

**Veterans Law
Fall 2025**

Judy Clausen, Legal Skills Professor, Director, Veterans and Service Members Legal Clinic

Course and Class Number: LAW 6930

Office Location: 105K (in the clinical offices). If I am not in my office, and you need to reach me, please email, text, or call me.

Office Phone: Please use work cellular phone (904) 412-5999.

Email: jclausen@law.ufl.edu

Class Schedule: Wednesdays 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM

Class Location: HH 283

Office Hours: My in-person office hours are on Wednesdays from 12:30 PM until 3:00 PM, and by phone on Thursdays from 9:00 AM until 11:30 AM. Please do not feel that you need to limit email, text, or telephonic questions to scheduled office hours. You may call, text, or email any time.

Course Communications:

Students should feel free to email, text, or call any time or day or visit my office during my scheduled in-person office hours.

Required Course Materials:

Veterans Benefits: Law, Theory, and Practice by Stacey Rae Simcox and David E. Boelzner from Carolina Academic Press, copyright 2023.

Veterans Benefits Manual most recent edition, published by LEXIS-NEXIS, produced by National Veterans Legal Services Program, edited by Barton Stichman, Ronald Abrams, Amy Odom, and Richard Spataro. Guidance in obtaining this book for free is in the UF Law Veterans and Service Members Legal Clinical Guidebook that I will provide after the first day of class. Other materials are available through electronic legal research, on the course page, and on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims website by doing a docket search, and by email. During the semester, I will communicate regularly by email and on the course page.

Course Description:

This class offers students an opportunity to learn Veterans Law, a specialized administrative law practice area and hone essential lawyering skills for any legal practice area. Students develop legal practice skills through in class and out of class exercises.

Course Purpose and Learning Outcomes:

Through classroom instruction, reading for class, and skills exercises and instruction, students learn essential concepts in Veterans Law and administrative law generally as well as to:

- advocate for clients before Article 1 tribunals and federal appellate courts generally,
- draft appellate briefs and briefs before administrative review boards,
- research, understand, and apply rules of appellate procedure,
- draft motions and proposed regulations and legislation,
- develop evidence to present before administrative review boards and administrative agencies,
- interview and counsel clients,
- write persuasively on behalf of clients,
- prepare client letters and emails,
- work with expert witnesses and other material witnesses,
- navigate ethical issues,
- research and analyze federal statutes, administrative regulations, and case law,
- evaluate clients' needs and identify potential solutions,
- negotiate settlements.

Grading:

This class is graded on the following scale. There will be an in-class closed book final examination and skills exercises for which students receive assessment. The final exam will be worth 60% of the grade. The final skills exercise will be worth 30% of the grade. And the first skills exercise will be worth 10% of the grade.

Grading Scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A (Excellent)	4.0	C+	2.33	D-	0.67
A-	3.67	C (Satisfactory)	2.00	E (Failure)	0.0
B+	3.33	C-	1.67		
B (Good)	3.00	D+	1.33		
B-	2.67	D (Poor)	1.00		

Workload Expectations:

This is a two-credit course. Thus, students must prepare at least two hours for every one hour of class, as required by the ABA. Therefore, students should spend, at a minimum, four hours of preparation for each week of class and two hours in class.

UF LEVIN COLLEGE OF LAW STANDARD SYLLABUS POLICIES:

Other information about UF Levin College of Law policies, including compliance with the UF Honor Code, Grading, Accommodations, Class Recordings, and Course Evaluations can be found at <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/427635/files?preview=98226140>.

Religious Holidays:

The Florida Board of Education and state law govern University policy regarding observance of religious holidays. The following guidelines apply:

Students, upon prior notification to their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances. If a faculty member is informed of or is aware that a significant number of students are likely to be absent from class because of the religious observance, the faculty member should not schedule a major exam or other academic event at that time.

A student who is to be excused from class for religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification for the reason for the absence. Furthermore, a student who believes that they have been reasonably denied an education benefit due to religious beliefs or practices may seek redress through the student grievance procedure.

Health and Wellness:

Being a part of this class includes attention to and care of your physical, mental, and emotional health. If you need help, please see the resources below:

U Matter, We Care:

Students who are in distress or know other students who are in distress should contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 352-392-1575, and the University Police Department: 352-392-1111, or 911 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Sexual Health Care Center, 352-392-1161.

University Police Department
352-392-1111, or 911 for emergencies.
<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Professionalism, Punctuality, Preparation, and Participation:

Students should prepare for and actively participate in class. Preparedness and active participation are key to success in this class. Tardiness to class sessions is unprofessional. Moreover, students must timely and thoroughly complete assigned skills exercises.

Course Website and Email Communication:

I will email important information. For example, students may learn through an email that I have changed the reading for a particular class or responded to commonly asked questions. Students should check email at least twice a day. There will be a Canvas course page.

Classroom Guidance:

Students should consult the Schedule of Assignments for assigned readings and an outline of topics to be explored in weekly class sessions. We will also conduct skills exercises. I will provide guidance concerning these skills exercises.

It is important that you feel welcome and that you are comfortable participating in discussions and communicating on issues related to this class. If your preferred name is not the name listed on the official UF roll, please let me know as soon as possible. I want to acknowledge your preferred name and pronouns that reflect your identity. Please let me know how you would like to be addressed in class if your name and pronouns are not reflected by your UF-rostered name. Welcome to class.

Reading Assignments (all from *Veterans Benefits: Law, Theory, and Practice*)

Below is a tentative schedule of reading assignments for the first month of classes. This schedule of assignments may change, and I will add reading including sample briefs and Veterans Court cases. I will notify you of changes and additions.

Class	Topic	Assigned Reading
1	Intro to Veterans Benefits & Writing for Advocacy	Pages 3-27, 533-570 (Chapter 1, 9)
2	Department of Veterans Affairs, Representing Veterans	Pages 27-53, 571-593 (Chapter 2 & 10)
3	VA Benefits for Veterans & Family	Pages 53-95 (Chapter 3)
4	Eligibility for Benefits: Who is a veteran?	Pages 95-159 (Chapter 4)