

**Current Developments in American Law  
FEDERAL CRIMINAL LAW & PRACTICE  
Spring 2020**

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**Required Course Materials:**

Text: Our course text is *Federal Criminal Law and its Enforcement* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2015), and 2017 Supplement to *Federal Criminal Law and its Enforcement*, Norman Abrams, Sara Sun Beale, Susan R. Klein.

**Course Overview and Objectives:**

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the federal criminal process from charging through sentencing, with some limited information on appeals and supervised release and probation hearings. The course will focus exclusively the *federal* criminal process.

**Weekly Course Rhythm**

This course is an asynchronous distance education course. All instruction and course materials are delivered online via TWEN. Offering this as an on-line course allows for greater flexibility for students. However, it also makes it much easier for students to fall behind. It is important that you stay organized and keep on schedule with readings and assignments. You should spend at least the same amount of time as you would for any other two-credit course, if not more, as you navigate the online process.

**Assessment:**

Weekly Quizzes: 15%  
Discussion Participation: 20%  
Writing Assignment: 15%  
Final Exam (take-home): 50%

**Attendance:**

Attendance will be based upon you regularly logging into the course and actively participating in course discussions.

### **Learning Objectives:**

At the end of the course, you should be able to understand, explain, and intelligently discuss both orally and in writing:

- the basic processes of a federal criminal court case;
- the burden of proof at trial and at non-trial proceedings, i.e., detention hearings, preliminary hearings, motion hearings, and sentencing hearings;
- the prosecution and defense functions and duties;
- the roll of the U.S. Probation Office in the federal criminal process;
- the individual rights at stake at the various stages of the federal criminal process;
- the cases and doctrines presented throughout the course.

### **Quizzes:**

You will take a 30-minute quiz each week based on the readings, the lectures, and the discussion questions. You will have access to the quiz beginning on Friday of each week and it must be completed by Sunday, the final day of each module. Once you begin the quiz, you will not be able to pause your time, so make sure that you are ready to devote a full, uninterrupted 30 minutes to it.

### **Discussions:**

Each week, two to three students will be responsible for leading our discussions. All students must participate in the discussions. Each week, every student must post at least two intelligent (well thought out and on-topic) responses that will further each week's discussion. Questions are allowed and encouraged during the discussions. However, questions alone do not qualify as responses unless they are a part of a well thought out and on-topic response. Responses must show evidence that you have read the material, listened to the lectures, and thought deliberately about the material. Although we will have weekly discussion leaders, everyone is expected to regularly participate and provide at least the minimum required number of posts each week.

### **Writing Assignment:**

A timed writing assignment that satisfies the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum requirement will be given in lieu of the weekly discussion during one week of the course. The assignment will be posted on Friday and will be due by Sunday. More details of that assignment will be forthcoming.

At my discretion, additional writing assignments may be given.

### **Final Examination:**

The final exam will be posted on Friday, of the final week of class (April 24, 2020). This will be a "take-home" style exam and will be due by no later than Sunday, May 4, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.

**Workload Expectations:**

The American Bar Association (ABA) standards for accrediting law schools contain a formula for calculating the amount of work required to earn one hour of law school credit. Pursuant to these standards, each credit hour should reasonably approximate one hour of in-class instruction and at least two hours of out-of-class work per week for fifteen weeks. Accordingly, for this two-credit-hour class, you should spend approximately two hours per week in online instruction and at least four hours per week preparing on your own.

**Reading Assignments:**

Read the assigned text and related supplement.  
Additional assignments may be posted intermittently on TWEN – Please check TWEN regularly.

**Reading Schedule**

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading Assignment & Lecture	Problems/Questions/Assignments
1	January 13-19	Course Introduction Jurisdiction (Federal vs. State) Role of the court	Chapters 1, 2, 3	Quiz 1
2	January 20-26	Jurisdiction (Why federal?) Role of prosecution and Role of Defense	Chapter 4	Quiz 2
3	January 27-February 2	Arrest and Presentment Charging Bond	Materials posted on TWEN	Quiz 3
4	February 3-9	Bribery and Extortion Fraud	Chapter 5 Chapter 6	Quiz 4
5	February 10-16	Money Laundering Firearms Offenses Robbery	Chapter 10 Chapter 11 TWEN	Quiz 5
6	February 17-23	RICO Terrorism	Chapter 13 Chapter 14	Quiz 6 Online discussion

<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading Assignment &amp; Lecture</b>	<b>Problems/Questions/Assignments</b>
7	<b>February 24- March 1</b>	Drugs Conspiracy	<b>Chapter 8</b> <b>Chapter 12</b>	<b>Writing assignment</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
8	<b>March 2-8</b>	Perjury Obstruction	<b>Chapter 15</b> <b>Chapter 16</b>	<b>Quiz 8</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
9	<b>March 16-22</b>	Immigration Child Pornography	<b>Materials posted on TWEN</b> <b>Materials posted on TWEN</b>	<b>Quiz 9</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
10	<b>March 23-29</b>	Notice: insanity, etc. Pre-trial motions	<b>Materials posted on TWEN</b>	<b>Quiz 10</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
11	<b>March 30- April 5</b>	Trial Plea Bargaining and Cooperation	<b>Materials posted on TWEN</b> <b>Chapter 17</b>	<b>Quiz 11</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
12	<b>April 6-12</b>	Sentencing	<b>Chapter 18</b>	<b>Quiz 12</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
13	<b>April 13-19</b>	Supervised Release Crime Victim's Rights	<b>Materials posted on TWEN</b> <b>18 U.S.C. § 3553</b>	<b>Quiz 13</b> <b>Online discussion</b>
14	<b>April 20-24</b>	Appeal Review	<b>Materials posted on TWEN</b>	<b>Ask clarification questions</b>
	<b>April 24</b>			<b>Final Exam will post</b>