

PUBP 4609 – Legal Practice

Syllabus

3.0 credit hours, Fall 2026

Section 89174

Thursdays, 5:00 - 7:45 P.M., Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons, Room 125

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Office Hours – by appointment. Please email me with your availability.

General Information

Course Description and Goals

In this course we will develop practical attorney/legal skills. We will read, analyze, and brief real-life legal cases and materials, practice drafting legal documents, and hear first-hand from attorneys working in the field.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Have a basic understanding of foundational concepts of some of the broad areas of law such as torts, contracts, criminal law, litigation, etc.
- Articulate your personal and professional motivations for considering a career in law and position those within the values and norms of the legal profession.
- Develop skills in trial advocacy, including persuasive writing and oral argument.
- Brief an appellate opinion.

Other Class Info:

- **Pre-Requisites:** PUBP 3000 or PUBP 3610.
- **Textbook:** None. Reading assignments for all classes (estimated 50-100 pages per class).
- **Class Website and Email:** CANVAS (set up immediate notifications).

Course Requirements & Grading

Course Requirements and Grades:

- Midterm Exam – 20%
- Final Exam – 20%
- Participation – 40%
- Mock Supreme Court Case Arguments – 10%
- Case Brief and Reflection Paper – 10%

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment or exam will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Attendance

Given the small size, once a week class meeting schedule, and interactive nature of this class, **attendance is taken each class period and is required.** Any requests for an absence to be excused must be made via e-mail to the professor either before or immediately after class. Excused absences are at the professor's sole discretion, and documentation may be required. Excused absences will only be granted in narrow circumstances that include, but are not limited to, Institute sanctioned absences, illness, jury duty, requirement for military service, religious observances, and death of a family member. It is the student's responsibility to request that an absence be excused either before or immediately after the absence from class.

All absences not excused by the professor are unexcused absences. Note that job interviews, career fair attendance, conflicts with other on-campus commitments (tour guide, students orgs, etc.), trips, etc. are all considered unexcused absences. You are allowed **ONE** unexcused absence per semester with no penalty. This is to account for the fact that you may have an intractable conflict of the nature described in this paragraph come up during the course of the semester. For the second and subsequent unexcused absence, your final grade in the course will be lowered by one letter grade for each unexcused absence. (i.e. if you have two unexcused absences, the highest possible letter grade you can earn is a B, three a C, four a D, and five an F). Please note this is independent of the fact that your participation grade will also suffer from excessive unexcused absences as outlined in the class participation section above.

Georgia Tech's official attendance policy can be found at <https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>. In addition to the GT rules, it states "All students are responsible for obtaining an understanding of each instructor's policy regarding absences." Information about how to notify instructors when you need to miss class and what kind of documentation you should provide is at: <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/student-absence-regulations/>.

Course Communications

I will communicate with you using only your Georgia Tech e-mail address, and you should communicate with me using my Georgia Tech e-mail address (above). All enrolled students have an e-mail account provided by Georgia Tech. This account is a student's official point of contact with the Institute, and you are expected to check it each school day.
<https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/3/>

I routinely send important class communications using Canvas announcements. Please make sure you have your Canvas settings adjusted so that announcements are delivered to your e-mail inbox when they are sent.

Collaboration & Group Work

Part of the fun of studying law is talking with your classmates about cases and the issues they raise outside of class. It's practically the favorite past-time of law students and law professors, too, and I encourage you to do so. Just make sure that when it's time to complete your assignments and exams that your work is entirely your own, and that you are not sharing resources or work with your classmates or anyone else. The assignments are to improve your own understanding, and the exams gives me a chance to assess and give you feedback on your analytical skills that are being developed through the course, so your work must be entirely your own.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at 404.894.2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

Assignments must be turned in by the beginning of the class period in which they are due, and Canvas' due date/time will reflect that. Late assignments will not be accepted and a score of zero will be assigned if your assignment is not received by the beginning of the class during which it is due. If you feel there are extenuating circumstances in a particular situation making this impossible, please discuss with the instructor to see if there are any accommodations that can be made.

Exams will be made available as Canvas quizzes for at least a 24-hour period of time that will end at 11:59pm Eastern time on the date the Exam is listed on our syllabus. The exam is due in Canvas by 11:59pm on the date listed. Exams may only be made up in the case of documented, excused absences. If you feel you have extenuating circumstances, please speak with the professor as soon as possible, PRIOR to the exam. I reserve the right to change the format of any exam to an in-person exam.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Additional Resources for Students

I want to see you succeed not just in this course, but at Georgia Tech and during this time of your life in general. If you need assistance in the course, or in other areas, please don't hesitate to reach out for help. Resources to keep in mind if you're facing challenges while at Tech include the Dean of Students (<https://studentlife.gatech.edu>), the Counseling Center (<https://counseling.gatech.edu>), the GT Police (<https://police.gatech.edu>), Stamps Health Services (<https://health.gatech.edu>), and Belonging & Student Support (<https://belonging.gatech.edu/studentssupport>)

If you are having issues with housing, food insecurity, clothing, or other financial issues, please be aware of possible assistance available to you through the STAR Program (Students' Temporary Assistance and Resources). More details on the STAR Program are available at: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/star-services>

Inclusion

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Course Schedule

The course schedule provided below will guide us through the semester. It may be necessary to tweak dates and readings, though any such change will be communicated to you prior to those classes/dates.

Dates for the midterm and final exams will not be changed.

No Legal Advice/No Attorney-Client Relationship

While your professor is an attorney, nothing expressed during this class, office hours, or any other interaction you may have with the professor in or out of class constitutes legal advice of any kind, and no attorney-client relationship exists between the professor and any student.

Class Meetings (Subject to Change)

	Date	Topic
1	27 Aug 26	Introduction
2	3 Sep 26	Briefing Cases and Drafting Motions
3	10 Sep 26	No Class Meeting
4	17 Sep 26	Contracts Law
5	24 Sep 26	Property Law
6	1 Oct 26	Labor and Employment Law
7	8 Oct 26	Immigration Law
8	15 Oct 26	MIDTERM (no class meeting)
9	22 Oct 26	Trademark and Copyright Law
10	29 Oct 26	Military Law / Being a JAG
11	5 Nov 26	Criminal Law
12	12 Nov 26	International Human Rights Law and Law of Armed Conflict
13	19 Nov 26	Supreme Court Case Arguments
14	26 Nov 26	Thanksgiving Break (no class meeting)
15	4 Dec 26	Wrap-Up and Make-Up Class Case Brief and Reflection Paper Due

16	(10-17 Dec 26)	FINAL EXAM
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