

Law and Economics Colloquium – Law 208

Thursdays @ 12 pm – 1:15 pm

Antonin Scalia Law School, George Mason University, Spring 2024

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Office Hours. Wednesdays 1-3 pm & by appointment.

Welcome. This is a course that will bring together outside scholars, resident faculty, and law school students for discussion of cutting-edge research papers in the law and economics tradition. Each seminar will feature a leading scholar presenting a paper growing out of his or her research. Students must read the papers before class and submit written assignments; they are also expected to be engaged and to participate in the discussion.

Learning Outcome: This course will expose students to advanced research in law and economics. Students will be required to produce written critiques of the papers presented and participate in the discussion during the workshop. Upon completing this course, students will be able critically read and analyze the methodology and inferential process used by the scholars in producing academic research in law and economics. Students will also be able to produce and articulate critical questions that will challenge and improve the speaker's research.

Students interested in a supplementary textbook on law & economics may wish to download, ROBERT COOTER & THOMAS ULEN, LAW AND ECONOMICS, 6th Edition (2016), <https://lawcat.berkeley.edu/record/1127400?ln=en>.

Workshops are also open to all interested GMU Faculty (including non-law faculty): Class will be held only on the dates listed below.

Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance: Attendance and participation at all workshops are required.

Persons absent for more than 20% of the classroom meetings (three classes or more) will not receive a passing grade. Students are also expected to be on time.

Assignments

Weekly Assignment – For each week a paper is presented, students are required to produce a written summary and commentary along with three substantive questions. The summary should be concise yet thorough—indicating a comprehensive understanding of the author’s arguments and methodologies. The commentary can, inter alia, evaluate the scholarly contribution, the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology, and the potential implications of the work. Finally, the three questions should be thoughtful and not just simple clarification questions. This exercise is intended to not only foster a deeper comprehension of legal and economic concepts but also to cultivate the skill involved in offering constructive criticisms.

The weekly assignment must be at least two double-spaced pages, fully justified, using 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins.

The summaries & questions are due 24 hours before the start of the workshop (that is, Wednesdays @ 12 pm). **Summaries & Questions determine 40% of the final grade.**

Q&A Workshop Comments - Students are expected to engage in the discussion during the workshop. Specifically, each student will be assigned to a set of speakers where the student is required to ask a question in-class during those seminars. **Workshop comments/participation determines 20% of the final grade.**

Critique - Students must write one critique of a selected paper presented in the workshop. The critique is due by Monday, Apr. 29 @ 12 pm. **It determines 40% of the final grade.**

The critique, or memo, must offer a detailed assessment of the selected paper. Specifically, the memo should *respond* to the paper—and not offer a summary of the paper. Examples of responses include critiques of specific or general points made, possible implications, challenges to the methodology, fundamental questions left unanswered (that arguably should have been addressed), and suggestions for improvements (that follow naturally from the paper and do not represent a completely different project) and extensions.

The memo must be 4 to 5 pages, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, fully justified, and have one-inch margins. There is no need to cite extensively, but, if there are cites, please use the Bluebook form.

Submissions - All assignments should be submitted as a pdf file via email.

Laptop Policy: Students are permitted to use laptops in class; however, students are expected to give their full attention to the speaker and subsequent discussion.

Honor Code. Students are expected to adhere to the Scalia Law HONOR CODE, which may be found at https://www.law.gmu.edu/academics/honor_code/.

Class Schedule

- 1/18 [Abraham Wickelgren](#) (Texas), *Optimal Enforcement with Evidence Suppression*
- 1/25 (no class)
- 2/1 [James Dana](#) (Northeastern), *Add-On Pricing and Hidden Fees: Do Consumers Need Protection?*
- 2/8 [Neel Sukhatme](#) (Georgetown), *Judges for Sale: The Effect of Campaign Contributions on State Criminal Courts*
- 2/15 (no class)
- 2/22 [Mariyana Zapryanova](#) (Smith College), *How do Parole Boards Respond to Large, Societal Shocks? Evidence from the 9-11 Terrorist Attacks*
- 2/29 [Heidi Liu](#) (George Washington)
- 3/7 Spring Break (no class)
- 3/14 [Danielle D'Onfro](#) (Washington U.), *Private Law after Contract*
- 3/21 (no class)
- 3/28 [Adam Chilton](#) (Chicago)
- 4/4 [Yun-chien Chang](#) (Cornell), *Does Familiarity Breed Contempt or Deference? An Empirical Study of Judicial Behavior*
- 4/11 (no class)
- 4/18 [Cherie Metcalf](#) (Queen's U.)