



SPRING 2026 COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: Law 129-001

Course Title: Federal Sector Employment Law

Credit Hours: 2

Grading Mode: Letter grade

Meeting Time(s): Tuesdays 6:05 – 8:05 p.m.

Meeting Mode: In person

Exam Time(s): N/A

Exam Mode: Paper

Prerequisite(s): None

Corequisite(s): None

Instructor(s): Jeff Rosenblum

Contact Information and Office Hours: jrosenbl@gmu.edu

Reading(s) & Supplement(s):

See syllabus

Course Overview:

An in-depth study of the unique employment laws applicable to the U.S. federal government.

Course Learning Outcomes:

To gain familiarity with employment and labor laws applicable to the federal government. To prepare students interested in government careers with laws applicable to them as federal employees.

Grading Policies:

Participation %: 25

Midterm Exam/ Paper %: N/A

Final Exam/ Paper %: 50% (final paper)

Additional Content %: 25% (final quiz)

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:

Moderate Use Policy: Generative AI tools may be used in this course for the following purposes, and with the following guidelines. Students may use AI in this course to brainstorm, outline, study, explore and research, but may not use AI for text of written assignments or during the final quiz. Students must use AI tools responsibly, verify facts presented by AI, disclose when AI tools are used to create course work product, properly cite any AI tools utilized, and should be prepared to produce the transcript of prompts and responses upon request. Misuse will be treated as a violation of academic standards.

Course Schedule & Assignments

Week 1:

Date: January 20

Topic: Introduction/Overview of the Civil Service/Forums

Assignment(s): 5 U.S.C. Chapter 75, Subchapters 1 and 2; 29 C.F.R. Part 1615, Subpart C; Perry v. MSPB, 582 U.S. 420 (2017) (syllabus only)

Week 2:

Date: January 27

Topic: Employee Rights/Probationary Periods

Assignment(s): Loudermill, 470 U.S. 532 (1985); McCormick, 307 F.3d 1339 (Fed. Cir. 2003); Stewart, 2023 MSPB 18 (May 16, 2023); Kaszowski, 2023 MSPB 15 (Apt. 4, 2023)

Week 3:

Date: February 3

Topic: Federal employment and the current administration

Assignment(s): TBA

Week 4:

Date: February 10

Topic: Employee Misconduct/Discipline

Assignment(s): 5 U.S.C. Chapter 75; 5 C.F.R. Part 752; McCauley, 116 MSPR 484 (2011); Stribling, 2008 MSPB LEXIS 1384 (2008); Ludlum, 278 F.3d 1230 (Fed. Cir. 2002); Metz, 780 F.2d 1001 (Fed. Cir. 1986); Miller, DC-0752-20-0790-I-1 (May 16, 2023)

Week 5:

Date: February 17

Topic: Penalties/Nexus

Assignment(s): Douglas, 5 MSPR 280 (1981); LaChance, 178 F.3d 1246 (Fed. Cir. 1999); Thomas, 2022 MSPB 35 (Oct. 20, 2022); Chin, 2022 MSPB 34 (Oct. 7, 2022); Doe, 2012 MSPB LEXIS 7432 (2012); Doe, 565 F.3d 1575 (Fed. Cir. 2009); Major, 413 F. Supp. 66 (ED LA 1976)

Week 6:

Date: February 24

Topic: Labor Issues

Assignment(s): Dept. of Labor, 38 FLRA 899 (1990); Dept. of VA, 3 F.3d 1386 (10th Cir. 1993); SSA, 19 FSIP 019 (2019); NTEU, 2023 FSIP 037 (2023)

Week 7:

Date: March 3

Topic: Discrimination

Assignment(s):

McDonnell Douglas, 411 US 792 (1973) (summary only)
Gabriele G., EEOC Appeal No. 0720180015 (Nov. 15, 2019)
Phyllis F, EEOC Appeal No. 0120150799 (Feb. 16, 2021)
Jess P, EEOC Appeal No. 0120132186 (Sept. 17, 2019)
Jazmine F, EEOC Appeal No. 012016132 (2018)
Annalee, EEOC Appeal No. 0120170991 (Nov. 17, 2019)
Regina B. Jackson, Docket No. DC-0752-14-0739-E-1
Article on Role of Agency Counsel – to be provided

Week 8:

Date: March 17

Topic: Discrimination

Assignment(s): Continue from last class

Week 9:

Date: March 24

Topic: Guest Speaker

Assignment(s): N/A

Week 10:

Date: March 31

Topic: Reasonable Accommodations

Assignment(s): Article – to be provided; 29 CFR Part 1630; Thersa E, EEOC Appeal No. 0120182764 (June 23, 2021); Latarsha A, EEOC Appeal Nos. 0120123215 and 012013079 (Mar. 15, 2016); Lamar M, EEOC Appeal No. 2019005929 (June 15, 2021); Frances A, EEOC Appeal No. 2019004187 (Nov. 30, 2020)

Week 11:

Date: April 7

Topic: Whistleblower Protections/Prohibited Personnel Practices

Assignment(s):

5 USC Section 2302
Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act
Turner, 2023 MSPB 25 (Aug. 30, 2023)
Covington, 2023 MSPB 5 (Jan 13, 2023)
Chambers, 116 MSPR 17 (2011)
Whitmore, 680 F.3d 1353 (Fed. Cir. 2012)

Week 12:

Date: April 14

Topic: Employee Performance/First Amendment Issues

Assignment(s): Lee, 2022 MSPB 11 (May 12, 2022); Wiley, 2008 MSPB LEXIS 6751 (Jan. 12, 2008); Kaplan, 733 F.3d 1148 (2013); Pickering, 391 US 563 (1968)

Week 13:

Date: April 21

Topic: Final Quiz

Assignment(s): N/A

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.

[Mason Square Clinic](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room B102

703-991-2831

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[Student Health Services](#)

[Student Disability Services](#)

[Student Conduct](#)

[University Life](#)