



## FALL 2026 COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: 493-001

Course Title: Computer Crime Seminar

Credit Hours: 2

Grading Mode: Letter grade

Meeting Day(s)/Time(s): MON 4:00P-6:00P

Meeting Mode: In-person

Exam Day(s)/Time(s): N/A

Final Exam Mode: PAPER due NOV. 20

Prerequisite(s): N/A

Corequisite(s): N/A

Instructor(s): Mysti Degani

Contact Information: TBA

Office Hours: Immediately following class or by appointment

### **Course Overview:**

This course examines the domestic laws relating to crime involving computers, including the statutes applicable to substantive criminal offenses and the procedural law governing the collection and use of electronic evidence. The course will also discuss current debates and policy issues in these areas. Students do not need any technical knowledge or background relating to computers or the Internet; all necessary concepts will be explained during the course.

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course, students will:

- Be knowledgeable about the federal statutes commonly used to charge computer-related crime, including the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, and understand how they can be applied to criminal conduct; and
- Understand the legal framework governing the collection and use of electronic evidence in criminal cases, including the Stored Communications Act, Pen Register Act, Wiretap Act, and Fourth Amendment.

### Reading(s) & Supplement(s):

- Orin S. Kerr, *Computer Crime Law* 6th Ed. (hereinafter referred to as “Textbook”)
- Other readings as assigned below

### Grading Policies

#### Final paper: 85%

- The final paper must address a topic related to the class that is approved by the professor. **This paper is due FRI., NOV. 20.**

#### Presentation relating to final paper: 15%

- Each student must give a presentation to the class during one of the final two class periods that relates to their final paper. While your finished paper is not due at this time, you will need to have given adequate time to researching, creating a thesis, and organizing your thoughts and information so that you can provide a clear, informative presentation.

Participation and preparation: A single-increment adjustment for class participation and preparation (e.g. from B to B+ or for A- to B+) may be applied at the professor’s discretion.

### Classroom Policies

Attendance: Per AR 3-1.4, “maintenance of matriculation requires regular class preparation, participation and attendance, registration in the course of study required for the student’s program (full-time or part-time), successive registration for each fall and spring term of each academic year until study is completed, and compliance with all other relevant requirements.”

Absences: Per AR 4-1.1, “if a student is absent for any reason for more than 20 percent of the sessions of a course, the student is not eligible for credit in that course. A student who is not present for at least 75 percent of a session of the course is absent from that session.”

Use of Technology & AI: Students may bring and use laptops to class. However, use of laptops unrelated to the class discussion and/or that is distracting to classmates will be considered when determining whether a grade adjustment for class participation and preparation is warranted.

## Course Schedule & Assignments

### Week 1:

Date: August 17, 2026

Topic: **Introduction to the Course and Each Other**

Assignment(s):

- Textbook pages 1-4 (up to “notes and questions”) and 26-27
- Mark D. Rasch, [Criminal Law and the Internet sections I and II](#).

### Week 2:

Date: August 24, 2026

Topic: **Computer Search & Seizure Part I**

Assignment(s):

- Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41
- Budapest Convention Article 19
- 3889-393: 397-403; 449-457; 540-548; 557-568; 574-580; 601-613; 620-628; 629 (sec. 4)-632; 634
- U.S. v. Eldred, 933 F.3d 110 (2d Cir. 2019)
- Yotam Berger, Lawfare, [Spyware-Based Searches for Domestic Criminal Law Enforcement](#).
- Mark Mazetti and Ronen Bergman, [Internal Documents Show How Close FBI Came to Deploying Spyware](#), Washington Post.
- Julia Jacobo, [Judge Orders Apple to Help Unlock San Bernadino Shooter's Phone](#), ABC News.
- *In re Order Requiring Apple, Inc. to Assist in the Execution of a Search Warrant*, 149 F. Supp. 3d 341 (E.D.N.Y. 2016)

### Week 3:

Date: August 31, 2026

Topic: **Computer Search & Seizure Part II**

Assignment(s):

- Textbook pages 377-385; 387-88; 460-479; 484-498; 508-527; 587-596; 615-616
- *United States v. Ackerman*, 831 F.3d 1292 (10th Cir. 2016)

### Week 4:

Date: September 7, 2026

Topic: **No class - Labor Day**

Date: September 9, 2026 - **observing Monday schedule**  
Topic: **The Electronic Communications Privacy Act & National Security Authorities**

Assignment(s):

- Budapest Convention, Articles 16-18, 20, 21
- Textbook pages 415-424; 427-444 (up to geofences); 458 sec. 5; 597-600; 641-646; 652-656; 658-659; 670; 679 (sec 4.)-680; 683-685; 695-702; 705-707; 714-715; 717(sec. 7)-719; 731-733; 895-899
- Chatrie v. United States, \_\_ U.S. \_\_ (2026)
- Paul Ohm, [Limiting Reverse Searches in the Stored Communications Act](#), Lawfare.
- Jude Joffe-Block, *Your Data is Everywhere*. [The Government is Buying It Without a Warrant](#), NPR.
- Matthew Tokson, [When the Government Buys Sensitive Data](#), Lawfare.
- Stephanie Pell and Richard Salgado, [Installing a Content Patch in the Stored Communications Act](#), Lawfare.
- Bob Goodlatte and Richard Salgado, *Forget the Knock on the Door*. [The Government Searches in Secret Now](#), Washington Post.
- Director James Comey, FBI, [Remarks at Brookings Institution Re: Going Dark](#).
- [Statement of 5 Eyes Ministers on End-to-End Encryption and Public Safety](#).
- Marc Zwillinger & Zach Judge-Raza, *Privacy, Power, and Encryption: Why End-to-End Security Matters*, available at: [ZwillGen](#)
- Alan Z. Roshenstein, [The Encryption Debate Isn't About Stopping Terrorists, It's About Solving Crime](#), Lawfare.
- Emily Harding, Center for Strategic & International Studies, [Section 702: Why Do We Need It?](#)
- Noah Chauvin, Brennan Center for Justice, [Congress Should Not Reauthorize Warrantless Surveillance of Americans](#).

Week 5:

Topic: **Computer Fraud & Abuse Act Part I**

Date: September 14, 2026

Assignment(s):

- 18 U.S.C. § 1030(a)
- Textbook pages 27-33 (to sec. 4), 35-44 (to sec. 7); 45-58, 59-61, 62-63, 64-70 (to notes and questions), 71-72, and 82-87
- Budapest [Convention on Cybercrime Articles 1, 2, 4, and 5](#).

Week 6:

Date: September 21, 2026

Topic: **Computer Fraud & Abuse Act Part II**

Assignment(s):

- Review § 1030(a) and Budapest Convention readings
- Textbook pages 91-93, 101-128 (to sec. 7), and 136-139
- Press release, [Russian Nationals Indicted for Conspiracy to Defraud Multiple Cryptocurrency Exchanges and Their Customers](#).
- Taylor Armerding, *Hack the Hackers? The Debate Rages On*, CSOOnline, available at [CSOOnline](#)

Week 7:

Date: September 28, 2026

Topic: **Conspiracy and Aiding & Abetting**

Assignment(s):

- 18 U.S.C. § 2, § 371, & § 1030(b)
- Budapest Convention on Cybercrime Chapter 2 Article 11, available at [Council of Europe](#)
- *United States v. Ulbrecht*, 31 F. Supp. 3d 540 (S.D.N.Y. 2014)
- *United States v. Bondars*, 801 Fed. Appx. 872 (4th Cir. 2020), also available at [UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT](#)
- Indictment, [United States v. Lacey et al](#)
- Kevin Poulson, *FBI Arrests Hacker Who Hacked No One*, The Daily Beast (will be provided by professor)

Week 8:

Date: October 5, 2026

Topic: **Other Commonly Charged Offenses**

Assignment(s):

- 18 U.S.C. §§ 875, 1028, 1028A, 1029, 2261A, 1343; 1832
- 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 & 506; 15 U.S.C. § 1125
- [Budapest Convention](#), Chapter II, Articles 3, 6-10.
- Textbook pages 157-161; 169-178; 186-192; 211-222
- Janelle Griffith, [People.com](#), [Retired Police Officer Jailed Over Charlie Kirk Assassination Post Gets \\$835,000 Settlement](#).
- *United States v. Osinger*, 753 F.3d 939 (9th Cir. 2014)
- *United States v. Yung*, 37 F.4th 70 (3d cir. 2022)
- *United States v. Baugh*, 583 F. Supp. 3d 321 (D. Mass. 2022)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [U.S. Attorney Announces Historic \\$3.36 Billion Cryptocurrency Seizure And Conviction In Connection With Silk Road Dark Web Fraud](#).
- Bob Sullivan, [Here's how hackers are using Zelle to raid bank accounts; and why victim was out \\$1800 until I wrote to the bank](#).

- U.S. Department of Justice, [Woodbury Man Sentenced to 30 Years in Prison for "Deliberate, Persistent Sextortion Scheme."](#)
- WeProtect Global Alliance, [A web of deceit: Financial sexual extortion of children and young people.](#)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [Five Defendants Sentenced in Connection with Operating One of the Largest Illegal Television Show Streaming Services in the United States.](#)
- [Megaupload indictment.](#)

Date: October 12, 2026  
 Topic: **Fall Break - No class**

Week 9:

Date: October 19, 2026  
 Topic: **Evolving Cybercrime**  
 Assignment(s):

- 47 U.S.C. § 223(h)
- Textbook pages 237-242, 253-256; 445-447;
- Jake Offenhartz, [Two Men Charged With Creating AI-Generated Porn Under New Law Targeting 'Deepfakes'.](#)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [L.A. Man Who Hacked Into Email Accounts and Obtained Nude Photos for "Revenge Porn" Website Sentenced to Federal Prison.](#)
- Dhruv Mehrotra & Andrew Coutts, Wired, [Youtube, Discord, and Lord of the Rings Led Police to a Teen Accused of a US Swatting Spree.](#)
- Dan Goodin, Ars Technica, [Swatters Used Ring Cameras To Livestream Attacks, Taunt Police, Prosecutors Say.](#)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [Ohio Gamer Pleads Guilty In Swatting That Caused a Death.](#)
- Kellen Dwyer, [It's Time to Surge Resources Into Prosecuting Ransomware Gangs,](#) Lawfare.
- U.S. Department of Justice, [United States Leads Dismantlement of One of the World's Largest Hacker Forums.](#)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [Justice Department Announces Seizure of Cybercrime Websites Selling Hacking Tools to Transnational Organized Crime Groups.](#)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [Russian Citizen Sentenced to Prison for Hacking into U.S. Companies and Enabling Major Cybercrime Groups to Extort Tens of Millions of Dollars.](#)
- Mike Levine, Pierre Thomas, and Lucien Bruggeman, [FBI has opened 250 investigations tied to violent online network '764' that preys on teens, top official says,](#) ABC News.
- [Congress.gov, The Dark Web: An Overview, available at: https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12172](#)
- U.S. Department of Justice, [Leading Dark Web Marketplace Creator and Operator Extradited from Colombia to the United States.](#)
- Department of Justice, [Cryptocurrency Enforcement Framework.](#)

- U.S. Department of Justice, [\*Operator of Helix Darknet Cryptocurrency “Mixer” Sentenced in Money Laundering Conspiracy and Ordered to Forfeit over \\$400M in Assets.\*](#)

Week 10:

Date: October 26, 2026

Topic: **Evolving Cybercrime Part II**

Assignment(s):

None; will continue discussion of readings in week 8

Week 11:

Date: November 2, 2026

Topic: **International Issues in Cybercrime**

Assignment(s):

- Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, Articles 23-35
- Textbook pages 837-845; 855-859; 860-866; 867-869
- European Commission, [\*E-evidence - Cross Border Access to Electronic Evidence.\*](#)
- Matt Zapotsky et al, [\*Britain Briefly Suspends Sending Evidence to U.S. Law Enforcement, In Move Some See as A Sign of a Fraying Relationship\*](#), Washington Post.
- Althea Chang, [\*Facebook exec released from custody in Brazil data dispute\*](#), CNBC.
- [\*Brazil Court Suspends Telegram for Not Complying With Order on Neo-Nazi Groups\*](#), WHBL.
- Justin Sherman, [\*The Kremlin is Trying to Force Twitter and Facebook to Store Data Locally. It's Not Alone\*](#), EuroNews.
- [\*German High Court Refuses to Extradite Hacker to the US.\*](#)

Week 12:

Date: November 9, 2026

Topic: **Final Paper Presentations Part 1**

Week 13:

Date: November 16, 2026

Topic: **Final Paper Presentations Part 2**

## **Student Resources**

[Antonin Scalia Law School Academic Regulations](#)

[GMU Common Course Policies Addendum](#)

[Mason Square Services](#)

[Mason Square Police](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room 110

Emergency - Dial 911

Escort Services - 703-993-8070

Dispatch – 703-993-2810

[Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#)

Mason Square Sexual Assault Services:

Van Metre Hall, Room 222D

703-993-8186

Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If a student wishes to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. Students may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

[Mason Square Clinic](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room B102

703-993-2831

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[Student Health Services](#)

[Student Disability Services](#)

[University Life](#)