

To: All 1L students

Re: First-year mini-seminar series, Winter 2021

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. No academic credit is awarded in 1L mini-seminars. The Law School will offer three mini-seminars this winter term exclusively for first-year JD students:

WINTER 2021 (FIRST-YEAR) MINI-SEMINARS

LAW 885 / 008 – What Do I Wanna Be When I Grow Up? Strategies for Figuring It Out

Instructor: Evan Caminker

Offered: Winter 2021

Credit: No

Enrollment Cap: 12

Meeting Information

Dates: Tuesdays: 2/16 and 2/23

Time: 7-9 p.m. ET

Location: REMOTE

Description

Some students begin law school with a strong career vision, perhaps aspiring to advocate for the public interest, litigate or do transactional work for a law firm, prosecute or defend criminal suspects, represent the government, or do generalist legal work for a local community. Most students, however, arrive without specific aspirations or a clear sense of why various choices might lead (or not) to professional and personal fulfillment. In this mini-seminar we'll share and discuss the questions you might begin asking yourselves as you sort this out. After years of speaking with our alumni about career choices and trajectories, we've learned that professional happiness frequently turns on a combination of factors. Of course it's helpful to be interested in your particular legal field (e.g., criminal, environmental, civil rights, business, entrepreneurial). But alumni also point to two other critical variables: characteristics and core competencies. First, how well do various job characteristics match your personality and proclivities? Would you prefer a job that is high pressure or not, fast paced or slow, surprising or predictable, generalist or specialist, soloist or collaborative, cause-oriented or people-oriented, passion-driven or puzzle-driven? Second, how well do your competencies fit with different job requirements? Are you—or can you become—the skilled writers, orators, negotiators, planners, or problem solvers that different jobs demand? I promise no psychometric testing, no psychobabble, and only a little navel-gazing ;) We'll discuss how you might start thinking about these connections and use your remaining time here to explore and expand your interests and competencies to give yourself a better sense of direction. *This is not a substitute for exploring the same questions with our Career Planning professionals*, but this seminar provides a complementary opportunity to chat about these questions in a small-group format.

LAW 885 / 009 – Rebellious Lawyering: Self & Movement

Instructors: Mira Edmonds and Gowri Krishna

Offered: Winter 2021

Credit: No

Enrollment Cap: 12

Meeting Information

Dates: Tuesdays: 2/23 and 3/30

Time: 6-8 p.m. ET

Location: REMOTE

Description

In this mini-mini-seminar, we will come together as a community of learners to investigate the role of the lawyer in movements for social change. How do we recognize ways in which we, as individuals and as part of the legal profession, participate in and perpetuate systems of oppression? How do we work towards equity, liberation, justice, and solidarity? Together we will lay the groundwork for continuing self-reflection throughout law school and beyond, and create connections with like-minded peers and faculty.

LAW 885 / 010 – In Courts Where Ghosts Appear: The Salem Witch Trials

Instructor: Len Niehoff

Offered: Winter 2021

Credit: No

Enrollment Cap: 12

Meeting Information

Dates: Mondays: 3/1 and 3/8

Time: 7-9 p.m. ET

Location: REMOTE

Description

In this mini-seminar, we will study the witchcraft prosecutions that took place in Salem, Massachusetts in 1692 and that led to the execution of nineteen of the accused. We will pay particular attention to the lessons that these prosecutions have to teach us about the structure of legal systems, the role of precedent, the nature of due process, the separation of civil and religious authority, the right to representation by counsel, the conduct of court proceedings, and the types of proof that should qualify as admissible evidence. With respect to the last, we will look especially at issues of relevance, confrontation, hearsay, character, and so-called “spectral” evidence. Readings will consist of primary and secondary source materials, as well as Arthur Miller’s play *The Crucible*. Our first meeting will consist largely in a discussion of history and substantive legal principles. Our second meeting will be a blend of discussion and of “acting out” certain part of the trials.

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 Tuesday, January 19. **You must submit your requests in Class Bidding by Friday, January 22 at 5 p.m. ET.** Assignment results will be available in Class Bidding on Tuesday, January 26. An announcement will be made on MLaw Live when results are ready to view in Class Bidding.