



SUMMER 2026 COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: 497-R01

Course Title: Emerging Law of Internet Seminar

Credit Hours: 2

Grading Mode: Letter grade

Meeting Day(s)/Time(s): MON/ WED 6:00-7:50p

Meeting Mode: Online

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

Final Exam Mode: PAPER

Prerequisite(s): N/A

Corequisite(s): N/A

Instructor(s): CARL SZABO & PETER V. ROMAN

Contact Information: cszabo2@gmu.edu, proman@gmu.edu

Office Hours: TBD

Course Overview

A deep dive into internet law with a focus on privacy but to also include AI, IP, and similar matters related to the law and technology.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the effects of the internet on privacy law in both the civilian and criminal settings at the local, national, and international levels
- Students will develop skills to advocate on issues related to internet privacy and its interaction on the national and world stages.
- Students will engage in deep research and analysis of topical issues related to privacy and internet security.
- Students will engage in mock situations such as presentations to Congress or Federal agencies that demand students not only understand their own arguments but also the arguments of the opposition.

Reading(s) & Supplement(s):

Since this is ever evolving, we're using regularly accessible materials

Unless otherwise specified, all readings are mandatory, and you should be prepared to discuss them in class. Because the law and policies related to Internet privacy are constantly changing, and because sometimes I change my mind, we may change the reading assignments,

sometimes drastically, from time to time. We will announce such changes in class. If you cannot attend class, you should consult a colleague to ensure you have the correct assignments and are appropriately prepared. If there is something that you think would be useful for the class to read, please suggest it.

Grading Policies

Participation & Preparation %: 15

Course attendance is required. Participation and preparation for our course meetings will be a critical part of your performance in this course. In the unusual event that you cannot attend a particular session, please inform us by email before class. Excessive absences will affect your grade.

Midterm %: 10

Final %: 75

There will be one longer research paper. All written assignments should conform to Bluebook citations.

Directed Research paper:

For this semester, and the majority of your final grade, we are engaging in a directed research project designed to place you in the position of an advocate. Students will rank their top 2 topics from a list provided by the Professor on which they would like to work. The Professor will then, taking into account ranking choices, assign to students. Note that you may still be assigned a topic area that you did not choose. For most of the topics, there will be one student arguing each side of the issue. This means that students should take into account opposing arguments and address them in their advocacy document.

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:

Open Use Policy: Students are encouraged to explore generative AI tools in this course, and are authorized to use AI for any purpose during this course except during any quiz or exam, or the drafting and/or editing of any written assignment. 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: May 18

Topic:

The First Amendment and Civil and Constitutional Concepts of Information Privacy - Szabo

Assignment(s):

- Warren & Brandeis, [The Right to Privacy](#), 4 Harv. L. Rev. 193 (1890).
- [How the Internet Works](#) (please read the introduction and all six parts).
- Review, compare and contrast the following bills:

Date: May 20

Topic:

Government Access to Private Information: The Fourth Amendment and the Third-Party Doctrine - Roman

Assignment(s):

- 4th Amendment
- Katz v. United States, 389 U.S. 347 (1967)
- Smith v. Maryland, 442 U.S. 735 (1979)
- Florida v. Riley, 488 U.S. 445 (1989)
- Kyllo v. United States, 533 U.S. 21 (2001)

Week 2:

Date: May 25

Topic:

Memorial Day - NO CLASS

Date: May 27

Topic:

Government Access to Private Information: Statutory Limitations - Roman

Assignment(s):

- Laws
 - Berger v. New York,

388 U.S. 41 (1967)

Stored

Communications Act

(SCA)

- 18 U.S.C. § 2702-13 (Electronic Communications Privacy Act (“ECPA”))
- 18 U.S.C. § 3121-27 (Pen Register/Trap and Trace)

Week 3:

Date: Jun-1

Topic:

State Privacy Laws - Szabo

Assignment(s):

- California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA)/CPRA
- Read the [California Consumer Privacy Act](#).
- [CCPA regulations](#)

Date: June-3

Topic:

Protecting Your Privacy Through Cybercrime Laws - Roman

Assignment(s):

- 18 U.S.C. § 1028 (Identity Theft)
- 18 U.S.C. § 1028A (Aggravated Identity Theft)
- U.S. v. Salazar-Montero, 520 F. Supp. 2d 1079 (N.D. Iowa 2007)
- U.S. v. Contreras-Macedas, 437 F. Supp. 2d 69 (D.D.C. 2006)
- 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510-2514 (Wiretap Act)
- 18 U.S.C. § 1029 (Access Device Fraud)
- 18 U.S.C. § 1030 (Hacking)

Week 4:

Date: June-8

Topic:

State and Federal Powers for Regulation of Content and Content Moderation - Szabo

Assignment(s):

- [NetChoice v Paxton](#)
- [NetChoice v Moody](#)
- Miami Herald Publishing Company v. Tornillo, 418 US 241 (1974)
- PruneYard Shopping Center v. Robins, 447 US 74 (1980)
- Hurley v. Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston, Inc., 515 US 557 (1995)
- Rumsfeld v. Forum for Academic and Institutional Rights, Inc. 547 US 47 (2006)

Date: June-10

Topic:

Data Breach Legislation - Roman

Assignment(s):

- California Data Breach Law, Cal. Civ. Code §§ 1798.29, 1798.80 et seq. Massachusetts Data Breach Law, Mass. Gen. Laws § 93H-1 et seq.
- FTC v. Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, LLC (3d Cir.), Supplemental Brief of FTC, 14-3514 (115.52 KB) LabMD, Inc. v. FTC, 891 F.3d 1286 (11th Cir. 2018)
- In re Microsoft Corp., FTC No. C-4049 (Dec. 20, 2002) In re Twitter, Inc., FTC No. C-4316 (Mar. 2, 2011)
- In re Snapchat, Inc., FTC No. C-4501 (Dec. 23, 2014)

Week 5:

Date: June-15

Topic:

Internet of Things, Health and Genetic Privacy, Cambridge Analytica discussion and Social Media Privacy - Szabo

Assignment(s):

- Internet of Things
 - FTC Staff Report, [Internet of Things Privacy and Security in a Connected World](#) (Jan. 2015).
 - Jat Singh & Julia Powles, [The Internet of Things - The Next Big Challenge to Our Privacy](#), The Guardian (Jul. 28, 2014).

Date: June-17

Topic:

Federal Consumer Privacy - Roman

Assignment(s):

- Spokeo, Inc. v. Robins, 136 S. Ct. 1540 (2016)
- In re Google Inc. Cookie Placement Consumer Privacy Litig., 988 F. Supp. 2d 434 (D. Del. 2013), aff'd in part and vacated in part, 806 F.3d 125 (3d Cir. 2015), petition for cert filed, (U.S. Mar. 14, 2016)
- Dwyer v. Am. Express Co., 652 N.E.2d 1351 (Ill. App. Ct. 1995) Fraley v. Facebook, Inc., 830 F. Supp. 2d 785 (N.D. Cal. 2011) In re Google Inc., FTC No

Week 6:

Date: June-22

Topic:

Children's Privacy - Szabo

Assignment(s):

- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act
- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998, 15 U.S.C. §§ 6501–6505
- [Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule](#): Final Rule Amendments -- 16 C.F.R. Part 312
- In re Apple Inc., FTC No. C-4444 (Mar. 25, 2014)
- United States v. VTech Elec. Ltd. Inc., No. 1:18-cv-114 (N.D. Ill. Jan. 8, 2018) United States v. Playdom, Inc., No. 8:11-cv-00724-AG (ANx) (C.D. Cal. May 24,

Date: June-25

Topic:

European Regulation and Right to Be Forgotten - Roman

Assignment(s):

- Background
 - [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (1948).
 - Louis Joinet, [Guidelines for the Regulation of Computerized Personal Files](#), United Nations (1988).
 - Ernst-Oliver Wilhelm, [A Brief History of Safe Harbor](#) (2000-2016), International Association of Privacy Professionals (last visited May 14, 2023).

Week 7:

Date: June-29

Topic:

Directed Research analysis and work - Roman/Szabo

Date: July-2

Topic:

Directed Research analysis and work - Roman/Szabo

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](#)

[University Life](#)