

KAITLYN POIRIER

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School
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Professional Summary

I am an Associate Professor of Law at Southern Illinois University Simmons School of Law, teaching legal writing, administrative law, and environmental law. Prior to that, I was employed as a Trial Attorney with the United States Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division for over eight years. I represented the United States in complex environmental and administrative law cases in federal courts across the country.

Law License

Member in good standing of the Tennessee Bar.

Recent Professional Experience

Associate Professor of Law

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School, Carbondale, IL August 2024 – present

- Courses Taught: Lawyering Skills I: Legal Writing, Lawyering Skills II: Legal Writing, Administrative Law, Environmental Law, Mastering Legal Education I, and Mastering Legal Education II
 - Member of the Academic Standards Committee and Faculty Senate
 - Author of the 2025 National Health Law Moot Court problem
 - Served as faculty advisor for two students drafting law review articles
 - Organized a current events forum at the law school
 - Held sessions about how to make a persuasive personal statement for undergraduate students interested in attending law school

Trial Attorney

United States Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. September 2015 – May 2024

- Lead counsel defending the United States in civil cases arising primarily under the Endangered Species Act and Administrative Procedure Act, but also the First Amendment of the Constitution, the National Trails System Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros

Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Animal Welfare Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, etc.

- Responsible for all aspects of a case in district court and cases of original jurisdiction in circuit courts of appeals
- Experienced in significant motions practice, including defending against motions for temporary restraining orders and/or preliminary injunctions, drafting motions to dismiss and motions for summary judgment, and briefing both liability and remedy
- Argued before federal district courts
- Conducted settlement negotiations
- Advised federal agencies, including senior agency officials and political appointees, during litigation, regulation development, and potential policy changes
- Litigated cases involving matters of national importance, such as the operation and maintenance of the Willamette Valley Project (a system of 13 dams and reservoirs) in Oregon and continued operations of both Pacific and Atlantic marine fisheries
- Awarded several accolades from the Department of Justice
- Participated in the hiring process for Honor Graduate Attorneys and lateral attorneys
- Mentored new attorneys hired in the Department of Justice's Honor Graduate Attorney Program

Education

University of Tennessee College of Law

May 2015

- Graduated in the top 5% - *summa cum laude*
- Executive Editor of the Tennessee Law Review
- Recipient of the Tennessee Law Review Silver Pen Award and Judge Harry W. Laughlin, Jr. Award for an exemplary case note
- Member of the Environmental Law National Moot Court team

University of the Southwest

May 2011

- B.A.S. in English and History
- Graduated *magna cum laude*

Publications

Kaitlyn A. Poirier & Carly M. Toepke, *The Damning of Digital Devices: Limiting Laptops in Legal Writing* (Working Paper, 2026).

“Gestures of Kindness Have Big Impact,” Law Day Essay for the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, May 1, 2025.

“Constitutional Law – The First Amendment Retaliation Doctrine – A Public Employee’s Rights Regarding Perceived Political Association Retaliation: *Dye v. Office of the Racing Comm’n*,” 81.2 TENN. L. REV. (2014). Cited in the petition for a writ of certiorari in *Heffernan v. City of Patterson*, 136 S. Ct. 1412 (2016).

Presentations

“Damning of Digital Devices in Legal Writing: Time to Remove Laptops from the Classroom,” Junior Scholars Conference, Sept. 27, 2025 (co-presented with Professor Carly Toepke).

“Damning of Digital Devices in Legal Writing: Time to Remove Laptops from the Classroom,” American Association of Law Schools Section on Technology, Law, and Legal Education, June 18, 2025 (co-presented with Professor Carly Toepke).