First Amendment case argued before the Supreme Court. Before law school, Shanor worked in social movement organizing, immigrant workers rights, and corporate social responsibility.

Shanor is a graduate of Yale Law School and Yale College and holds a PhD in law from Yale University. Shanor served as a law clerk to Judges Cornelia T.L. Pillard and Judith W.

Rogers on the D.C. Circuit, and Judge Robert W. Sweet in the Southern District of New York.

Class Schedule 1.0

	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	Jan. 18	What is Law?	<p>Welcome!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Preliminary Note • Mann & Roberts, Business Law, ch. 1, <i>Introduction to Law</i> • Orin Kerr, <i>How to Read a Judicial Opinion</i>
2	Jan. 23	Introduction to Fields of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calabresi & Melamed, <i>Property Rules, Liability Rules, and Inalienability: One View of the Cathedral</i>, Introduction (p. 1089-93) • Morton Horwitz, <i>The History of the Public/Private Distinction</i> • Canvas home page • Welcome survey (under the quizzes tab on canvas) • Read any readings from the first class that you haven't already
3	Jan. 25	The Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mann & Roberts, Business Law, ch. 3, • <i>Civil Dispute Resolution</i> • Note on Standing
4	Jan. 30	Property I – What is Property?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jaque v. Steenberg Homes, Inc.</i> • <i>Hinman v. Pacific Air Transport</i> • Penner, <i>The Idea of Property in Law</i> • Grey, <i>The Disintegration of Property</i> • Note on Owner Sovereignty & its Limits • <i>Hendricks v. Stalnaker</i> • Notes on the Trespass/Nuisance Divide <p>OPTIONAL:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feineman, Law 101, ch. 7 – <i>The Law of Property: You Are What You Own</i>
5	Feb. 1	Property II – Where Does Property Come From?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackstone, <i>Commentaries</i> • Various Notes • <i>Popov v. Hayashi</i> • <i>International News Service v. Associated Press</i>
6	Feb. 6	Property III – Some Limits on the Right to Exclude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ploof v. Putnam</i> • <i>Shelley v. Kraemer</i> • Notes on Public Accommodations & Antidiscrimination Laws • Kristen Clarke and David Brody, <i>It's Time for an Online Civil Rights Act</i>, The Hill (Aug. 3, 2018) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>State v. Shack</i> • <i>Uston v. Resorts International Hotel, Inc.</i> • & Public Policy Exception Notes
7	Feb. 8	Property IV – The Tragedy of the Commons & the Anticommons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardin, <i>The Tragedy of the Commons</i> • Heller & Eisenberg, <i>Can Patents Deter Innovation? The Anticommons in Biomedical Research</i> <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demsetz, <i>Toward a Theory of Property Rights</i>
8	Feb. 13	Property V – What is Property For? And Does Law Matter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coase, <i>The Problem of Social Cost</i> • Ellickson, <i>Order Without Law</i> • Jolls, Sunstein & Thaler, <i>A Behavioral Approach to Law & Economics</i> <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelman, <i>Consumption Theory, Production Theory, and Ideology in the Coase Theorem</i>

9	Feb. 15	Contracts I – Promises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mann & Roberts, ch. 9 – <i>Introduction to Contracts</i> Mann & Roberts, ch. 15 – <i>Contracts in Writing</i> <i>Ignacio v. Lyons</i> <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feinman, Law 101, ch. 6 – <i>When is a Deal a Deal?</i>
10	Feb. 20	Contracts II – Problems of Meeting Minds & Unequal Bargaining Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mann & Roberts, ch. 10, <i>Mutual Assent</i> <i>Williams v. Walter-Thomas Furniture Co.</i> Silver-Greenberg & Gebeloff, <i>Arbitration Everywhere, Stacking the Deck of Justice</i>, N.Y. Times (2015)
11	Feb. 22	Contracts III – Unenforceable Contracts & Things the Law Won't Let You Contract For	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandel, <i>What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets</i>, Introduction <i>Cases, Problems & Materials on Contracts — Consideration</i>, ch. 2 (stop before problem 38) Remedies, Contracts in a Nutshell
12	Feb. 27	Torts I – What is a Tort?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feinman, Law 101, ch. 5 – <i>Hot Coffee and Crashing Cars: Tort Law</i>
13	Feb. 29	Torts II –The Problem of Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guido Calabresi, <i>The Cost of Accidents</i> (1970) (excerpts)
		March 2-10	SPRING BREAK!
14	March 12		Group Projects
	(March 13)	(if necessary)	(Group Projects)
15	March 14		Group Projects
16	March. 19	Introduction to Public Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The U.S. Constitution Philip Bobbitt, <i>Constitutional Law & Interpretation</i> Reva Siegel, <i>Constitutional Culture, Social Movement Conflict and Constitutional Change: The Case of the de facto ERA</i>, Introduction, p. 1323-32

17	March. 21	Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> (1857) • <i>The Civil Rights Cases</i> (1883) • <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> (1896) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPR Interview with historian Eric Foner on Reconstruction • Background on the Civil Rights Cases (see video and background essay link on right) • <i>The Slaughterhouse Cases</i> (1873) • <i>Jacobson v. Massachusetts</i> (1905)
18	March 26	Classical Liberalism, Legal Realism, & The New Deal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lochner v. New York</i> (1905) & Notes • Summary of Robert Hale's <i>Coercion and Distribution in a Supposedly Non-Coercive State</i> • <i>West Coast Hotel v. Parrish</i> (1937) • <i>Williamson v. Lee Optical Co.</i> (1955) & Notes • Note on Constitutional Revolution
19	March 28	Federalism & The Commerce Clause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>United States v. Darby</i> (1941) • <i>Wickard v. Filburn</i> (1942) • <i>Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States</i> (1964) • <i>United States v. Morrison</i> (2000) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>United States v. Lopez</i> (1995) • <i>National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius</i> (2012) & Notes
20	April 2	Takings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epstein & Walker, <i>The Takings Clause</i> • <i>Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid</i> (2021) (syllabus & dissent) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Millhiser, <i>The sweeping implications of the Supreme Court's new union-busting case</i>, VOX • Notes on Modern Taking Clause Doctrine

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral argument in <i>Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid</i>
21	April 4	Separation of Powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer</i> (1952) (focus on Justice Jackson’s opinion, p. 944-48) • Backgrounder on <i>A.L.A. Schechter Poultry Co. v. United States</i> • SCOTUSblog summary of <i>Gundy v. United States</i> (2018) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortenson & Bagley, <i>Delegation at the Founding</i>, Columbia Law Review (2021) • Posner & Vermeule, <i>Interring the Non-Delegation Doctrine</i>, Introduction (p. 1721-25)
22	April 9	Administrative Law I – Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bressman et al., <i>Theories of Statutory Interpretation</i> (excerpt) • Bressman et al., <i>Justifications for Regulation</i> • <i>Chevron v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.</i> (1984) & Notes <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bressman et al., <i>Theories of Statutory Interpretation</i> (full text) • Richard Thaler & Cass Sunstein, <i>Libertarian Paternalism</i>
23	April 11	Administrative Law II – Major Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>West Virginia v. EPA</i> (2022)
24	April 16	What Classifications Should Receive Strict Scrutiny?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>United States v. Carolene Products Co.</i> (1938) & Notes • John Hart Ely, <i>Democracy And Distrust</i> (excerpt) • Bruce Ackerman, <i>Beyond Carolene Products</i>, Introduction (p. 713-18) • Letter from the Attorney General to Congress on DOMA litigation (only “Standard of Review” section)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>San Antonio Independent School Dist. v. Rodriguez</i> (1973) (Marshall, J. dissenting) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greene, <i>Rights as Trumps?</i>, Harvard Law Review (2018)
25	April 18	Equal Protection I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> (1954) • <i>Loving v. Virginia</i> (1967) • <i>McCleskey v. Kemp</i> (1987) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backgrounder on McCleskey (with link to oral argument) • <i>Korematsu v. United States</i> (1944)
26	April 23	Equal Protection II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bradwell v. Illinois</i> (1872) • <i>Reed v. Reed</i> (1971) • <i>Frontiero v. Richardson</i> (1973) & Notes • <i>Bostock v. Clayton County</i> (2020) <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pauli Murray, <i>Jane Crow</i> (1965)
27	April 25	Fundamental Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i> (2015) • <i>Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Org.</i> (2022)
28	April 30		Conclusion & overflow
	TBA		Review Session
	May 2-5		READING DAYS
	May 6-14		FINAL EXAMS