

GEORGETOWN LAW: BEST PRACTICES FOR COURSE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Designing and teaching a course or seminar for the first time or tenth time is a project that demands significant attention and advance planning. To guide you in that project, we have collected here our basic guidance on drafting course syllabi and related teaching issues. We hope both new and experienced teachers will find this guidance helpful. Some of the information reflects best practices developed by our faculty. Other guidance is prompted by the requirements of the ABA and federal law. Every institution has its own culture and methods of operation. This memorandum will serve as an introduction to both at Georgetown University Law Center.

The information that follows is designed to take you through several key steps in planning to teach. The first section of this memorandum discusses drafting a course syllabus. We then review topics such as selecting course materials, creating a course website, evaluating students and providing feedback, and information on teaching support and resources at the Law Center. Finally, we include a one-page Quick Start card to guide you through your course set-up.

As you read this memorandum, please keep in mind that there are designated faculty contacts. These Contacts are as follows:

Memo Contents	
Course Syllabi	2
Course Materials	6
Course Websites	8
Evaluating Students	9
Evaluating Yourself	13
Teaching Resources	14
Quick Start Card	A1
Syllabus Template	A2
Learning Outcomes Tips.....	A3

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Your Law Center Contact is a good first resource for any issues or concerns you may have as you prepare to teach and conduct your class. If your Law Center Contact cannot help with a particular request, your Contact will connect you with the appropriate colleague here.

Course Syllabi

Basic Information – what every syllabus should contain

We expect faculty to draft a syllabus for each course that they teach and to review the content of the syllabus with students in the first class meeting. The course syllabus should also be posted on your course webpage (discussed further below) and/or distributed in the first class meeting.

At a minimum, a course syllabus should contain the following basic information:

- Course title
- Faculty name(s)
- Semester and class meeting times
- Contact information
- Office hours (Many adjunct faculty meet with students by appointment or offer to meet with students before or after their class.)
- A clear, precise statement of your student learning goals
- A clear, precise description of your plan for evaluating students (which must be consistent with what is listed for your class in the Course Schedule). This should include both the percentage of the final grade associated with each assignment and the specific evaluative criteria you will use to assess students' individual performance on those assignments.
- A class-by-class listing of topics and reading assignments
- Attendance and participation policy
- All relevant deadlines and your policy on late assignments
- Course rules or expectations for in-class behavior (e.g., punctuality, respect of others, etc.)
- Course recording policy
- Laptop policy

Syllabi for experiential courses may require additional information on topics such as withdrawing from the course, client confidentiality, experiential projects, fieldwork assignments, and/or in-class simulated exercises and self-reflection activities. The Law Center Contacts for experiential faculty will provide such faculty with syllabus templates before the semester begins. In the following sections, we provide more detailed guidance on the core parts of the syllabus.

Student Learning Outcomes

The ABA and Law Center now require each course syllabus to contain course-specific learning outcomes. In organizing what you plan to teach as well as how you plan to teach it, your starting point should be: *what do I want my students to learn?* Your course syllabus should contain a clear, concise statement of the learning outcomes or goals that you have for your students. These goals should describe what you want your students to know upon completion of the course, what

skills you expect the students to acquire, and what values your students should understand and integrate into their professional lives. You should articulate the level of proficiency, or competency, you expect for each of these by the completion of the course.

As you reflect on your learning goals, the following prompts may be helpful:

- In my course, what knowledge, skills, and values do I hope students will learn over the semester?
- How will I know if students have learned what I hoped they would learn?
- What behaviors, insights, and knowledge will be indicative of real learning?

For more information or assistance with drafting your course-specific learning outcomes, contact Assistant Dean Mushtaq Gunja at Mushtaq.Gunja@georgetown.edu.

Evaluation/Assessment Plan

As you develop your learning outcomes, keep in mind your assessment plan—how you will evaluate students’ progress toward and achievement of your learning goals. In your syllabus, explain your plan for evaluating students’ performance. Provide the percentages allocated to each assignment (including, where relevant, to the final exam or paper, and to class participation). Include detailed information about requirements and expectations for assignments. If you are giving an exam, state whether it is an in-class or take-home exam and the time frame for taking the exam. This information is extremely important to students and your syllabus should match the information in the Course Schedule in order to avoid confusion later.

Once you have stated your course requirements in your syllabus and reviewed them in your first class meeting, you should not change them. For more information on the type and format of assessments to use and policies around them, see the section below on “Evaluating Students and Giving Feedback.”

Grading Rubrics

As part of your efforts to ensure transparency and accuracy in your grading practices, we also encourage you to use and share your grading rubric with your students. Explaining how you will assess the assignments and award credit helps reassure that you are not grading solely on your impressionistic observations. For example, in grading papers, will you evaluate citations, grammar, and the quality of the writing? (See the section below on “Evaluating Students and Giving Feedback” for more information on creating an assessment plan.)

Faculty teaching experiential courses should provide detailed information on how students’ practical work will be evaluated. Where students are conducting fieldwork outside of Georgetown Law, faculty should be clear that those “fieldwork” credits will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis, and should indicate how the faculty member will interact with the fieldwork supervisor to determine that aspect of the grade. In experiential courses where students are completing projects or simulations as part of a group, faculty should be clear on how individual performance will be assessed. Faculty who would like to discuss strategies for assessing students in experiential courses (including those involving group work) should talk with their Law Center Contact.

Class Topics & Reading Assignments

Students appreciate knowing at the start of the semester how the course will be organized, what topics you plan to cover in each class session, and the weekly reading assignments. Your syllabus should contain this information. Many students rely on class syllabi to budget their time for completing assignments in their classes. Some students, particularly part-time students with full-time jobs, will read ahead in their classes or will frontload their reading on the weekends.

Some tips on how much reading to assign: A common question faculty ask is how much reading to assign for each class. There is no simple answer to this question; however, consider the following points: 1) the ABA guides us to assign about two hours of preparation for each hour of class. For experiential courses, that number may vary depending on the other time demands that the legal work requires; 2) in gauging the amount of time it will take students to complete a class assignment, remember that students, who are reading the material for the first time, will read more slowly than you; 3) the type of reading assigned will dictate how much time you will want to allocate to a given class session. For example, a newspaper or magazine article may take less time to absorb than a dense statutory text; 4) many experienced teachers find that student preparation and class discussion is improved by assigning fewer pages but requiring students to read more carefully and to fully digest the material; and 5) what you ask students to do and know in class based on the reading will influence how they read, so consider how your choices affect theirs. For example, if you plan to spend time in class drilling down into the language and structure of a case or statute, only assign the pages you will be focusing on and expecting them to know. Conversely, if you plan to lecture broadly on the evolution of an area of law or policy, more pages are appropriate. The more you can let students know what you expect them to do with the material you assign, the better prepared they will be. Time commitments in experiential courses can be less predictable but general guidance on seminar assignments and non-case related readings should be reflected in a syllabus to assist students in managing their time.

Weekly readings in experiential courses should be closely tied to the practical work students are conducting at that point in the semester. Some weeks, depending on the practical assignments students are working on or simulated exercises in which they will be engaging, more or less reading may be appropriate.

Attendance and Participation Policy

The Law Center requires regular and punctual attendance. Within that policy, faculty have discretion to outline more specific attendance requirements and rules. In your syllabus and in your first class meeting, state your policy on attendance and how you will enforce it. Also, explain your expectations for the students' participation in your class and how you will account for their participation. Some faculty factor class participation into the final grade. In seminars and experiential courses where class participation is key to the success of the class, that percentage may be as high as 20-25% of the grade. If attendance or participation are part of the final grade, it is important to explain to students how you will grade them on it and to create a rubric or other tracking mechanism for yourself to ensure you are properly identifying and marking the student behaviors indicative of successful participation.

Class Participation: Some additional thoughts on creating an inclusive environment for students in the classroom and through office hours

Faculty each have their own style for organizing and conducting a class, and students have their own styles of learning and participation. While we may want all our students to feel equally empowered in our classes, the fact is not all students feel fully included and respected within the dynamics of a given class. Simple awareness of this fact will go some way toward improving the classroom experience for everyone. Some basic, additional steps include trying to learn students' names, reaching out to meet those who are the quietest, and being as explicit as possible about expectations within the class and opportunities to meet with you outside of class.

Inside the classroom, class participation can be a source of frustration or exclusion for students. Cold-calling (when it is done systematically) and panels both have the benefit of distributing participation more evenly. Relying only on volunteers often has the tendency to lead to a handful of the same students dominating class discussion. When seeking volunteers to answer a question, consider adopting the *5-Second Rule*: rather than calling on the first person to raise her hand, wait 5 seconds for additional volunteers and call on those who speak less often. The *5-Second Rule* favors thoughtfulness over speed and gives you an opportunity to increase the pool of volunteers. Providing a few questions before class and starting with those or allowing for a few minutes of group discussion of a hypothetical during class are additional options for varying your approach and increasing class participation. Lastly, some faculty find it useful to encourage other methods of participation such as assigning students to lead a designated discussion thread on the course website. This approach can foster participation from different students than those who often volunteer in class.

Outside the classroom, please consider if your office hours are attracting the same repeat players. If so, you may want to experiment with how you schedule and hold office hours or simply encourage students who have not come to office hours to schedule a time to meet with you individually. Quieter students who make interesting points or write a thoughtful exam are worth emailing or meeting with; it can give them a meaningful boost in confidence. In general, we ask you to be on the look-out for students in need of encouragement or mentorship.

Deadlines and Policy on Late Assignments

Be very clear about the deadlines for each assignment, including drafts. State whether or not you will accept late assignments for grading and how lateness will impact the student's grade. If you have a strict rule against granting extensions on papers, please explain that in your syllabus.

Course Recording Policy

Beginning in Fall 2017 and pursuant to the Dean's decision to follow the recommendation of the Technology Committee and IST and other administrators, the Law Center adopted a one-year pilot program that simplifies the classroom recording policy. In order to comply with ADA and other legal requirements, **all law school classes will be recorded**. The new classroom recording policy defers to individual professor preferences to make video recordings of their classes liberally available to students under the upgraded Echo360 ALP recording platform that is being installed to replace our obsolete audio recording platform. Recordings will be retained on this

platform until the eve of the first day of the semester following the semester in which the recorded class is taught.

Faculty have two options. Under Option 1 (the default option), all students will be granted access to all classroom recordings without restriction. For faculty who opt out of the default and selection Option 2, no students in the class will be granted access to classroom recordings for any reason—other than students who are granted access to the recordings for disability or religious accommodation purposes. The Office of Disability Services will continue to notify faculty members when recordings of their classes may be disseminated to enrolled students with disabilities as part of the Law Center’s reasonable accommodation policy, but that Office will preserve the confidentiality of the students to whom it grants access to classroom recordings. Similarly, the Offices of JD and Graduate Academic Services will disseminate class recordings to students who request reasonable accommodations for religious holidays, and will preserve the confidentiality of students requesting religious accommodations.

Faculty who teach non-confidential classes are encouraged to select Option 1 because students strongly favor unrestricted access to classroom recordings; unrestricted access promotes fairness within and across courses; and Option 1 minimizes the administrative burdens imposed on the Law Center. Faculty who are concerned with the effect Option 1 might have on class attendances can address that concern by taking attendance in class, rather than by denying students access to classroom recordings. Faculty may switch from Option 2 to Option 1 during a semester, but, in order to protect student reliance, faculty do not have the ability to switch from Option 1 to Option 2 during a semester. The full policy will be posted online soon, and this document will be updated with a link to the policy.

In your syllabus, note whether you follow the default recording policy (Option 1) or if you will follow Option 2. If you select Option 2, include your policy on when you will grant individual students access to a recording (e.g., illness, wedding, death in the family, job interview, or other reasons the faculty member deems sufficient to grant access). Faculty should ensure that ad hoc access is granted in ways that are fair, equitable, and treat like cases alike. Faculty should also announce their recording policies during one of their first classes.

Laptop Policy

With respect to technology, some faculty use it very effectively in the classroom and others choose to prohibit laptops entirely. It is worth adopting a clear policy on what kinds of devices you will allow. For those contemplating a ban on laptops in their classroom, the faculty who have done this report appreciative and more fully engaged students. Here is Professor David Cole's Op-Ed on his experience: David Cole, Opinion, *Laptops vs. Learning*, WASH. POST (Apr. 7, 2007),

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/06/AR2007040601544.html>.

Course Materials

Selecting what you want students to read is another key part of planning and organizing your course. What follows is information on ordering a textbook, creating a course reading packet, obtaining copyright permissions, and sharing information on a “first class reading assignment.”

Selecting and Ordering Textbooks

One of the first steps in preparing to teach is determining if there is an appropriate casebook for the class. Faculty can use an adoption tool from Barnes & Noble called Faculty Enlight (www.facultyenlight.com) to peruse offerings and read reviews from faculty across the country. Adjunct faculty may contact their Law Center Contact for other professors to reach out to for suggestions. To review casebooks pertinent to your course, you may request a complimentary copy by contacting the publisher of the book. We encourage you to also request a teacher's edition. We have compiled contact information for publishers frequently used by Law Center faculty and posted that information at <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Publishers>. Copies of some casebooks currently being used at the Law Center are in the Course Reserve section of Williams Library at the circulation desk.

Faculty can place their textbook order through Faculty Enlight or by email to Paul.Concannon@law.georgetown.edu.

Compiling a Reading Packet

If you plan to prepare a reading packet in addition to, or in lieu of, a textbook, you may opt to have your readings posted online by the Office of Faculty Support or you may post the materials on your course website (see below). Faculty Support posts course materials on ArticleWorks, our course materials distribution website (<https://articleworks.cadmus.com/geolaw/coursepacks.html>), where students can download the material as a pdf file at no charge or can purchase a printed course pack.

Faculty Support requests materials six weeks before the first week of class in order to process them before the start of the semester. You will receive an email from Faculty Support with instructions for submitting course materials. If you need assistance preparing your course materials for ArticleWorks, please contact Ronnie Rease at rr224@law.georgetown.edu or (202) 662-9286.

Note that course materials submissions are static and faculty cannot edit their course packet on ArticleWorks during the semester. If you decide to use a course website, you can post additional materials at any point in the semester for students to view online, download, and/or print.

Special Materials

If you teach a simulation course and need to purchase materials on behalf of students that you will distribute in class as part an in-class exercise (for example, with confidential instructions for the specific roles you assign to students), you should contact your Law Center Contact as soon as possible. We work with the Office of Faculty Support to coordinate these purchases and place a charge on each enrolled student account roughly one month prior to the start of the applicable semester. We include notice to students about this charge in the course description and ask that you include notice in your syllabus.

Copyright Permission

The Office of Faculty Support can seek copyright permission on your behalf for each copyrighted document. For information about which materials do and do not require copyright permission and to determine fair use, see: <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/CopyrightPolicy>.

For questions about copyright or the process for seeking permission, contact Jonathan Zimmer at zimmerj@georgetown.edu or (202) 662-9404.

In an effort to reduce the copyright and printing fees, newspaper and journal articles and any other resources freely available online or through one of the library databases (Westlaw, Lexis, Proquest, etc.) may not be copied. Links to these materials must be provided in your syllabus or on your course website instead. If you are having difficulty locating links to your materials, contact Law Library Faculty Services for help at lawfacserv@law.georgetown.edu.

First Class Reading Assignment

At least two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester, please email your first class reading assignment to lawfacultysupport@georgetown.edu. For courses taught during our Week One session (in early January), we recommend these assignments be posted in early to mid-December. Include your assignment in the body of the email and do not send attachments as they cannot be posted to the Reading Assignments webpage. Students can review their assignments at <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Assignments>.

If your reading assignment is not available in a required textbook, please make the assigned text available in a course materials packet, post the reading assignment on your course website (see below), or email the reading to your students. You will find a list of students enrolled in your course, as well as their email addresses, by logging into *MyAccess* with your NetID and password. Please remember that enrollment in your course may fluctuate up until the end of the add/drop period, so if you email students the first class reading assignment directly, students who sign up for your course late may not know of it.

Creating a Course Website

Each semester, Canvas course management websites are automatically set up for each class. These sites help Georgetown Law's faculty manage their classes and communicate with students. These sites allow for posting documents (e.g., supplemental reading materials and syllabi), listing links to supplemental materials, emailing messages to students enrolled in your site, facilitating online discussions, conducting quizzes or polls, and many other useful options. The course Canvas page is often the first place a student visits to get course information at the start of the semester.

Students enrolled in a course will automatically be enrolled in the associated Canvas site, and the system supports the posting of documents, links, videos, quizzes, audio/visual commenting, discussion boards, and group messaging. It is integrated with the Echo360 system, which is used for class recordings, making it easy for students to access any such recordings that a faculty member has authorized. It is also the only platform that integrates with other classes, so that students and faculty can see all of the courses they are taking or teaching, with the deadlines and assignments in each showing up in a single, integrated dashboard and calendar. IST frequently schedules training sessions for beginners and advanced users. Faculty may access helpful guides and information for 24-hour support for Canvas at <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Canvas>. For additional assistance, contact the Technology Service Desk at lawhelp@georgetown.edu or Mark Wiest, Manager of Academic Technologies, at mtw56@law.georgetown.edu. Adjunct

faculty may also contact Faculty Assistant Jennifer Lane for assistance in setting up their site at jel29@law.georgetown.edu or (202) 662-9645.

The default platform for course websites at Georgetown Law is Canvas, and Canvas is the only platform fully supported by the Law Center. The IST department and the Faculty Technology Committee strongly encourage faculty to use or transition to Canvas. Canvas increasingly serves as a portal to other online systems at the Law Center. The new Echo360 ALP course recording platform is integrated into Canvas. (See the above section “Course Syllabi” for the discussion of the revised course recording policy.)

Some faculty have used TWEN (The West Education Network) as the course management tool in the past. The IST department discourages its use. TWEN is no longer supported by the Law Center and students must enroll themselves in TWEN courses. Faculty who wish to continue to use TWEN should contact their Law Center Contact or librarian Thanh Nguyen at (202) 662-9073 or nguyent2@law.georgetown.edu with questions about TWEN.

Evaluating Students and Giving Feedback

Before the semester is underway and while you are constructing your course syllabus, you should decide how you plan to evaluate students. What follows provides guidance on creating an assessment plan, reviews some critical rules for exam courses, discusses seminar papers, and describes SR (Special Requirement) courses.

Creating an Assessment Plan

At its essence, creating an assessment plan simply means evaluating whether your students have achieved the learning goals you identified when designing your course. The best assessment plans use a combination of formative and summative assessments to gauge student performance. Indeed, the ABA revised its Standards for Legal Education in 2014 to require that law schools utilize a mix of formative and summative assessments in assessing individual student performance.

Formative assessments are opportunities for students to practice what they are learning during the course and receive feedback from you in order to improve in subsequent assessment exercises or assignments. There are many different kinds of formative assessments that you may consider incorporating into your course. Some common examples include mock oral arguments, weekly reflection papers, multiple-choice or short answer quizzes, drafting legal documents, or role play exercises. The options you choose will be shaped by the subject matter of your course and your learning objectives.

Summative assessments focus on evaluating students at the end of a course. The final exam is the classic summative assessment instrument. If you are teaching an exam course, review the learning objectives that you established at the start of the semester and then test your students on whether they have achieved those objectives.

We strongly recommend that for each assessment you use (both formative and summative) you create an associated grading rubric and share this with the students ahead of time. Doing so will allow you to both ensure your grading is consistent among students and to put students on notice

of the criteria you use to define success on each particular assignment. Moreover, when students have questions about their performance on a particular assignment or their grade in a course, having a grading rubric to walk through with them can facilitate a productive conversation about where the student did well and where he or she needs to improve.

The method of evaluation (e.g., mid-terms, final exam or paper, drafts of practical work, etc.) in your course should be decided in advance and agreed upon after discussion with the Associate and Assistant Deans or Director in your program. Students are notified of the method of evaluation in the annual Course Schedule and some students use this information as a key factor in selecting their courses. For example, some students perform better on take-home exams and will look for courses that use that format. For that reason, we cannot allow you to change your evaluation method after the add/drop period is over because students would not have an opportunity to choose another course.

Exam Courses

Faculty teaching courses with an exam (mid-term, final, or take-home) should pay particular attention to the following guidelines:

1. Write new exam questions every semester

It is imperative that you write new exam questions each semester because all prior exams are posted online for students to review in preparing for exams. We have learned from painful experience that students typically review most if not all posted prior exams and some will recognize a re-used exam question. The grading problems this creates are significant for the faculty and administration and often result in the students receiving a credit rather than a grade in the course. These problems are avoidable if all faculty abide by the rule of not recycling any prior exam question. This rule applies equally to exams that have been administered at other schools, as students will also search the web for past exams by new or visiting faculty.

2. Adhere to exam deadlines

Exams are due, in final form, to the Registrar's Office no later than four (4) business days (by 3:00 p.m.) before the scheduled exam opening date in your course. Course exam dates are listed online in the Curriculum Guide at <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/curriculum>. Approximately one month before the exam period begins, the Registrar will send a memo to all faculty about exam procedures and the process for submitting exams to her office. The Registrar will also email you individually to remind you of when your exam is due to that office. Please read all these communications carefully. If you are unable to submit your exam by the deadline, please contact the Registrar before the deadline to discuss your situation.

Beginning in Summer 2017, the following types of courses may require a take-home exam only: mini-courses, bookends, Week One courses, and Summer courses. The Registrar's Office will set the exam period for these take-home exams. For more information about exams, contact Associate Registrar Aryan Kushan (Aryan.Kushan@law.georgetown.edu) or Associate Director Lynda Sanders (Lynda.Sanders@law.georgetown.edu).

3. Follow the recommended curve for exam courses

Georgetown Law has a recommended curve for first-year and upper level exam courses. The curve is published in the *Student Handbook* (<http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Handbook>) and included in the exam memo sent to each professor by the Registrar's Office each semester. While this curve is not required, it is strongly recommended, and you will be contacted by the Registrar if the grades you submit deviate substantially from it.

4. Provide feedback on your exam

Faculty are expected to provide feedback to students on each exam. This feedback can take one of two forms: either (a) providing a detailed feedback memorandum discussing each of the exam questions or (b) identifying a "best" exam or a combination of "best" exam answers from different exams, accompanied by a brief addendum noting any major issues or errors in the answers. Feedback memos should be sent to the Registrar's Office.

After submitting grades each semester, faculty also should submit all graded exams to the Office of the Registrar. Under the rules of the Law Center's accreditation, all papers and exams must be kept on file at the Law Center for one year. The Registrar will make them available to students who wish to review them.

Paper Seminars

There are two types of paper seminars in the JD program at Georgetown Law: (1) JD upperclass writing requirement seminars; and (2) seminars that do not satisfy the JD upperclass writing requirement. Courses, including those in our experiential curriculum, that use other types of written assignments, are covered in the separate "Special Requirements" section below.

1. The JD Upperclass Writing Requirement

Faculty who are teaching a JD upperclass writing requirement ("WR") seminar should remember the technical requirements that set a WR seminar apart from a one or two-credit, non-WR class. Students in a WR seminar must:

- receive faculty approval for their paper topic;
- submit an outline of their paper;
- submit a first draft (of a minimum of 6,000 words excluding footnotes) to the professor for comments; and
- submit a revised, final paper with legal citations (of at least 6,000 words excluding footnotes) directly to the Office of the Registrar. These requirements are explained in more detail in the *Student Handbook*: <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Handbook> (search for "writing requirement").

Please be clear in your syllabus about the deadlines for each stage of the process and follow up promptly with students who fail to meet a deadline or requirement. Beyond providing the technical requirements of a WR paper, it is often extremely helpful to provide students with

guidance on writing a research paper, such as how to narrow a topic, formulate and structure an argument, and avoid plagiarism.

If you have any questions about whether your seminar is one that meets the writing requirement or what those requirements mean, please ask now!

2. Other Seminars (non-WR)

Faculty have discretion in assigning the paper(s) required in a non-WR seminar. A useful rule of thumb is that we expect students to write in the aggregate 12-15 pages in a one-credit seminar and 18-20 pages in a two-credit seminar. The required writing may take the form of several short assignments throughout the semester or one final paper. You should discuss your plan for the paper(s) in your seminar with the Assistant Deans or Directors in the Program that oversees your class at the time of proposing or scheduling your seminar. **Once you have stated your paper requirements in your syllabus and reviewed it in your first class meeting, you should not change the requirements.**

Grades – Seminar Papers

Seminars are not subject to the same recommended grading curve used for exam courses. Instead the Registrar's Office distributes historical data on seminar grades. The historical data is an important guidepost to aid faculty in assessing a fair distribution of grades in a seminar. Like the grading curve for exam courses, the historical seminar curve is not required, but it is strongly recommended, and you will be contacted if the grades you submit deviate substantially from the historical data.

Courses with Special Requirements (SR)

Some courses – including many experiential courses – are designated as SR (“Special Requirement”) courses. This means that there is no final exam or paper, but rather students will be evaluated on other types of assignments throughout the semester. In a project-based practicum course, for example, students might be evaluated on drafts of a practical legal memo, an in-class presentation on their work, their interactions with a client, and class participation. Assignments in SR courses will depend on the particular nature of the course, but must be described in the syllabus at the outset of the semester. In SR courses, students submit their assignments directly to the professor and do not go through the Registrar's Office.

Faculty teaching non-exam courses use the historical grade distribution (subject to change year to year) as guidance, and grades that are significantly above or below the historical distribution must be discussed with the Associate Dean. The most recent grade distribution for such classes can be found at: https://www.law.georgetown.edu/campus-services/registrar/upload/Recommended-Curve_Historical-Grade-Distribution.pdf.

Extensions in Paper and SR courses

Unless you set an alternate date, all papers are due on the date announced in the academic calendar. Assignments for SR courses are likely to fall throughout the semester, but can be due no later than the final paper deadline announced in the Academic Calendar. You may grant

extensions—either individually or for the entire class—up to the maximum extension date set each semester by the Registrar's Office: <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Papers>. Before granting an extension, you should consider whether a delayed grade would interfere with a student's employment prospects or the calculation of academic honors. For any extension beyond the maximum extension date set by the Registrar's Office, the student must obtain your permission and that of the Vice Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (for J.D. students and LL.M. students in experiential courses) or the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs (for nonexperiential LL.M. students). These extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances.

Grading Deadlines for Courses and Seminars

The Office of the Registrar sets the grading deadlines for each semester and summer session and posts the deadlines at <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/GradingDeadlines>. In order to process the grades and get them to students who are anxiously awaiting them, we require faculty to meet the grading deadlines. The deadline for graduating students in the spring semester is hard and fast so that the Office of the Registrar can process and post the grades, clear students for graduation, and calculate honors. For non-graduating students and in the fall and summer terms, there is a three-day grace period afforded to faculty. On the fourth day, full-time faculty who have not submitted grades will be subject to a \$400 late submission penalty. There is a \$100 late submission penalty for each additional day that grades are late. This late fee is not assessed for adjunct faculty, but failure to meet grading deadlines may be a factor in determining whether or not an adjunct professor is appointed in a future semester. Students are awaiting grades and updated transcripts for their job searches, so it is imperative for faculty to comply with the grading deadlines.

To submit your grades by the grading deadline, please log in to *MyAccess* with your NetID and password and click on all courses/sections of courses you are teaching. Faculty teaching WR seminars with separate grades for the paper and the course should be sure to enter grades for both. Faculty teaching experiential courses with both a letter grade and pass/fail component should be sure to enter grades in both areas.

Grading Errors – Only errors in calculating or posting grades may be changed

Once grades are released to students, those grades may not be changed except for a demonstrable mechanical error made in computing the component parts of an examination into the final grade, in transcribing the grades in the grade reporting process, or if a substantive error is discovered in the exam or exam administration process. The Registrar must approve all findings of error. Therefore, please do not inform a student of a grade change without the Registrar's approval.

Reflecting on the Effectiveness of Your Teaching: Course Evaluations

Below we offer a brief overview of course evaluations as well as the many resources available to all of our faculty who wish to improve their teaching or rethink their approach in some way.

Each semester, we ask students to evaluate the courses in which they are enrolled and the faculty who teach them through our faculty/course evaluation process. You will be asked by the Office of the Registrar to provide your students with 15 minutes in one of your last two class sessions to complete the evaluations. After all grades are posted each semester, you will receive information from the Registrar's Office about how to access the student evaluations for your course.

We hope that you will use these evaluations to reflect on your performance as a teacher, and think about changes you may wish to make to your course or how you teach it in future semesters. The results are also reviewed carefully by the academic administrators responsible for the curriculum, and the numeric evaluations are made available to students. Generally, successful faculty receive ratings of 4.0 or greater on a scale of 1.0 to 5.0. In practicum courses and other adjunct-taught courses, our default policy is that we will not continue to offer courses receiving a rating of less than 4.0 in three or more evaluative criteria, or courses with a rating of less than 3.0 in any evaluative criteria. We encourage you to speak with your Law Center Contact regarding your evaluation ratings, particularly if your ratings are below 4.0.

We also encourage you to utilize mid-semester evaluations. Though these are not required by the Law Center, they can be a very useful tool for gauging the progress of your course while you still have the opportunity to make changes based on student feedback. We encourage you to have students submit feedback anonymously by asking them to bring printed responses to class or completing forms you provide during a class session.

Teaching Resources

The Law Center has a number of resources available to assist you in your teaching. There are many general and specific teaching resources available to you on the faculty/staff page on the Georgetown Law website: <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty-staff/>. These resources provide more information on course design, approaches to teaching, outcomes and assessments, embracing difference and diversity in the classroom, and using technology.

Dean of Students

If you have concerns about a student's well-being, we encourage you to reach out to Mitch Bailin, the Associate Vice President and Dean of Students, who can speak with you regarding particular students and issues you may be observing in your course. You may contact Dean Bailin at (202) 662-4066. If you have an urgent concern and cannot reach your Law Center Contact or Dean Bailin, you should contact the Department of Public Safety at (202) 662-9325.

Accommodations

The Office of Disability Services provides accommodations for students with physical, learning, chronic health, psychological and other disabilities. Students who have a documented disability should contact the Director of Disability Services, Mara Bellino (mcb60@law.georgetown.edu or (202) 662-4067), to seek an accommodation. (To preserve anonymity, accommodated students in exam courses should not disclose their accommodation to their professors.)

Teaching Seminars

The Law Center offers a series of Teaching Seminars each year designed to help new faculty prepare to teach, and help established faculty fine-tune their teaching goals and strategies. You will receive invitations to these seminars several weeks in advance, but we welcome registrations at any time, and encourage you to attend the seminars if you are able. The teaching seminars are recorded, and the materials are available at:

<http://www.law.georgetown.edu/go/TeachingSeminars>. If you would like to suggest a topic for an upcoming teaching seminar, please share it with your Law Center Contact.

There is also a collection of teaching materials available in the cabinet located in the Law Center's faculty lounge in McDonough 520. The collection includes materials on teaching methods, common challenges, and useful resources. You may borrow these materials any time.

Law Library

The Law Library offers many services to assist faculty in their teaching. Reference Librarians are available to present to your class on research techniques and materials that are specifically tailored to the subject matter of your course. Should you wish to arrange for a class visit, please contact Kristina Alayan at kja41@law.georgetown.edu or for an internationally-focused course, contact Mabel Shaw at shawm@law.georgetown.edu. They ask that you arrange these sessions at least two weeks in advance. The Librarians are also available to provide individual consultations to your students writing papers once they have identified their paper topics. Please encourage your students to schedule consultations with the Law Librarians.

The Library can also provide a single copy of an article for use in your courses, which you can request by emailing lawlibraryresearch@georgetown.edu. Finally, should you need assistance with research related to your teaching responsibilities, the Reference Librarians are able to assist you. You can contact them at lawlibref@georgetown.edu, or lawintlref@georgetown.edu for international topics.

**Attachment 1 (A1): Quick Start Card
(Preparing Your Course Materials and Syllabus)**

Preparing Your Course Materials and Syllabus

OPTIONAL

Are you using a textbook?

No

Yes

Order with Barnes & Noble at Paul.Concannon@law.georgetown.edu or www.facultyenlight.com.

Request examination copies and teachers' editions.

See list of frequently used publishers at: www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Publishers.

Are you creating a coursepack or using supplemental materials?

No

Yes

Will you have Faculty Support post on ArticleWorks, where students can download the material as a single PDF file at no charge or purchase a printed coursepack?

Submit your course materials to Faculty Support via SharePoint at <https://gulaw.sharepoint.com/sites/FacultyStaff/course-materials/internal/CD/Forms/AllItems.aspx%E2%80%99>

Questions? Contact Ronnie Rease at rr224@law.georgetown.edu or (202) 662-9280

Will you post materials on your LMS?

- Post documents (course materials, syllabus)
- Email messages to students
- Facilitate online discussions
- Conduct quizzes or polls

No

Yes

Canvas

Canvas is the preferred LMS and integrates with other Law Center systems

See training guides and access 24-hour support at www.law.georgetown.edu/go/Canvas.

Questions? Contact Mark Wiest at mtw56@law.georgetown.edu or Jennifer Lane at jel29@law.georgetown.edu or (202) 662-9645

TWEN

(The West Education Network)

See training guide at www.law.georgetown.edu/go/TWEN.

Questions? Contact Thanh Nguyen at nguyent2@law.georgetown.edu or (202) 662-9073

Are you using copyrighted materials?

See copyright policy at www.law.georgetown.edu/go/CopyrightPolicy

Questions? Jonathan Zimmer at zimmerj@georgetown.edu

No

Yes

Can you provide links or citations to students (instead of full excerpts)?

Yes

No

Replace full text with links/citations to save copyright fees

Submit request for copyright permission to apps.law.georgetown.edu/forms/form.cfm?FormID=342

REQUIRED

Syllabus

For requirements, see **Best Practices for Course Design and Management**

Submit to Law Center Liaison at least two weeks before the start of the semester

Post a copy on your LMS or provide to Faculty Support for posting on ArticleWorks

Review with your students on the first day of class

First Class Reading Assignment

Two weeks before the semester, email your first class reading assignment to lawfacultysupport@georgetown.edu

Attachment 2 (A2): Syllabus Template

Georgetown University Law Center
Course Title
Professor Name
Semester and Year
Day/Time of course

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Faculty Contact Information

Name

Office: [Full-time and visiting faculty add their on-campus office location. Adjunct faculty should explain where they prefer to meet (e.g., at their law firm, in an adjunct office on campus, etc.)]

Email: [Note for adjunct faculty: You are responsible for checking your Georgetown email. You can set up your Georgetown account to forward to another personal email account.]

Telephone

Office hours: [Typically 1-2 hours set aside weekly for in-person meetings with students. Faculty should also note if they are available for meetings by appointment.]

Note your preferred method for communication (email, telephone, office hours).

Course Description:

One to two paragraph narrative description of the course that provides an overview of its scope and the organizing principles.

Course Goals/Student Learning Outcomes:

Your course syllabus should contain a clear, concise statement of the learning outcomes you have for your students. The outcomes should describe what you substantively want the students to learn, what skills you intend to teach, and what values you want your students to absorb through the course. We do not prescribe a set number, but we have found 3-7 learning outcomes to be a fairly useful amount of outcomes for students. For more information, and for a sample set of outcomes, please see the attached memorandum.

Assessment Plan/Grading Rubric:

Explain in detail how you will assess and grade students. Include information about how you will allocate percentages or points to the required assignments. Explain how you will assess each assignment and award credit. For exams, explain the type of exam, the time allotted, the materials students are permitted to access, and (if possible) the

types of questions you will ask. For papers, provide the deadlines for topics, outlines, drafts (if required), and final papers and instructions for submission.

Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Provide a description of the required textbook and any supplemental readings and/or recommended readings.

Course Website

If you have course website on Canvas or TWEN, include information about how you will use the site. [Note: If you have a Canvas site, students will be automatically enrolled for the site. If you have a TWEN site, you have to instruct your students to enroll themselves.]

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Attendance and Class Participation

Regular and punctual attendance is required of each student. If you have set consequences for failure to attend (including reduction of a student's grade), note them here. If you require students to email you in advance if they miss class, note that here. If you have a policy of first class mandatory attendance, note that here.

Laptop Policy

Georgetown Law has no policy on laptop use in classrooms. If you have a policy, note it here.

Course Recording Policy

Beginning in Fall 2017, all classes will be recorded. Faculty have two options. Under Option 1 (the default option), all students will be granted access to all classroom recordings without restriction. Under Option 2, no students in the class will be granted access to classroom recordings for any reason—other than students who are granted access to the recordings for disability or religious accommodations purposes. Confirm in your syllabus whether you follow the default recording policy (Option 1) or if you will follow Option 2. If you select Option 2, include your policy on when you will grant individual student access to a recording (e.g., illness, wedding, death in the family, job interview, or other reason the faculty member deems sufficient to grant access).

Syllabus Changes

Explain if there may be changes to the syllabus and how and when changes will be communicated. For example: "While the overall structure of the syllabus will remain the same, we expect that there will be slight changes to reading assignments, guest speakers and the class schedule throughout the course of the semester. Changes will be announced no later than one week in advance on the Canvas site and the syllabus will be updated to reflect any changes. We appreciate your flexibility in accommodating these changes."

CLASS SCHEDULE

For each class session, provide the date, a topic or theme, and the specific pages and/or case names assigned in the materials. If you would like, you can also include a paragraph that describes the themes of each class session.

Class 1 – [insert date]: Introduction and Course Overview; Relevance: FRE 606(b) and the basics of trial and evidence.

Assigned Reading: FRE 606(b);
Casebook [defined in the section above on Textbooks and Other Course Materials], pp. 6-19;
Tanner v. United States.

Class 2 – [insert date]: The Specialized Rules.

Assigned Reading:
FRE 407, 408, 409, 410, 411;
Casebook, pp. 95-113, 117-122, 125-26, 130-131, 144;
Problem 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8
Tuer v. McDonald

Continue through to final class meeting.

Attachment 3 (A3): Course-Specific Learning Outcomes: Drafting Tips

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes: Drafting Tips

In 2014, the American Bar Association mandated that law schools establish and publish program-level learning outcomes. In June 2015, the ABA also mandated that learning outcomes for individual courses must be created and published in course syllabi. These requirements were instituted in an attempt to give students greater clarity about what they could expect to master over the course of their study and to catalyze law schools to be more intentional about pedagogical and curricular development.

After a year-long drafting process, which included a survey of full-time and adjunct faculty on which institutional outcomes would be desirable, the Law Center full-time faculty voted in 2017 on a set of institutional learning outcomes. These outcomes include a set of knowledge, skills, and values we believe all Georgetown Law students should possess upon graduation from the Law Center. Those outcomes are included in Appendix A.

Over the course of 2017, the faculty and staff also focused on the creation of learning outcomes for individual courses, and developed several tips for faculty who are designing outcomes for the first time. The following tips are guidelines and not rules; in our experience, however, they are useful in thinking through a first draft of outcomes.

1) You already have course goals

The creation of learning outcomes for your class may seem stressful at first. But if you take a few minutes to think through your class, you will likely learn that you already have course goals in mind. You are teaching this class for a reason, and you have crafted your course lessons with the goal of having your students learn substantive knowledge, skills, and values. Putting those goals on paper is just the written articulation of something that you were likely doing implicitly all along.

2) Focus on outcomes, and not inputs

Outcomes in syllabi can be useful to students because they help define what they will be able to demonstrate after taking the course. With that as the goal, it is useful for faculty to define what students will be able *to do* at the end of the course. Outcomes that merely describe what substantive topics the faculty will teach in the course do not help students take that next step to understand what they can do with that substantive knowledge.

3) Choose precise verbs

The more precise the language you use in describing your learning outcomes, the more likely it is that your outcomes will be useful to students. Verbs like “identify, craft, assess, apply, and refine” show up in many successful learning outcomes. A phrase like “Improve oral communication skills through practicing making objections” may be more useful to your students than “Understand the basics of evidence law.”

4) Avoid breaking substantive topics into separate elements

There can be a temptation to break your course topics into different course outcomes (e.g. learn the basics of the law of relevance; master all of the exceptions to hearsay). In general, however, students will be able to see the different component parts of your course in the “readings” or “assignments” section of the syllabus. It is generally better to focus on the different skills and values the students will be learning through the course.

5) Define the level of mastery

Useful learning outcomes often describe the level at which a student will learn a particular skill by the end of the course. Sometimes you may hope that students are able to gain mastery of a certain skill; in other instances, you may be hoping that students will be able to perform a skill at an introductory level. In either instance, it may be helpful to students to have the level of mastery you expect defined in your outcomes.

6) Be cognizant of assessments

As you are crafting your outcomes, please keep an eye toward your assessment methods. If a particular skill or value is a course goal, how do you plan to assess whether students have achieved that skill? Please keep in mind that if a final, summative exam is not sufficient to assess your outcomes, formative assessments during a course may be appropriate and valuable.

7) If stuck, ask for help

The articulation of learning outcomes for courses is fairly new for many of us, and we are learning as we go. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the faculty and staff at the law school who have been working on this project. If you have questions or need assistance with a particular course, contacting Assistant Dean Mushtaq Gunja at mushtaq.gunja@georgetown.edu is a good place to start. We have also included a couple of examples of course-specific learning outcomes in Appendix B.

Appendix A

Georgetown Law's Institutional Learning Outcomes

Georgetown University Law Center is committed to providing all students an intellectually rich education that combines theory and practice, and embraces the values of cultural competence, social justice, serving the public good, and educating the whole person. Georgetown Law's curriculum is founded on extraordinary scholarship and robust experiential educational opportunities and equips our students to practice in today's quickly evolving legal landscape. Our specific institutional learning outcomes are as follows:

- 1) Knowledge of substantive and procedural law, including the influence of the administrative state, political institutions, and other academic disciplines
- 2) Ability to engage in legal analysis, including the analysis of case law, constitutions, statutes and regulations, legal instruments and sources, and the application of law and theory to fact
- 3) Ability to conduct legal research
- 4) Ability to communicate effectively in the legal context, orally and in writing
- 5) Ability to use problem-solving and collaborative techniques in the legal context
- 6) Ability to engage in critical and strategic thinking
- 7) Understanding of the rules, ethics, and values of the legal profession, such as honesty, civility, work-ethic, and the centrality of a commitment to one's clients and to the legal system

Appendix B

Course Specific Learning Outcomes Examples

Eloise Pasachoff: The Regulatory State

You can check your understanding of whether you are meeting the course goals by reviewing these questions (and their related key content and skills) throughout the semester:

1. *What is the law?*

- Key Content: How does Congress work? How do agencies work? What are the tools of statutory interpretation? What are the legal frameworks governing judicial review of agency action? What are the tools Congress and the President have to control agency action?
- Key Skills: Reading judicial opinions closely; lining up opposing arguments in judicial opinions; reading statutes, other legislative material, and agency documents closely

2. *How do you apply the law?*

- Key Content: How do the tools of statutory interpretation help make sense of a given statutory question? How should the legal frameworks governing judicial review of agency action affect what agencies do in a given situation? How should the legal frameworks governing judicial review of agency action determine what a court should do with respect to a given agency action under challenge? How should agencies act in a given situation in light of the potential for political control by Congress and the President? How should Congress and the President act in light of a given action taken by an agency?
- Key Skills: Identifying the open question and the law that might apply in a given context; flipping arguments; assessing the strength of these flipped arguments and picking one in a given context

3. *How do you critique / justify / suggest alternatives for the law?*

- Key Content: What are the pros and cons of how Congress works? Of how agencies work? Of the tools of statutory interpretation? Of the legal frameworks governing judicial review? Of the tools Congress and the President have to control agency action? In light of those pros and cons, should anything be modified? If so, how?
- Key Skills: Flipping arguments; assessing the strength of these flipped arguments and picking one in a given context; generating alternatives

Lisa Heinzerling: Food Law Seminar

Aims of the Course:

1. By the end of this course, I hope you will have a good understanding of the federal regulatory framework for food, as administered primarily by the Food and Drug Administration. You should gain a sense of the history of this framework, its basic requirements, its overarching goals, and its upsides and downsides. You will not learn every detail of this program, but you should grasp the nature and structure of the central prohibitions against misleading labeling (misbranding) and unsafe food (adulteration). You will also see how basic principles of administrative law play out in the specific setting of FDA regulation of food.
2. Another aim of the course is skills-oriented. By participating in class discussions and presenting your own paper to the class, I hope you will hone your skills in speaking fluently and comfortably about legal issues. By preparing a significant research paper for the course, I anticipate that you will both master a substantive legal issue related to food and sharpen your skills in legal research and writing. My specific expectations for the paper are set out below.

Erin Carroll: Legal Practice

- Refine legal research skills with a focus on case law research.
- Refine critical reading skills, including recognizing rules, facts, and analysis in case law that are both helpful and harmful to your client's interests.
- Demonstrate ability to engage in effective legal analysis and advocacy through, for example, constructing persuasive rules, effectively employing analogical reasoning, strategically applying law to fact, utilizing policy arguments, and selecting a persuasive and logical organizational structure.
- Demonstrate an ability to effectively communicate that legal analysis in a polished, readable, and appropriately concise written product.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how audience impacts writing, including through form, purpose, depth of analysis, organization, stance, and tone.
- Practice working collaboratively, including providing feedback to others, communicating that feedback, and strategizing on behalf of a shared client.
- Gain experience presenting arguments orally in a formal setting.
- Continue practicing how to research, analyze, and write about legal issues under time constraints.