

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys American constitutional law, focusing primarily on the decisions of the United States Supreme Court. Emphasis is given to the powers of Congress and the President, the relation between the national and state governments, and individual liberties. Topics include Congress's commerce, spending, and tax powers; presidential power; due process; equal protection; property rights; privacy, family autonomy, and other nontextual liberties.

The goals of this course include more than the transmission of the history and current content of constitutional law. The goals include the development of basic legal skills, such as analyzing legal sources, deriving law from them, and applying law to varying factual settings. In addition to teaching constitutional doctrine and policy, the course should enable students to develop their professional capacity to formulate and assess alternate approaches to a legal problem, as well as to judge what outcomes are certain, probable, or only possible.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required:

Erwin Chemerinsky, *Constitutional Law* (3rd ed. 2009)

Recommended:

Erwin Chemerinsky, *Constitutional Law: Principles and Policies* (3rd ed. 2006)

Louis Seidman, *Constitutional Law: Equal Protection of the Laws* (2003)

Dan Coenen, *Constitutional Law: The Commerce Clause* (2004)

COURSE GRADING

There will be a three hour examination administered at the scheduled time and place.