

Dear Federal Courts Students:

I know that this was likely not the summer that many of you had planned. I hope, though, that you and your family remained safe and healthy, and that you have adjusted to our new normal.

I've spent a good deal of time thinking about the best way to teach this challenging course in a hybrid format—some of you will be in person with me, and some will be on Zoom. More generally, I've also been thinking hard about what I want my students to learn. And, to be honest, it's probably not the rules that you think you're supposed to be memorizing. Sure, I'd like for you to learn those black-letter rules. But, relatively speaking, that's the easy part of law. The hard part is learning how to be a nimble, creative legal thinker. The hard part is learning how to argue like a lawyer—how to develop arguments, how to persuade courts and judges, and how to spot issues that matter (and sort them from those that don't).

To that end, I'm making a number of changes to the structure of class to engage more directly with the kinds of lawyering problems you may encounter in real life—whether as a lawyer for a civil rights plaintiff, the government, or as a law clerk. I'm excited to share this approach with you, as it reflects what I've learned over the last two years working with students (including many of you!).

**For our first class on Monday, August 24, you are responsible for the following material:**

- Read the U.S. Constitution, Art. I, § 8, cl. 9; Art. III; Art. VI, cl. 2. You may find a copy of the Constitution in the online supplement for our casebook, which is available at <http://www.jsiegel.net/publications/Supp2020-2021FINAL.pdf>. But feel free to Google it. Or read the pocket constitution that I know you carry in your back pocket.
- In our casebook, Jonathan Siegel, *Federal Courts* (2d ed.), read *Sheldon* and *McCardle* on pp. 223 through 227.
- Review the syllabus carefully, especially sections 1 (Overview), 3 (Class Meetings), 9 (Asynchronous Course Content), 10 (Reading Quizzes), 11 (In-Class Hypotheticals and Section Assignments), 12 (Class Preparation, Participation, and Experience), 13 (Class Attendance), and 15 (Evaluation).
- Watch the video for Class 1 on Intro to Article III & Traditional Doctrine and complete the Class 1 reading comprehension quiz (which includes some questions about the syllabus!). Both are on Canvas.
- Use Flipgrid to watch my introduction and record your own. Find the link on Canvas.
- Read the hypothetical problem for Class 1. You will find your section assignment (X, Y, or Z) on the problem (and in the syllabus).

I look forward to seeing you on Monday, August 24 at 1:30 pm in HH180 (or on Zoom)!

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