

Health Law

University of Florida Levin College of Law

Fall 2025 Syllabus

LAW 6930

3.0 Credit Hours

Name: Professor Jerron Wheeler

Office: Holland Hall 341

Cell Phone: 352-281-0030

Email: jerronwheeler@law.ufl.edu

Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. (1:00 PM – 3:00 PM)

Meeting Time: Mon. & Wed. (10:35 AM to 12:00 PM)

Location: Holland Hall 283

Course Description:

This course examines the legal frameworks that shape access to healthcare for low-income populations in the United States. Anchored in the study of major public programs such as Medicaid and Medicare, the course explores how health law operates at the intersection of poverty, policy, and federalism. Students will gain a deep understanding of the statutory and regulatory structures that govern healthcare access, with particular focus on the doctrinal, procedural, and economic barriers that disproportionately affect poor communities.

Topics will include cooperative federalism, Section 1983 litigation, administrative rulemaking under the APA, and legislative strategies for reform. We will explore key cases such as *Medina v. Planned Parenthood*, *NFIB v. Sebelius*, and *Goldberg v. Kelly*, and assess how courts have shaped and limited the rights of individuals seeking care. Throughout the course, students will engage critically with competing theories of poverty, consider the political economy of health systems, and evaluate both traditional and emerging tools for legal and policy change. By the end, students will be equipped to navigate and challenge the systems that determine access to health care in America.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- I. Analyze and interpret the legal and regulatory frameworks governing healthcare access for low-income populations, with particular emphasis on Medicaid, Medicare, and related public health programs.
- II. Evaluate how constitutional principles, federal statutes, and landmark cases (e.g., *Medina*, *Sebelius*, *Goldberg*) shape and constrain the rights of poor individuals seeking healthcare.
- III. Apply legal tools—including Section 1983 litigation, APA rulemaking, and legislative advocacy—to identify and challenge barriers to healthcare access, especially for vulnerable and marginalized communities.
- IV. Understand and explain how market forces, healthcare financing structures, and medical debt impact the delivery of care, and assess how these economic dynamics intersect with legal doctrine and policy implementation.

- V. Critically assess the role of cooperative federalism in shaping public health law, including the division of authority between federal and state governments and its implications for program accessibility and equity.

Required Course Materials:

There is no casebook for this course. Instead, all required readings are posted on Canvas.

Optional Course Materials:

Poverty, Health and Law: Readings and Cases for Medical-Legal Partnership

ISBN: 978-1594607790

Authors: Elizabeth Tobin Tyler, Ellen Lawton, Kathleen Conroy, et al.

Edition: 1st

<https://www.amazon.com/Poverty-Health-Law-Medical-Legal-Partnership/dp/1594607796>

Note: Please be sure to register for the Canvas course and have any required materials with you in print or easily accessible electronic form in class. You are responsible for checking your Canvas page and the e-mail connected to the page on a regular basis for any class announcements or adjustments.

Grades:

Your grade in the course will be based on five writing assignments, with potential adjustment based on your attendance and participation. I will provide more information on the writing assignments in class. Each of the five papers you submit will need to be between **three to five** pages in length. You must email the papers to me (jerronwheeler@ufl.edu) by 11:59 pm on their respective due dates to receive full credit. All students must submit at least three of their five assignments by October 10th. I will not accept any papers after Friday, November 21st at 11:59 pm. All students may revise up to three of their five papers, and those revisions will be taken into account for final grades. Those revised papers must be submitted by Friday, November 21st at 11:59 pm.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory and an essential part of the course. In accordance with ABA guidance, you are allowed a total of two absences from class, for any reason (including for illness, medical appointments, job interviews, school activities, work tasks, family obligations, and the like). For ease of administration and to respect your privacy, I do not differentiate between “excused” or “unexcused” absences. As a result, there is no need to tell me why you will be or were absent from class, so long as you have no more than two absences total. Only observance of a University-recognized religious holiday does not count toward your two absences, but you must notify me in advance of those religious observance-related absences. More than two absences could result in a reduction of your final grade or even failing the course. The law school's policy on attendance can be found [here](#).

Office Hours:

My office hours this semester will be on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. While I love talking about health law and the law more generally, I am happy to talk about whatever you'd like. You do not need to prepare for office hours.

ABA Out of Class Hours Requirements:

ABA Standard 310 requires that students devote 120 minutes to out-of-class preparation for every “classroom hour” of in-class instruction. Each weekly class is approximately 1.5 hours in length, requiring at least **6 hours of preparation** outside of class. This is independent of the time spent completing the writing assignments.

Additional Information:

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 this [link](#).

Recordings of Class:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor and Student Conduct Code.

Health and Wellness Resources:

Law school can be a daunting experience, especially when life outside the law becomes challenging. UF Law provides numerous resources for your support, and I encourage you to seek help if you have concerns. Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food or lacks a safe place to live is encouraged to contact the Office of Student Affairs. If you are comfortable doing so, you may also notify me so that I can direct you to further resources.

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in crisis, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, (352) 392-1575 (available 24/7), or visit the [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in crisis.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call (352) 392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call (352) 392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

- *University Police Department:* [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call (352) 392- 1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call (352) 733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

GENERAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: These are just the projected readings and topics for the first half of the course. The second half is to come at a later date.

Week 1: Introduction to Health Law

- Class introduction
- What is health law? (article)

Week 2: Legal Determinants of Health

- Legal Interventions to Address US Reductions in Life Expectancy (article)

Week 3: Health and Constitutional Law

- *King v. Smith*
- *Goldberg v. Kelly*
- Reich's New Property (article)

Week 4: Health and Social Welfare

- Medicaid & Medicare
- Federalizing Medicaid (article)
- *Harris v. Mcrae*

Week 5: Health and Social Welfare

- Medicaid & Medicare
- Federalizing Medicaid (article)
- *Harris v. Mcrae*

Week 6: Health and Federalism

- Cooperative federalism
- *NFIB v. Sebelius*
- What is federalism in healthcare for? (article)

Week 7: Health and Federalism

- Cooperative federalism
- *NFIB v. Sebelius*
- What is federalism in healthcare for? (article)