Course Materials

The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction (CALI), various materials
Selected cases and authorities, listed below and as supplemented/revised during the semester

Course Overview
This course is designed to introduce the United States legal system to LL.M. students who did not receive their legal education in the U.S. as well as provide instruction on practical skills to succeed in law school. We will cover the structure of the U.S. government and legal system as well as basic legal writing and analysis skills. The student will learn how to analyze and apply precedent through the study of cases (listed below and subject to modification) and through research, writing, and skill development assignments (to be handed out and discussed in class).

Class Meetings and Schedule
We will meet on Tuesdays from 6:00pm – 7:50pm.

Course Outline, Meeting Dates and Assignments

1. Acclimating to Law School, Preparing for Class, and Getting the Most out of Class (August 25th)
   How to Read a Legal Opinion: A Guide for New Law Students by Orin Kerr
   Parker v. Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation 3. Cal. 3d 176; 474 P.2d 689; 89 Cal. Rptr. 737
   CALI: Preparing for Your First Semester of Law School (25 minute podcast)

2. Overview of the U.S. Legal System and Introduction to the U.S. Constitution (September 1st)
   Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 1—An Overview of the U.S. Legal System (full chapter)
   Jaeger-Fine Chapter 2—The Constitution of the United States of America (pp. 8-16)
   The Constitution of the United States of America (pp. 99-115 of Jaeger-Fine)
   National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius
   United States v. Morrison
   Gonzalez v. Raich
   McCullouch v. Maryland.

3. The U.S. Constitution (September 8th)
   Jaeger-Fine Chapter 2—The Constitution of The United States of American (pp.16-27)
   Arizona v. United States
   Philadelphia v. New Jersey
   McDonald v. City of Chicago
   Atkins v. Virginia
   Lawrence v. Texas
4. The Basics of Legal Writing for Exams and Papers (September 15th)
   - CALI: Learning Legal Analysis Through Its Components: Issue, Rule, Application, Conclusion – IRAC (1 hour lesson)
   - CALI: Legal Research Methodology (1 hour lesson)
   - CALI: Punctuation and Grammar Basics for Students (50 minute lesson)
   - CALI: Plagiarism – Keeping Out of Trouble (45 minute lesson)

5. U.S. Judicial Systems (September 22nd)
   - Jaeger Fine, Chapter 3—U.S. Judicial Systems (pp. 27-41)
     - Roe v. Wade
     - Marbury v. Madison

6. U.S. Judicial Systems, Continued (September 29th)
   - Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 3—U.S. Judicial Systems (pp. 41-46)
     - Hertz v. Friend,
     - International Shoe v. Washington,
     - World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson
     - Good year Dunlop Tires v. Brown

7. Sources of Law (October 6th)
   - Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 4—Sources of Law (pp. 47-53)
     - Rector of Holy Trinity Church v. United States
     - Griffin v. Oceanic Contractors, Inc.

8. Sources of Law, Continued (October 20th)
   - Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 4—Sources of Law (pp. 61-74)
     - Li v. Yellow Cab
     - Hart v. Massanari
     - Citizens United v. Federal Election Comm’n
     - Planned Parenthood v. Casey
     - Lawrence v. Texas

9. Long Term Final Exam and Paper Preparation Strategies (October 27th)
   - CALI: Exam Taking Skills, Outlines, and Advice for Law Students Panel 1 (22 minutes)
   - CALI: Exam Taking Skills, Outlines, and Advice for Law Students Panel 2 (13 minutes)
   - CALI: Exam Taking Skills, Outlines, and Advice for Law Students Panel 3 (12 minutes)
     - Garratt v. Dailey
     - Fisher v. Carrousel
     - Richardson v. Hennly
     - Wallace v. Rosen

10. Civil Dispute Resolution (November 3rd)
    - Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 5—Civil Dispute Resolution in the United States (pp. 76-85)
      - Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly
      - Ashcroft v. Iqbal

11. Civil Dispute Resolution Continued (November 10th)
    - Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 5—Civil Dispute Resolution in the United States (pp. 85-95)
      - Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. Ltd. v. Zenith Radio Corp.
      - Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.
      - Celotex Corp. v. Catrett

12. Short-Term Exam Preparation and Exam Taking Strategies (November 17th)
    - CALI: Tips for Multiple Choice Exams in Law School (12 minute podcast)
    - CALI: Top 10 Tips for Successfully Writing a Law School Essay (12 minute podcast)
    - Prepare

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13. Synthesizing Case Law & Review (November 24)
   Jaeger-Fine, Chapter 4—Sources of Law (pp. 74-75)

14. Make-Up Session (if needed, December 1st)

Notes on Scheduling
This syllabus is not absolute. We may have meetings in addition to the ones listed above and/or may need to modify those dates. You will be notified of any changes over the course of the semester and are responsible for knowing what material is required for a given class meeting.

Grading
Your grade will be comprised of your performance on the writing assignments and any quizzes given in class (35%), the final paper (50%), and class participation (15%).

Class Participation
Class participation and attendance in class and at the fundamental skills sessions will constitute 15% of your final grade. Significant portions of each of our class sessions will be spent in Socratic dialogue, thus preparation is essential.

Office Hours
Professor Hodge will hold office hours upon request and as-needed. She can also be reached by phone (202-305-9291) and by email: Jennifer.Hodge@usdoj.gov and will respond as soon as possible. Alex Sklut is available for drop-in office hours from 8:30am until 4:00pm every weekday that courses are being held. She can also be reached by phone (703-993-8853) and by email: asklut@gmu.edu.