

HOMELAND SECURITY LAW SEMINAR

Antonin Scalia Law School
George Mason University
Professor James McCament
Spring 2025

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The 21st Century risk environment facing our nation is a complex mix of manmade and naturally occurring threats and hazards including terrorism, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, power outages, hazardous materials spills, industrial accidents, pandemic influenza, cyber intrusions, among various others. In addition, our nation continues to be engaged in a series of critical policy discussions-some related to these threats and hazards and others to long-running debates regarding immigration, law enforcement and intelligence and information sharing.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 served as a catalyst for exploring new mechanisms of coordinated decision-making and response to this complex mix of what are now referred to as homeland security issues.

One such critical mechanism was the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002 as the first new Cabinet-level Department created in over 30 years. The broad policy, decision-making and execution authority of the now well-established DHS covers many areas of homeland and national security. Yet, even with the centralization of issues formerly controlled by multiple federal agencies, since its operational inception in 2003 DHS has continued to work with a multitude of Federal, state, local, tribal and private sector organizations in constructing responses to the critical homeland security issues we face. Although surrounded by robust policy discussion, these responses are ultimately statutory and regulatory in nature and are based upon legal issues of both first impression and long-standing precedent.

This course introduces the policy, strategy and operational application of homeland Security through the lens of its 20 year history by utilizing DHS principle source documents and related laws, regulations, and polices. The course also includes a practical examination of stakeholder interaction and key subject matter areas through an interactive tabletop exercise and a research paper assignment as well as other interactive opportunities throughout the course.

This is a multi-faceted course designed to expose students to complex intergovernmental and public-private sector policymaking, operational planning and crisis management. The course is designed to promote subject matter understanding, critical analysis of issues and insight into senior governmental leader decision making.

COURSE INFORMATION:

Credits: 2 Credits

Class Format: Class will consist of lecture and class discussions covering administrative law principles and recent legal issues across the DHS mission, including counterterrorism, border security, immigration, cybersecurity, and disaster relief. In addition, students will be expected to participate in an incident management exercise and write a research paper. As law students, you are to learn, in an independent manner, a body of knowledge pertaining to federal agency decision-making and its application to the critical issues faced by the DHS and to communicate your understanding and assessment of that knowledge to fellow students and faculty via discussions and written papers.

Contact Information: jmccamen@gmu.edu

Office Hours: I do not have set office hours but I am happy to meet either in the hour before class meets or after class. My contact information will be provided in class.

Recording: Recording by students of any class session is strictly prohibited.

In-class Laptop Usage: Note-taking during class using personal laptops is permissible. Accessing and use of the GMU wireless area network during class, however, is not permitted while class is in session.

Use of AI: Use of AI is permitted for the purposes of gathering research sources and development of research paper outlines. Use of AI for the actual writing of a research paper is limited to grammar and spell checking.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Grading: Grades will be based upon class participation, class exercises and a written research paper on a topic selected by each student and approved by the professors. Grading will be determined as follows:

Class Participation 15%
Class Exercises 15%
Research Paper 70%

Class Participation: Students are expected to come to class prepared to meaningfully participate during lecture discussions. This includes reading all assigned readings for that class. Some sections contain reference readings that, while not required, may be helpful in understanding that section's topic.

Class Exercises:

1. DHS Stand-up Exercise: At the conclusion of Class One, you will be assigned to serve in a senior official position within the Department of Homeland Security, a role which you will hold for the remainder of our semester together. That position is one specifically named in the Homeland Security Act and I hope will help frame your participation and your perspective on the issues discussed through the semester. In addition to your readiness to discuss the general concepts found in the assigned weekly reading, you will also be asked to provide questions and input based upon your position within the Department of Homeland Security. In the section covering the DHS regulatory agenda, you will be asked to present on a recent regulatory action relevant to your assigned position.

2. SAFETY Act Exercise: Based on an understanding of the SAFETY Act application process, students will be presented with some basic information on a hypothetical technology company ("Get Them Before They Get You") and will have to prepare and defend responses to these questions in front of officials from the SAFETY Act Office (Professor McCament) and meet the demands of your clients (Guest Lecturer).

3. Incident Management Exercise: Students will participate in an interactive tabletop exercise simulating a complex, well-coordinated terrorist attack on critical infrastructures and population centers within the United States. Each student will be assigned a role as a key public or private sector official with attendant concerns and responsibilities. The exercise will include an emerging threat phase, operational response phase and post-incident recovery phase. Students are expected to play a dynamic and informed role playing during the class exercise.

Final Course Requirement:

Research Paper: Each student will write a 20-25 page research paper, not including citations, on a current homeland security issue of their choice (National, regional, state, local, sector or international focus). The paper should be completed using the following organizational format: problem statement, background (include key players, authorities, resources, etc.), discussion (presentation of alternatives with the identification of pros and cons for each alternative) and recommendations (including rationale behind their selection).

Your research paper is expected to reflect thorough legal research and analysis while understanding many of the topics may be policy oriented. Citations may be entered as footnotes or endnotes, but there must be a consistent format. The paper should focus on the benefits, drawbacks and obstacles, including practical, policy and legal, to the application of proposed policy alternatives. The recommendations section should clearly describe the rationale for the option of choice.

Prior approval of the topic for the research paper is required. Students should submit a one paragraph written description of their proposed topic via email for approval **by the beginning of the 6th class session.** Students may also subsequently submit an outline of their paper for review.

Final papers are to be delivered electronically to Professor McCament by nlt 10 p.m. on Monday, April 28th.

COURSE OUTLINE

Class One: January 16, 2025:

(Part 1) Homeland Security Guiding Principles

1. **Whitman v. American Trucking Associations, Inc., 531 U.S. 457 (2001) (focus upon holding)** <http://supreme.justia.com/us/531/457/case.html>

(Part 2) September 11, 2001: Future Threat Attacking the Future of our Homeland Security

2. **9/11: *The 9/11 Commission Report*. Chapter 8**
<http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/index.htm>

3. **Pre-DHS Homeland Security Environment:**
White House Office of Homeland Security. *National Strategy for Homeland Security*. July 2002 (pp. 1-14, 63-69).

<https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/nat-strat-hls-2002.pdf>

Reference:

[*The FBI's Handling of the Phoenix Electronic Communication and Investigation of Zacarias Moussaoui Prior to September 11, 2001: Statement of Eleanor Hill: September 24, 2002 \(fas.org\)*](#)

Class Two: January 30, 2025 (Class on January 23, 2025 is to be rescheduled)

(Part 1) Department of Homeland Security Leadership Roles and Responsibilities:

At the end of our first class you will be assigned one of the following positions as a member of the 2003 DHS Leadership Team:

1. **Secretary of Homeland Security;**
2. **Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security;**
3. **Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Homeland Security;**
4. **Under Secretary of Management;**
5. **Under Secretary of Border & Transportation Security;**
6. **Under Secretary of Intelligence Analysis & Infrastructure Protection;**
7. **Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness & Response;**
8. **Under Secretary for Science & Technology;**
9. **General Counsel;**

10. Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties;
11. Director, United States Secret Service;
12. Commandant, United States Coast Guard;
13. Director, Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration Services;
14. Ombudsman, Citizenship & Immigration Services;
15. Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Border Security;
16. Commissioner, Bureau of Customs & Border Protection;
17. Assistant Secretary, Transportation Security Administration;
18. Assistant Secretary, Intelligence & Analysis;
19. Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection;
20. Assistant Secretary, International Affairs;
21. Assistant Secretary, Private Sector;
22. Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs;
23. Policy Advisor to the Secretary;

White House Advisors:

24. Homeland Security Advisor to the President;
25. Deputy Homeland Security Advisor to the President;

For class two please research your assigned position within DHS and be prepared to present to our class a no more than 5 minute brief overview of your position to include: (1) where the duties and functions of your position may have existed before DHS; (2) where this position existed within the DHS framework circa 2003; (3) how your position has evolved in the years following the initial creation of DHS; and (4) potential challenges or benefits resulting from your position's inclusion in DHS.

As noted in the class overview, your assigned position also determines those assigned readings for which you are responsible to help present throughout the semester. In addition to your readiness to discuss the general concepts found in the assigned weekly reading, you will also be asked to provide questions and input based upon your position within the Department of Homeland Security.

(Part 2): Homeland Security: Strategic and Threat Environment Then and Today

1. The Office of Homeland Security:

[Federal Register: Establishing the Office of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Council](#)

2. DHS Today: Strategic Environment:

[Department of Homeland Security's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2020-2024 | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)

3. DHS Today: Threat Environment:

[Homeland Threat Assessment 2024 \(dhs.gov\)](#)

Reference:

4. **Presidential Proposal of the Department of Homeland Security: June 2002**
<https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/book.pdf>

Class Three: February 6, 2025

(Part 1) Congressional Oversight of DHS: Control or Quagmire?

1. **9/11: *The 9/11 Commission Report*. Chapter 13.**

<http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/index.htm>

2. **O’Hara, Joan V. Turf Wars-How a Jurisdictional Quagmire in Congress Compromises Homeland Security** *New York University Journal of Legislation and Public Policy* 18.1 (2015).

[Turf Wars: How a Jurisdictional Quagmire in Congress Compromises Homeland Security](#)

3. **Changing the Landscape of Oversight**

[The Future of DHS Project: Key Findings and Recommendations: Congressional Oversight - Atlantic Council](#)

(Part 2) DHS Regulatory Implementation:

4. **Federal Rulemaking**

- a. **Overview of Federal Regulations and the Rulemaking Process**

Congressional Research Service (CRS)

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10003>

- b. **Federal Rulemaking: The Role of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs**
Congressional Research Service (CRS):

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32397.pdf>

Class Four: February 13, 2025

(Part 1): Homeland Security Intelligence Enterprise

1. [The Office of Intelligence and Analysis FY 2020-2024 Strategic Plan | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)

2. **Department of Homeland Security Intelligence Enterprise: Operational Overview and Oversight Challenges for Congress: Mark A. Randol. (CRS)**

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesecc/R40602.pdf>

(Part 2): Countering Threats to the Homeland

1. [DHS Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Targeted Violence | Homeland Security](#)

Class Five: February 20, 2025

(Part 1) Cybersecurity to Protect and Promote the Homeland

1. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity Strategy 20
https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/DHS-Cybersecurity-Strategy_1.pdf
2. Class-Action [lawsuit](#): Plaintiff v. Solarwinds Corporation et. al. U.S. District Court Western District of Texas

(Part 2) Protecting Infrastructure and Promoting Risk and Resilience

3. [U.S. Department of Homeland Security Artificial Intelligence Strategy | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
4. [S&T Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning Strategic Plan \(dhs.gov\)](#)

Reference

5. [Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence | The White House](#)

Class Six: February 27, 2025 (Retrospectives on the 20th Anniversary Year of DHS)

From 2003 to 2023 – Perspectives of DHS From Founding to Today

1. [The Two Faces of DHS: Balancing the Department's Responsibilities \(hsaj.org\)](#)
2. Assessing the Effectiveness of DHS-20 Years Post 9/11
[Assessing DHS Dahl Costs of War.pdf \(brown.edu\)](#)
3. [DHS twenty years after 9/11: Looking back and looking ahead \(brookings.edu\)](#)
4. [The Convergence of National Security and Homeland Security: A Conversation with DHS Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas | Center for Strategic and International Studies \(csis.org\)](#)

Reference:

1. [DHS 2.0: Rethinking the Department of Homeland Security | The Heritage Foundation](#)

Reminder: Paper Topics Due To Professor McCament

Class Seven: March 6, 2025

Terrorist Screening and Watch Listing

(Part 1):

1. **The Terrorist Screening Database and Preventing Terrorist Travel**
<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R44678.pdf>

(Part 2): Presidential Decision-Making Regarding Terrorist Screening and Travel:

1. 2021-Present:

- a. [Proclamation on Ending Discriminatory Bans on Entry to The United States | The White House](#): January 21, 2021
- b. Reference: Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, et al., Petitioners v. Hawaii, et al

https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/17pdf/17-965_h315.pdf (
Reference: [Docket for 17-965 \(supremecourt.gov\)](#))

Spring Break: March 13, 2025 – Enjoy!

Class Eight: March 20, 2025

Federal Emergency Management Background and Reform

1. [Executive Order 12127 \(fas.org\)](#) (1979)
2. **The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned**

<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/reports/katrina-lessons-learned>
(Chapters 1, 5 (sub sections 1-3,15).

3. DHS [National Response Framework | FEMA.gov](#) October 2019:

(Review Introduction, Operational Coordination, Operational Planning)

Reference: The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Selected Readings

Class Nine: March 27, 2025

Overview of Federal Immigration Development and Reform (Subject to Change)

U.S. Immigration Law and Policy of the 19th Century:

1. [A Brief History of U.S. Immigration Policy from the Colonial Era to the Present Day \(cato.org\)](#)

U.S. Immigration Law and Policy in the 20th and 21st Century:

2. Legal Immigration System:

[Research: Rethinking the U.S. Legal Immigration Sy.. | migrationpolicy.org](#)

3. Border Security: [Migration at the U.S.-Mexico Border: A Challenge Decades in the Making \(migrationpolicy.org\)](#)

Reference Only:

a. Refugee Act of 1980, Public Law 96-212

<https://uscode.house.gov/statutes/pl/96/212.pdf>

b. Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Pub.L. 99-603

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/99/s1200>

c. Immigration Act of 1990, Pub.L. 101-649

[Pub. L. 101-649 Immigration Act of 1990](#)

d. Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, Pub.L. 104-208

<https://www.congress.gov/104/plaws/publ208/PLAW-104publ208.pdf>

Class Ten: April 3, 2025

Federal Immigration Through Litigation: (Subject to Change)

Comparing and Contrasting Border and Immigration Policies:

1. Memorandum from Secretary Janet Napolitano Establishing DACA:

<https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/s1-exercising-prosecutorial-discretion-individuals-who-came-to-us-as-children.pdf>

2. [Memorandum from Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen on the Rescission Of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals \(DACA\) | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)

3. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ET AL. v. REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ET AL

https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/19pdf/18-587_5ifl.pdf

4. 2010:

[State Efforts to Deter Unauthorized Aliens: Legal Analysis of Arizona's S.B. 1070 \(fas.org\)](#)

5. 2023:

[Bill Text: TX SB4 | 2023 | 88th Legislature 4th Special Session | Enrolled | LegiScan](#)

Reference

6. [U.S. Reports: Arizona v. United States, 567 U.S. 387 \(2012\). \(loc.gov\)](#)

7. [Wolf v. Innovation Labs: https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/19/19-1212](#)

Reminder: Paper Outlines Due

Class Eleven: April 10, 2025

(Part 1): Protecting Against Catastrophic Liability: The Meaning and Application of the SAFETY Act

1. In re: September 11th Litigation. 280 F.Supp.2d 279 (S.D.N.Y. 2003)

<https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp2/280/279/2501198>

2. [DHS SAFETY Act \(Home\)](#)

(Part 2): SAFETY Act Exercise: Directions will be provided at the beginning of the exercise.

Class Twelve: April 17, 2025: Selected Topics Regarding Homeland Security

Part 1: Countering Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS):

Protecting Foreign Investment in the United States: CFIUS and FIRRMA

31 C.F.R. Part 800.

- [Provisions Pertaining to Certain Investments in the United States by Foreign Persons \(31 C.F.R. part 800\)](#)
- [Final Rule on Mandatory Declaration Provisions \(31 C.F.R. part 800\)](#)

Class Thirteen: April 24, 2025

Table-Top Exercise: Details to be provided during Class Eleven

Reminder: Final Papers Due Electronically to Professor McCament **nlt 10:00 pm Monday April 28th.**