To: All 1L fall starter students

Re: First-year mini-seminar series, Winter 2018

Each year, the Law School offers mini-seminars aimed at giving students and faculty the opportunity to enjoy discussions about the law in a relaxed and informal setting. As detailed below, each mini-seminar focuses on a different area of substantive interest. There will be refreshments provided at all mini-seminars. No academic credit is awarded in 1L mini-seminars. For mini-seminars which meet at professors’ homes, addresses will be provided to students admitted to the mini-seminars. The Law School will offer three mini-seminars this winter term exclusively for first-year fall starter JD students:

**WINTER 2018 (FIRST-YEAR) MINI-SEMINARS**

**LAW 885 / 005 – Of Mockingbirds and Finches: Justice, Idealism, and the Law**

Instructor: Kate Andrias  
Offered: Winter 2018  
Credit: No  
Enrollment Cap: 10  

**Meeting Information**

Dates: Mondays: 3/5 and 3/26  
Time: 7:00-9:00 PM  
Location: Professor Andrias’s home (about 0.8 miles from the Law School)

**Description**

Atticus Finch may be the county's most famous legal hero. According to one recent article, "he is invoked as a guiding influence more frequently in essays for law school admission than any other factor by far." This mini seminar will use Atticus Finch and *To Kill a Mockingbird* as a jumping off point for two discussions. At our first session, we will focus on the problems of legal ethics and racial and social injustice at the heart of the novel; we will examine Atticus Finch’s virtues and shortcomings as a lawyer; and we will ask why the novel remains so canonical and Atticus Finch so admired despite trenchant critiques. At our second session, we will continue our critique of Harper Lee’s classic, but we will also open up to a more personal inquiry. Students will reflect on the ideals that inspired them to go to law school; on how law school nurtures or challenges those ideals; and on ways to do justice as a lawyer.

**LAW 885 / 006 – Abraham Lincoln and Legal Ethics**

Instructor: Ted Becker  
Offered: Winter 2018  
Credit: No  
Enrollment Cap: 12  

**Meeting Information**
Dates: Wednesdays: 3/21 and 3/28
Time: 6:30-8:30 PM
Location: TBA (venue close to the Law School)

Description
This two-class 1L mini-seminar will address various lessons that modern lawyers can learn from Lincoln about professional responsibility and the practice of law. Topics will be chosen with student input before the first class, but some topics that spring immediately to mind include candor to the court and opposing counsel, dealing honorably with clients, diligent preparation, and effective oral and written advocacy. Among other sources, I'll draw on several surveys of his legal career and the online archive of documents from his legal practice.

LAW 885 / 007 – My Cousin Vinny

Instructor: Tim Pinto
Offered: Winter 2018
Credit: No
Enrollment Cap: 12

Meeting Information
Dates: Mondays: 3/19 and 3/26
Time: 7:00-9:00 PM
Location: Professor Pinto’s home (about 5.5 miles from the Law School)

Description
My Cousin Vinny was released 25 years ago, and remains one of the greatest courtroom comedies every written. It's not only funny, but contains, surprisingly, a lot of serious lessons about beginning to practice law. We will use the movie as a launching point to discuss issues such as professionalism, courtroom procedure, different styles of advocacy, and what makes a "good" lawyer.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

1. Interested students will use the Law School’s Class Bidding system to bid for mini-seminars. Class Bidding will open on the first day of classes to accept mini-seminar bids. To access Class Bidding, go to https://www.law.umich.edu/classbidding.

2. Students may list up to three (3) mini-seminars in order of preference. There are almost always fewer seats in mini-seminars than there are students who seek to fill them. Therefore, if you get into a mini-seminar, you are expected to attend each session. Please do not sign up if you cannot make this commitment. If you drop a mini-seminar after you have been awarded a seat, you may be precluded from enrolling in mini-seminars in future terms.

3. Seats for 1L mini-seminars are assigned randomly.
4. Unlike in the usual Class Bidding registration process for regular fall and winter term classes, during mini-seminar registration we place a higher priority on making sure that each mini-seminar gets filled than on making sure students get the mini-seminars they want most. Therefore, although your preferences will be taken into account, it is quite possible that you will be assigned a mini-seminar that is low on your list of choices. So, please list only those mini-seminars that you are absolutely certain you are willing to take.

**Timing and Deadlines**

Mini-seminar registration begins Wednesday, January 10. **You must submit your requests in Class Bidding by Monday, January 15 at 5:00 PM.** Assignment results will be available in Class Bidding on Wednesday, January 17. An announcement will be made on MLaw Live when results are ready to view in Class Bidding.