

Advanced Legal Research
University of Florida Levin College of Law
Spring 2026 Syllabus – LAW 6798 – 1 credit

Instructor

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Class Schedule

Mondays, 9:00am – 10:40am
Jan. 26 – Mar. 9
Holland Hall 270

Office Hours

Tuesdays, 1:00-2:00pm
Thursdays, 4:00-5:00pm
Or by appointment

Course Readings

There is no textbook required for this course. Assigned readings will be posted to Canvas.

Course Canvas Page

All materials are accessible on Canvas at <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/553093>. Please be sure to register for the Canvas course and have any required materials with you in print or easily accessible electronic form in class. You are responsible for checking your Canvas page and the email connected to the page on a regular basis for any class announcements or adjustments.

Course Description and Objectives

This one-credit course expands on the foundational legal research skills learned in the first-year research class by teaching strategies for effective legal research, with an emphasis on both manual and electronic research sources as well as primary and secondary sources of law in federal and state jurisdictions. This course meets for 7 classes in the first 8 weeks of the semester.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Utilize tools for analyzing constitutional provisions;
- Understand the federal legislative process and evaluate materials created during the process;
- Locate executive orders, proclamations, and other presidential materials;
- Outline the federal rulemaking process;
- Distinguish between binding regulations and nonbinding agency guidance;
- Navigate federal court dockets using Bloomberg Law and other docket tools;
- Utilize litigation analytics tools to assess case trends, judge behavior, and legal strategy;
- Identify and navigate tools for multi-jurisdictional research such as 50-state surveys for case law and statutory research;
- Identify and evaluate current awareness resources for various areas of the law, considering reliability as it relates to authority, credibility, authenticity, and bias.

Grading Criteria

The components of the final grade for the course are as follows:

Homework Assignments (6)	30%
Final Exam	60%
Participation	5%
Attendance	5%

1. Homework Assignments

There will be six homework assignments during the semester. Each week after class a homework assignment will be posted on the course Canvas page (under the “Assignments” tab and in “Modules”). The due date for each assignment is 11:59pm on Thursday of the week the homework opens. Full credit for assignments will be given to those who demonstrate a good faith effort. A good faith effort includes fully responding to all questions and turning in assignments on time. cursory responses to questions that ask for an explanation will be penalized. A late submission, without prior consent from the instructor, will be penalized at least 25% for lateness if submitted by the start of the next class session (9:00 on Monday). A late assignment that is submitted after the start of the next class session will receive no credit. Completion of the six homework assignments is worth 30% of the final grade. **Students must work individually on homework assignments.**

2. Final Exam

The final exam is an individual 24-hour, timed, take-home exam, to be completed between March 9 and March 23, 2025. It will include short answer and essay questions that will test your ability to apply the skills you will have learned during this course. This exam will comprise 60% of the course grade. The final exam will be graded anonymously. The law school policy on exam delays and accommodations may be found at: <https://law.ufl.edu/student-life/uf-law-student-handbook-academic-policies/#exams>

3. Participation

The participation grade is determined by preparation for class, participation in class, and overall effort to complete the weekly assignments, including contacting the instructor when encountering difficulties with the assignment. Repeated lack of preparedness or participation will impact your participation grade. Repeated class disruption (e.g., excessive noise, texting, personal internet use) will impact your participation grade.

4. Attendance

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are not recorded absent if they come in late.

Per law school policy, this course will be graded on a curve. Points received for assignments during the semester represent raw scores only. College of Law grading policies for grade distribution for required courses and GPA determination can be found at: <https://law.ufl.edu/student-life/uf-law-student-handbook-academic-policies/#grading-and-examinations>

Letter Grade	Point Equivalent
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.0
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.0
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.0
D-	0.67
E	0.0

Class Attendance Policy

Attendance in class is required by both the ABA and the Law School. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. Students are allowed 1 absence during the course of the semester, though any unexcused absences may affect the attendance portion of your grade. A student who fails to meet the attendance requirement will be dropped from the course. The law school's policy on attendance can be found at: <https://law.ufl.edu/student-life/uf-law-student-handbook-academic-policies/#attendance>

ABA Out-of-Class Hours Requirements

ABA Standard 310 requires that students devote at least 42.5 hours of total in-class instruction and out-of-class student work per credit hour. Students should expect to spend at least 30 hours of preparation outside of class including reading the assigned materials and completing assignments. Time devoted to studying for a required final examination may count toward the out-of-class time required.

Generative AI

The use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Claude, and CoPilot, is permitted in the course as a supplementary aid for legal research and writing. These tools are not required and are not an appropriate substitute for developing and demonstrating your legal research and analysis skills. **For every written assignment submitted for credit that you use generative AI for, you must describe the specific tool(s) used and briefly explain what you used it for (e.g., generating ideas, summarizing materials, proofreading, etc.).** Regardless of AI use, all work submitted must reflect your own original thought, demonstrate your understanding of the material, and be thoroughly fact-checked against reliable sources. Failure to disclose the use of generative AI or misrepresenting the role it played in your work may be considered a breach of academic integrity.

Compliance with UF Honor Code

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the [UF Law Honor Code](#).

UF Levin College of Law Standard Syllabus Policies

Other information about UF Levin College of Law policies, including Grading, Accommodations, Class Recordings, and Course Evaluations can be found at:

<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/427635/files?preview=98226140>

UF Academic Policies and Resources

Other information about UF academic policies and resources can be found at [this link](#).

Course Schedule

Schedule & Topics	Before Class	Assignments
Class 1 – Jan. 26 Intro & Constitutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review course Canvas pageReview SyllabusComplete the Getting to Know You formIn the Class 1 Module on Canvas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the assigned readingsReview Class 1 slides	Homework #1 due Thursday, January 29, by 11:59pm
Class 2 – Feb. 2 Federal Legislative History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the Class 2 Module on Canvas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the assigned readingsReview Class 2 slides	Homework #2 due Thursday, February 5, by 11:59pm
Class 3 – Feb. 9 Federal Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the Class 3 Module on Canvas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the assigned readingsReview Class 3 slides	Homework #3 due Thursday, February 12, by 11:59pm
Class 4 – Feb. 16 Admin. Decisions, Agency Guidance, and Presidential Docs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the Class 4 Module on Canvas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the assigned readingsReview the Class 4 slides	Homework #4 due Thursday, February 19, by 11:59pm
Class 5 – Feb. 23 Dockets & Litigation Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the Class 5 Module on Canvas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the assigned readingsReview the Class 5 slides	Homework #5 due Thursday, February 26, by 11:59pm
Class 6 – Mar. 2 Multi-Jurisdictional Research & Current Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the Class 6 Module on Canvas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the assigned readingsReview the Class 6 slides	Homework #6 due Thursday, March 5, by 11:59pm
Class 7 – Mar. 9 Review	Start preparing for your final exam!	Final exam opens on March 9 and is due March 23

Disclaimer

This syllabus is offered as a guide to the direction of the course. Our pace will depend in part on the level of interest and the level of difficulty of each section and is subject to change.