

Readings in Legal Thought Seminar

TO: Seminar students, Spring Semester, 2022, George Mason University Antonin Scalia School of Law

FROM: Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg

RE: Assignments and Logistics

This seminar will meet four times during the Spring semester on Tuesdays from 4:00 pm to 5:50 pm. The dates and readings are, subject to change, as follows:

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January 18th, Organizational Meeting. Allow one hour. Consider volunteering to do the outline for our first class discussion.

February 8th, The Declaration of Independence: A Global History, David Armitage

March 8th, Innovators, Firms, and Markets: The Organizational Logic of Intellectual Property, Jonathan M. Barnett

March 29th, Purchasing Submission: Conditions, Power, and Freedom, Philip Hamburger

All books are available on the internet at modest prices. Do not use an ebook; because the pagination is different from the hard copy, page references in student papers and in class discussions will not be aligned.

Because the dates on which we will meet are subject to change, you should remain available every Tuesday from February 8th through April 19th. I will release dates as soon as it becomes clear we will not use them.

Prior to 5:00 pm on the Thursday preceding class, you should send me a five to six page "reaction paper" on the book for that class. Your paper should be **analytical, not descriptive**. You may, but need not, read beyond the assigned book; you may **not** consult reviews of the book. Each paper must be double-spaced and paginated, and your name must be at the top of every page. Non-conforming papers will not be accepted. Page references should be put in parenthesis in the text, not in footnotes.

You should submit your paper in the form of an attachment to an email message addressed to me (dginsburg@cadc.uscourts.gov), to my assistant, Ms. Renee Douglas (renee_douglas@cadc.uscourts.gov), and to every member of the seminar. If at all possible, do not wait until the last day to send your paper.

Be sure to register for this seminar on TWEN so that you receive all necessary communications.

Registration is your implicit consent to share your email address with all class participants.

Before the seminar meets, you must read the papers submitted by the other members of the seminar and be prepared to discuss them as well as the book. I will designate in advance two or three students, preferably volunteers, to circulate by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday before class an outline for our discussion, organized around the issues raised in the papers.

Grades for the seminar will be based entirely upon your written submissions and class participation; there is no examination. This seminar qualifies as a “writing” course. I will comment on both the substance and the writing of student papers but grades will not take account of the quality of the writing.

Attendance at every meeting of the seminar is important; timely submission of every paper is imperative and is expected even of a student who will unavoidably miss a particular class.

Learning outcomes: By the end of the semester, students should have improved their ability to:
Read closely and analyze a book-length thesis;
Write a succinct but telling critique;
Courteously probe and challenge the critiques of their peers; and
Defend their own work when challenged in discussion.