

Sharon Cop

Sharon is a S.J.D candidate at the University of Virginia School of Law. He earned his bachelor degrees in Law and Finance from The Interdisciplinary Center of Hertzeliya, Israel, in 2001(B.A and LL.B, in Finance and Law accordingly). On his second year at the Law School, Sharon was recruited to work as an intern for one of the leading litigator of Israel, Mr. Dov Weissglass. Following his graduation, he practiced law as a white-collar crimes defender, for about a decade, before joining the LL.M program at UVA Law.

As a practitioner, Sharon specialized in corruption cases; Corporates criminal responsibility (securities, management responsibility, and corporates responsibility); and criminal aspects of malpractice. He argued several cases in front of the Israeli Supreme Court and took an active role in several groundbreaking cases in his fields of specialty. Several such cases initiated legislation reforms, which are currently under different stages of parliamentary work. On top of his practice, Sharon kept his love for teaching. He tutored legal and non-legal classes in different institutions. (Which he keeps these days, teaching at UVA.) He actively served in criminal law related BAR committees, acted as a prosecutor for the Tel Aviv Jurisdiction ethics tribunal and actively served as an officer in the IDF reserved forces.

Sharon joined the LL.M program in the fall of the 2011 academic year out of his wish to expand his professional horizons and to enrich his perspectives about the different aspect of the legal field. He was immediately caught by the great academic atmosphere at UVA law, and rather than returning to his practice in Israel, he took the academic route.

Among other areas of research, over the LL.M year Sharon examined the approaches different jurisdiction take towards negligence in the criminal law, in theory, and in practice. His dissertation, entitled “Gorillas in the Midst of a Philosophical Debate”, takes a new approach to resolving a longstanding scholarly debate over the justification for negligence in the criminal law. Mentored by Professor Barbara A. Spellman, Sharon employs empirical data, mainly from the fields of cognitive psychology and neuroscience, re-examining the different philosophical assumptions of this scholarly debate. His findings shed significant doubt regarding the philosophical justification for negligence, establishing new guidelines for policymakers in addressing to failure of risk perception by different actors in society.

Among other academic activities, Sharon recently founded the Graduate Forum at UVA Law. This student-run colloquium allows graduate students from different disciplines to exchange scholarly ideas and test their first steps of scholarly work with their peer critics. Sharon’s objective is to amplify this forum to the general university community, to open the legal discussion to other fields of science, and to elaborate significant interdisciplinary approach towards different legal questions.