

2026

ORIGINALISM CONFERENCE

Courts and the Academy



UF UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
LEVIN COLLEGE of LAW

GAINESVILLE, FL | MARCH 5-6, 2026

Welcome, Conference Attendees!



JOHN STINNEFORD
Conference Host,
UF Law Professor

Welcome to the **University of Florida Levin College of Law’s Second Annual Originalism Conference**. This year, we have brought together an outstanding group of federal judges, state supreme court justices, and nationally recognized scholars and advocates to explore the role of originalism in contemporary adjudication.

A central theme of this year’s conference is the relationship between the academy and the judiciary. On Thursday evening, Dean Merritt McAlister will lead a roundtable on “Teaching Originalism,” and on Friday morning I will moderate a panel on how scholarship can assist judges in applying originalist research. We will also host a junior scholars works-in-progress session Thursday afternoon.

In addition, Professor Jonathan Marshfield will lead a panel on state constitutions, and we will conclude with a discussion of upcoming Supreme Court decisions led by Dean McAlister. We look forward to a thoughtful and engaging two days together.

Thursday, March 5

2:30–4:45 PM

Junior Scholar Presentations and Discussions 106 Martin Levin Advocacy Center

Presenters:

- Newby Parton, Law Clerk, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- Professor Tyler Lindley, Brigham Young University Law School

Discussants:

- Professor Josh Blackman, South Texas College of Law Houston
- Professor Gary Lawson, UF Levin College of Law
- Professor Tara Grove, University of Texas School of Law
- Professor Ben Johnson, UF Levin College of Law

5:00–6:00 PM

Teaching Originalism Roundtable Discussion 106 Martin Levin Advocacy Center

Moderator: Interim Dean Merritt McAlister, UF Levin College of Law

- Judge Kathryn Mizelle, U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
- Professor Adam Lebovitz, UF Hamilton School
- Professor Benjamin Johnson, UF Levin College of Law
- Professor Josh Blackman, South Texas College of Law

6:15–7:00 PM

Cocktail Reception Levin Advocacy Center Foyer

7:00–8:30 PM

Dinner (By Invitation) Bailey Event Space

Friday, March 6

8:00–8:45 AM

Continental Breakfast Levin Advocacy Center Foyer

9:00–10:30 AM

Panel I. Institutional Division of Labor: Can Legal Scholars Help Courts Be Better Originalists? 106 Martin Levin Advocacy Center

Courts are not institutionally equipped to perform the historical and linguistic research necessary to decide many of these cases. This panel will consider the extent of the problem, and how the legal academy might bridge this gap.

Moderator: Professor John Stinneford, UF Levin College of Law

- Professor Randy Barnett, Georgetown University Law Center
- Justice Jamie Grosshans, Florida Supreme Court
- Jeffrey DeSousa, Acting Solicitor General, Office of the Florida Attorney General
- Professor Michael Wolf, UF Levin College of Law

10:45 AM–12:15 PM

Panel II. Originalism and State Constitutions: Special Challenges and Opportunities 106 Martin Levin Advocacy Center

Most discussion regarding originalism focuses on interpreting the U.S. Constitution. This panel will focus on originalism as a method of interpreting state constitutions with special attention to how state constitutions are different.

Moderator: Professor Jonathan Marshfield, UF Levin College of Law

- Justice John Curiel, Florida Supreme Court
- Professor Marcus Gadson, University of North Carolina School of Law
- Chief Judge Jeffrey Sutton [virtually], U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

12:15–1:15 PM

Luncheon 106 Martin Levin Advocacy Center & Bailey Event Space

1:30–3:00 PM

Panel III. SCOTUS: End of Term Preview 106 Martin Levin Advocacy Center

As the Supreme Court’s 2025–26 term nears its end, this panel will examine the major cases to be decided by late June, their issues, possible outcomes, originalism’s role (if any), and their future implications.

Moderator: Interim Dean Merritt McAlister, UF Levin College of Law

- Professor Tara Grove, University of Texas School of Law
- Professor Jed Shugerman, Boston University School of Law
- Professor Gary Lawson, UF Levin College of Law



SCAN for speaker bios & more info

