

Northeastern University
School of Law
Boston, Massachusetts

FINAL COURSE SYLLABUS - WINTER 2020-2021 TERM

- I. COURSE TITLE: **Introduction to U.S. Constitutional Law
(Law 6314 01)**
- II. TEXT:
Required Material:
Leading Cases in Constitutional Law: A Compact Casebook for a Short Course (2020 Ed.), by Choper, Fallon, Dorf, Schauer (“LCCL”)

The Federalist Papers, The Classic Original Edition (“FP”),
by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay
- III. INSTRUCTOR: **Diane Messere Magee, Esq.**
(Licensed: MA, RI, United States Supreme Court)
Email: dmmsg19@aol.com, d.magee@neu.edu
Twitter: @AttyDMM
Website: www.MessereMageeLaw.com
- IV. PLACE: TBA
- V. TIME: **Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:20 p.m. - 2:20 p.m.**
- VI. COURSE INTRODUCTION: Introduction to Constitutional Law explores the three branches of the government of the United States of America in relation to the context and purpose of the United States Constitution. The course will examine the separation of powers among the three branches of government, judicial review, the relationship of power between the federal government and the sovereign states. We will also review individual rights and specifically examine the bill of rights and other amendments to the United States Constitution. Additionally, we will look at strategies to assimilate constitutional law into critical thinking practices.

SYLLABUS CONTINUED

Introduction to U.S. Constitutional Law (Law 6314 01)

VII. REQUIREMENTS:

1. While I do not prohibit the use of laptops during class, I encourage you to refrain from using them as it will help you develop significant skills in deep focus of complex legal issues. And it will develop your ability to take time-constrained handwritten notes (which is generally all you are allowed at oral argument in Court).
2. All cell phones must be turned off during class (not merely placed on vibrate or silent). As in all Courts you should practice self-prohibition of cell phone use to avoid unnecessary distractions during class.
3. You are expected to be fully prepared to discuss the issues presented in each assignment prior to the day of class. While some legal issues will take more than one class to complete you should have the full constitutional law topic prepared for discussion on the first class day of that topic.
4. Regular participation, preparation, and attendance are expected - - whether attending class in person or virtually. On-line classes will not be recorded.
5. There will be one or more multiple choice interim tests lasting no more than 15 minutes each. These tests will be graded in class with a following discussion of strategies for understanding constitutional law legal issues in the context of this kind of testing environment.
6. The final exam will be a 24-hour take home exam.

VII. **GRADE COMPOSITION:** Your final grade will be determined by the multiple choice test(s) and the final exam. I will also consider, however, the development of your critical thinking skills as evidenced by your class preparation, participation, and attendance. The cumulative effect of these factors may result in my making a special mention in your evaluation. The majority of your grade, however, will be your performance on the required final examination.

IX. **ATTENDANCE POLICY:** It is mandatory that students attend class sessions within the current NUFlex protocol. For in-person students, while I understand public transportation can be unpredictable, please respect your fellow classmates and be in class on time. Repeated class absence or tardiness will be reflected in your overall class grade.

SYLLABUS CONTINUED

Introduction to U.S. Constitutional Law (Law 6314 01)

X. TEACHING METHODOLOGY: Class instruction will be split between classroom lectures and practical case study application of the legal principles covered. Students should be familiar with the concepts reviewed in the reading assignments and be prepared to participate in and generate classroom discussions.

Questions and problems on material being covered are expected to be raised immediately for resolution and classroom discussion. In person office hours are available for more in depth questions or questions that, due to classroom time constraints, could not be fully developed or addressed.

INTRODUCTION TO U.S. CONSTITUTIONAL LAW
(Law 6314 01) WINTER TERM, 2020-2021
ACADEMIC SCHEDULE FOR TUESDAY/THURSDAY DAY CLASS

WEEK 1: **Article III and Judicial Review**
11/17, 11/19 READ LCCL pp. 1-34, pp. 897-920
 READ FP #78, pp. 224-228

WEEK 2: **The Power of the National Congress**
11/24 READ LCCL, pp. 37-58

VACATION ***November 25, 2020 - November 30, 2020***

WEEK 3: **The Power of the National Congress**
12/1, 12/3 READ LCCL, pp. 58-101

WEEK 4: **Distribution of Federal Power:**
12/08, 12/10 **Separation of Powers**
 READ LCCL, pp. 103-120
 READ FP #47 and #48, pp.139-145

WEEK 5: **Distribution of Federal Power:**
12/15, 12/17 **Separation of Powers**
 READ LCCL, pp. 120-146
 READ FP #47 and #48, pp.139-145

State Power to Regulate
READ LCCL, pp.147-151

WEEK 6: **State Power to Regulate**
12/22 READ LCCL, pp.152-185

VACATION ***December 24, 2020 - January 1, 2021***

WEEK 7: **Substantive Protection of Economic Interests**
01/05, 01/07 READ LCCL, pp. 187-220

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ACADEMIC SCHEDULE FOR TUESDAY/THURSDAY DAY CLASS

WEEK 8: QUIZ
01/12, 01/14,
01/15 **Protection of Individual Rights**
 READ LCCL, pp. 221-247

WEEK 9: **Protection of Individual Rights**
01/19, 01/21 READ LCCL, pp. 247-329

WEEK 10: **Equal Protection/State Action**
01/26, 01/28,
01/29 READ LCCL, pp. 705-781

WEEK 11: **Equal Protection/State Action**
02/02, 02/04 READ LCCL, pp. 782-848

FINAL EXAMINATION