

SENIOR WRITING SEMINAR: GENDER AND THE LAW
LAW 590-001/ 3 CREDIT HOURS
CLASSROOM 164
TUESDAY & THURSDAY 11:00 A.M. TO 12:15 P.M.

Instructor and Contact Information:

Instructor name: Anna Vick

E-mail address: anna.vick@siu.edu

Office hours: MW 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., TR 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., Other hours by appointment.

Office location: Room 226

Cell Phone: 618-751-4644

Course Description and Objectives:

This advanced legal writing seminar explores the dynamic intersection of gender, theory, and doctrine in American and international law. Using the ninth edition of *Gender and Law: Theory, Doctrine, Commentary* as its foundational text, the course challenges students to critically examine how different theoretical frameworks—liberal feminism, critical race feminism, queer theory, intersectionality, and more—shape legal doctrine and influence outcomes across a broad array of issues.

Topics will include reproductive rights and justice, employment discrimination, LGBTQ+ rights, domestic violence, pornography, and global trafficking. In addition, students will investigate how gender issues arise in less traditionally examined areas such as property, civil procedure, contracts, sports, and legal ethics. The course also incorporates current legal controversies and landmark cases, including *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, *Bostock v. Clayton County*, and *Rizo v. Yovino*, to analyze how evolving interpretations of sex, gender, and equality impact legal systems.

Through in-depth discussions, reflective writing, and research-based assignments, students will engage with “Putting Theory into Practice” problems, pushing them to apply legal theory to real-world dilemmas. Special emphasis will be placed on the intersection of gender with race, class, and other identities, as well as the impact of contemporary developments such as the COVID-19 pandemic, transgender athlete bans, and evolving sexual assault laws.

This seminar is designed not only to deepen students’ understanding of gender in the law, but also to develop sophisticated legal writing skills through a substantial research paper, legal commentary, or advocacy-oriented project. Students will have opportunities to workshop their writing and receive extensive feedback throughout the semester.

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze and critique legal doctrines and statutes through multiple feminist and critical theories.
- Develop advanced legal research and writing skills with a focus on gender-related issues.
- Craft persuasive, theory-informed arguments in various legal writing formats.
- Understand and evaluate the role of intersectionality in the construction and application of legal rules.
- Engage thoughtfully in class discussions and peer feedback workshops.
- Understand how the processes and ways in which we learn can reinforce oppressive relationships and social structures.
- Develop ways to take effective action for change in our communities.
- Identify proper topics, improve research skills, and write excellent quality seminar-length papers analyzing an aspect of social justice advocacy.
- Improve critical thinking, analogical reasoning, and legal writing methodology.
- Increase proficiency in oral presentations.

Required Reading:

Gender and the Law, Theory, Doctrine, Commentary, Ninth Edition, Katharine T. Bartlett, Deborah L. Rhode, Joanna L. Grossman, Deborah L. Brake, Frank Rudy Cooper

D2L:

We will be using D2L as the course webpage. I will post the syllabus, reading assignments and materials, and a schedule of assignments on the webpage, as well as other relevant information. Students are expected to check D2L on a regular basis and are responsible for any materials posted there. Students are also expected to check their email for class updates and information.

Class Attendance and Preparation:

This is a writing-intensive course and time off from some classes will be given to work on research and writing. For this reason, barring extraordinary circumstances, students are permitted only six (6) absences during the semester. Absent extraordinary circumstances, a greater number of absences will result in a withdrawal from the course. Students are expected to be on time for class and attendance will be taken daily. If you are more than five (5) minutes late for class, you will be marked absent. Students are responsible for keeping track of their absences.

Students are expected to read the assigned material for each class, prepare any written assignments, and actively participate in the class discussion of that material. If I call on you and I judge that you are unprepared, I reserve the right to mark you as absent for that class.

Students will be expected to prepare paper topic presentation for the class. Each student will be asked to read and give constructive feedback on other students' oral presentations. Students will also give feedback on the drafts of their colleagues. All students are expected to come prepared to ask questions and comment on oral presentations. All of these activities will be taken into account in calculating the class participation portion of the grade.

In addition, students will be required to meet with me individually twice. Failure to schedule and attend these meetings will result in a reduction of 3 points per missed meeting.

If you are unprepared for class but would like to attend and receive the benefit of the class discussion: (1) do not sign the attendance sheet; (2) give me a note at the start of class with your name and the date. A day of "noting out" counts as one of your permitted absences.

Evaluation:

The final grade will consist of the following multiple parts:

10 points	Weekly Reading Questions
5 points	Paper Topic Presentation
5 points	Thesis Statement, Outline, Annotated Bibliography
15 points	First Draft of Paper
40 points	Final Draft of Paper
15 points	Final Oral Presentation with Abstract
10 points	Participation

Details on all assignments are on D2L.

Workload Expectations:

The American Bar Association standards for accrediting law schools contain a formula for calculating the amount of work required to earn one credit hour of law school credit. Pursuant to these standards, for this three-credit-hour class, you should spend 150 minutes per week in class (2.5 hours), plus a minimum of six hours of reading, studying, and writing each week, for a total of 8.5 hours per week.

Class Recordings:

This class will be recorded using Echo360.

Classroom Atmosphere:

During this course we will discuss topics on which personal views may vary. Open discussion of ideas and viewpoints is encouraged. I hope that each class meeting will provide all of us an opportunity to gain new insight and appreciation of our shared experiences. During the first day of class, we will discuss the parameters for group discussion. The classroom is shared space of learning and growth and must be respective by all participants.

Ban on Collaboration:

Written assignments you submit in this course must be your own original work. You are not allowed to obtain help from generative artificial intelligence (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT) on written assignments for this course. However, you may discuss your seminar paper with others in accordance with the instructions for individual assignments and to obtain research assistance from the law librarians. If you violate the ban on this collaboration policy, you will receive a failing grade on the assignment. You also may be found in violation of the Honor Code, which can lead to serious penalties, including expulsion. An Honor Code investigation must also be reported to the Bar Examiners, even if you are cleared of any violation. When in doubt about how to proceed, ask me.

SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT

SIU SCHOOL OF LAW – Spring 2026

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: We ask that you become familiar with Emergency Preparedness @ SIU. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, on the Emergency Preparedness @ SIU website, and through text and email alerts. To register for alerts, visit <http://emergency.siu.edu/>.

DISABILITY POLICY. SIU Carbondale is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible experience for all students with disabilities. Disability Support Services coordinates the implementation of accommodations. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but have not yet obtained approval, please contact DSS immediately at 618-453-5738 or disabilityservices.siu.edu. You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to ensure accommodations are in place when needed. Accommodations and services are determined through an interactive process with students and may involve consideration of specific course design and learning objectives in consultation with faculty. Please send approved accommodations to your faculty through the DSS online portal.

SALUKI CARES and COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS). The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students, and their families, SIU will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For Information on Saluki Cares: (618) 453-2461, or siucares@siu.edu, <https://salukicares.siu.edu/>. Associate Dean Angela Upchurch (aupchurch@siu.edu or (618) 536-8314) is available at the School of Law to help students access university resources. Additionally, counseling services are available through CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) | Student Health Services | SIU). A counselor is at the law school every Wednesday from noon until 4:30pm in Room 268 for drop-in appointments.

SAFETY AWARENESS FACTS AND EDUCATION Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://safe.siu.edu>

Syllabus Attachment

Spring 2025

IMPORTANT DATES:

Semester Classes Begin: **01/13/2025**
Last day to add full-term course (without Dean's signature): **01/19/2025**
Last day to withdraw from the University with a full refund: **01/24/2025**
Last day to drop a full-term course for a credit/refund: **01/26/2025**
Last day to drop a full-term course (W grade, no refund): **03/30/2025**

Final examinations: **05/05/2025–05/09/2025**

Note: Please verify the above dates with the Registrar calendar and find more detailed information on deadlines at <http://registrar.siu.edu/calendars>. For add/drop dates that apply to shorter-than-full-term courses, please look at the Schedule of Classes search results at <http://registrar.siu.edu/schedclass/index.php>

SPRING SEMESTER HOLIDAYS:

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday 01/20/2025
Spring Break 03/08/25-03/16/25

DIVERSITY: Southern Illinois University Carbondale's goal is to provide a welcoming campus where all of our students, faculty and staff can study and work in a respectful, positive environment free from racism and intimidation. For more information visit: <http://diversity.siu.edu>. Additional [informational flyer](#).

OFFICE FOR ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS: SIU Carbondale is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible experience for all students with disabilities. Office for Access and Accommodations coordinates the implementation of accommodations. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but have not yet obtained approval please contact OAA immediately at (618) 453-5738 or <https://access.siu.edu>. You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to insure accommodations are in place when needed. Accommodations and services are determined through an interactive process with students and may involve consideration of specific course design and learning objectives in consultation with faculty.

MILITARY COMMUNITY: There are complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student, and military and veteran related developments can complicate academic life. If you are a member of the military community and in need of accommodations please visit Veterans Services at <http://veterans.siu.edu/>.

STUDENT MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER: The Student Multicultural Resource Center serves as a catalyst for inclusion, diversity and innovation. As the Center continues its work, we are here to ensure that you think, grow and succeed. We encourage you to stop by the Center, located in the Student Services Building Room 140, to see the resources available and discover ways you can get involved on the campus. Visit us at <https://smrc.siu.edu/>.

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MISSION STATEMENT FOR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

SIU embraces a unique tradition of access and opportunity, inclusive excellence, innovation in research and creativity, and outstanding teaching focused on nurturing student success. As a nationally ranked public research university and regional economic catalyst, we create and exchange knowledge to shape future leaders, improve our communities, and transform lives.

SAFETY AWARENESS FACTS AND EDUCATION: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://safe.siu.edu>.

PREGNANCY: Title IX makes it clear that students who are pregnant or have a related condition may contact the Title IX Coordinator to request accommodations or to report any allegations of discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator may be contacted at: *Nick Wortman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 0135 Woody Hall, 900 S. Normal Avenue, Mail Code 6520, Carbondale, IL 62901, (618) 453-6667, equity@siu.edu.*

SIU COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): Mental health counseling services are available by calling [CAPS](#) at (618) 453-5371. CAPS offers confidential same-day services and ongoing counseling. For after hours crisis care, students are encouraged to call 988, 911, or present to their nearest emergency room.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY (Undergraduate Only): Students who officially register for a session must officially withdraw from that registration in a timely manner to avoid being charged as well as receiving a failing grade for those classes. An official withdrawal must be initiated by the student, or on behalf of the student through the academic unit, and be processed by the Registrar's office. For the proper procedures to follow when dropping courses and when withdrawing from SIUC visit: <https://registrar.siu.edu/students/withdraw.php>.

SIUC'S EARLY WARNING INTERVENTION PROGRAM (EWIP): Students enrolled in courses participating in SIUC's Early Warning Intervention Program might be contacted by University staff during a semester. More information can be found at the University Core Curriculum's Overview webpage: <https://corecurriculum.siu.edu/for-faculty/>.

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CATALOGS:

catalog.siu.edu
gradcatalog.siu.edu - Graduate policies often vary from Undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, please refer to the graduate catalog.

CENTER FOR LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

Tutoring: [https://cls.siu.edu/](http://cls.siu.edu/)
Math Labs: <http://math.siu.edu/courses/course-help.php>

WRITING CENTER: <http://write.siu.edu/>

PLAGIARISM: See the Student Conduct Code: <http://srr.siu.edu/student-conduct-code/>

INCOMPLETE POLICY (Undergraduate Only): <http://registrar.siu.edu/grades/incomplete.php>

REPEAT POLICY: <http://registrar.siu.edu/students/repeatclasses.php>

MORRIS LIBRARY HOURS: <https://lbcal.lib.siu.edu/hours/>

ADVISEMENT: <http://advisement.siu.edu/>

SIU ONLINE: <https://online.siu.edu/>