

**INTRODUCTION TO U.S. LAW
and
LEGAL PRACTICE
SYLLABUS**

***Subject to slight modification
August 13 – 24, 2018**

Monday through Friday
9:00 – 12:10, 1:00 – 2:00
and as indicated

Sections:

- Section 1** **Professor Irene Ayers**
Vanderbilt Hall (VH) 210
- Section 2** **Professor Mary Holland**
Vanderbilt Hall (VH) 218
- Section 3** **Professor Hon. Gerald Lebovits**
Vanderbilt Hall (VH) 220

Purpose: The purpose of this course is to ensure that you have the tools you need to thrive during your LLM year at NYU School of Law. The faculty will give you an overview of the U.S. legal system, explore evolving lines of cases and teach you the basics of U.S. legal research, writing and analysis. By providing you with a broad overview and a detailed look at a line of cases, we highlight the methods and background you will need to succeed, especially during the first semester. As part of the course, we will watch and discuss a documentary related to the U.S. legal system. You will also get practice taking and evaluating law school exams.

Early Assignment & Class Requirements: Please do the first assignment **before class on Monday, August 13**. The readings for the first class are available on our NYU Classes websites, as well as the cases we expect you to read for the second week. You must attend class, be prepared to discuss the readings and submit assigned written work to the course website. Please bring your laptop to class each day.

Required Textbook: We will use a custom textbook, the *NYU Graduate Lawyering Book*, published by Wolters Kluwer, as our primary text. The textbook is available for purchase at the NYU Bookstore. Page references in the syllabus refer to the second edition. You may use the first edition, but you may need to adjust chapter and page references. In addition to the text, each section of the course requires you to read section-specific cases that are available in a course reader in the NYU bookstore and on our course websites. The faculty will also post additional materials.

Examination: You must take and pass the final two-hour exam on Friday, August 24, 2018. It will be “open book,” meaning you may bring your notes and cases and consult them during the exam; you may not consult the internet. You will type your answers on your computer and upload them to a server. You will receive a score on your midterm test, but the score will not count towards your final pass/fail grade. Faculty will post the top three final exams from each section.

Exam Review: The faculty will hold an exam review sessions that we urge all students to attend. Each section will schedule its own review session. We will review the exam and three sample answers to it.

Recommendations: We recommend that you buy a small booklet, *The U.S. Constitution and Fascinating Facts About It*. The booklet will be useful for our discussion of the Constitution. Please buy or be prepared to use a library copy of *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, Harvard Law Review Association.

We also recommend but do not require three texts as supplements to the course: *Whose Monet? An Introduction to the American Legal System*, by John Humbach, Wolters Kluwer; *Law 101: Everything You Need to Know about American Law*, by Jay M. Feinman, Oxford University Press; and *Open Book: Succeeding on Exams from the First Day of Law School*, by Barry Friedman and John C.P. Goldberg, Wolters Kluwer. These books are available for purchase on the internet or at the NYU Bookstore.

NY Bar Eligibility Requirements: Students who need the LLM for NY bar eligibility may count the credits earned for the introductory summer classes toward the eligibility requirements. *Introduction to US Law* fulfills the requirement to take two credits in American Legal Studies; *Introduction to US Legal Practice* carries one of the two credits required in Legal Research, Writing and Analysis (the other credit can be earned by taking Graduate Lawyering I).

Assessment: You will get the results of a multiple-choice assessment on Friday, August 17, and we will review them in class. You will also receive a designation of “exceeds expectations,” “meets expectations,” or “below expectations” on your final essay examination. The faculty expects to give roughly 70% of each class “meets expectations,” 15% “exceeds expectations” and 15% “below expectations.” The top three essays in each section will be posted on the course websites without name or exam number as samples of work that exceeded expectations.

Graduate Lawyering I: There are 1-credit and 2-credit sections of the course available in the fall semester and 1-credit sections available in January. Graduate Lawyering I is a graded course. We encourage Graduate Lawyering for all LLM students, but particularly for students who scored “below expectations” or “borderline meets expectations” on their final exams.

Schedule: The course meets every day from 9:00 – 12:10 and 1:00 – 2:00, with slight variations noted below with an **.

Week 1:

Homework to complete before class on Monday, August 13:

Read the U.S. Constitution

Read *Graduate Lawyering Book*, chapters 1, 2 and 4. See course websites for details.

Monday, August 13

Morning:

- “No Vehicles in the Park” In-class Exercise (Powerpoint presentation)
- How to Read and Brief a Case

Afternoon:

- Brief and review *Everett v. Rogers*, Appendix

Homework for Tuesday August 14:

Review *Graduate Lawyering*, chapters 5, 6 and 7

Prepare a written brief of *Everett v. Rogers*; bring four copies to class.

Tuesday, August 14

Morning

- Small group discussions of *Everett v. Rogers* briefs and hypotheticals based on this case
- Overview of the U.S. Constitution (Powerpoint presentation)

Afternoon:

- Overview of the U.S. Constitution

Homework for Wednesday, August 15:

Read *Graduate Lawyering*, chapter 3 on civil litigation and chapters 10-12 on standards of review.

Prepare a summary statement about the Broward matter, Exercise 3-1, pages 34-38; bring four copies to class.

Wednesday, August 15

Morning:

- Overview of the U.S. Legal System (Powerpoint presentation)
- Anatomy of the Civil Litigation Process (Powerpoint presentation)

Afternoon:

- Introduction to Legal Research: Lexis software

Homework for Thursday, August 16:

Prepare an analysis supporting Broward's or Warren's position in Exercise 6-4 or 6-5, page 93, for class discussion.

Thursday, August 16

Morning:

- Discussion of Broward and Warren arguments based on *Everett* case (Appendix)

Afternoon:

- Introduction to Legal Research: Westlaw software

Homework for Friday, August 17:

Study material covered during the week. Midterm will be open book.

Friday, August 17

9:00 – 10:00 multiple choice midterm

10:15-12:10

- Midterm review
- background on thematic line of cases
- in-class research assignment on the section's line of cases

1:00-4:00 Film and Discussion in Tishman Auditorium

Homework for Monday, August 20:

Brief cases assigned by professor and be prepared for class discussion.

Complete the research assignment started in class Friday and submit to course websites by 9:00 a.m.

Read *Graduate Lawyering* chapters 8 and 9 and your section's line of cases.

Week 2:

Monday, August 20

Morning:

- Discuss film
- Discuss line of cases relevant to section

Afternoon:

- Discuss line of cases relevant to section

Homework for Tuesday, August 21:

Brief cases assigned by professor and be prepared for class discussion.

Tuesday, August 21

Morning:

- Discuss line of cases relevant to section

Afternoon:

- Discuss line of cases relevant to section

Homework for Wednesday, August 22:

Prepare for practice exam.

Wednesday, August 22

9:00-11:00 Further discussion of cases or in-class practice exam

11:15-12:10 Review

1:00-2:00 TA Exam Workshop

Homework for Thursday, August 23:

Review course and identify questions.

Thursday, August 23

Morning:

- Discuss practice essay exam
- Wrap-up question and answer session

Afternoon:

- Questions and Answers
- Online survey and course evaluation

Homework for Friday, August 24:

Prepare for examination.

Friday, August 24

10:00 – 12:00

Final Exam