

# Course Syllabus

## ECON 408: Economic Analysis of Law

### Course Instructor

Christina P. Tapia, Ph.D., Visiting Lecturer [ctapia@uw.edu](mailto:ctapia@uw.edu) (<mailto:ctapia@uw.edu>)

### Purpose and Goals

The study of economics provides students with a very valuable analytical “tool kit” and the ability to apply the economic way of thinking to various issues. Students interested in law will find that there are many useful applications of economic principles within various career paths that involve the law or working with professionals in the legal field. This course will help students identify these career paths and practice working with “real-world” applications that combine economics and law. To assist students, we will discuss various topics throughout the quarter including: Antitrust, Mergers & Acquisitions, Contracts, Property, Torts, and Market Regulation. Throughout the course, lectures will be presented by both attorneys and economists in order to provide current examples and applications within the practice of law, as well as the underlying economic theory embedded in these areas of law.

### Learning Outcomes

1. Students will have the opportunity to discuss and apply concepts from economics to various areas of the law.
2. Students will learn from both economists and attorneys about the application of economics in the context of law through various current examples and case studies.
3. Students will have a good understanding of some applications of economics in law and will be able to better evaluate potential career paths that involve the intersection of law and economics.

### Course Structure

#### Modules and Readings

In addition to providing some introductory material regarding sources of law and some fundamental concepts, this course explores several topics in law and how one can apply concepts in economics to pursue a career path in one of these fields. Each "Module" on Canvas will provide the associated readings and discussions. Throughout the course, we may reference this text by [Cooter & Ulen, \(https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1633510/files/104122015?wrap=1\)](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1633510/files/104122015?wrap=1) *Law and Economics*. Feel free to use it as a supplemental source as needed. See further below for the Course Schedule.

#### Assessments

Each module will include an exam OR a short writing project. In addition, each module may include a Canvas discussion prompt to get you thinking about the concepts. Grading is discussed further below. The module exam or writing project will be scheduled after the final lecture for each topic. Details regarding each module assessment (including due date) will be posted on Canvas.

### Course Communication

In addition to our time in the classroom, this course offers several ways that you will be able to communicate and connect with others in this course.

- If you have a question about the course, please start by reading this syllabus page carefully, along with any Canvas announcements and any relevant course assignment instructions.
- If you can't find an answer to your question after reading the syllabus and any relevant instructions, of course you are always welcome to ask during class or via email ([ctapia@uw.edu](mailto:ctapia@uw.edu) (<mailto:ctapia@uw.edu>)). Please use your UW email address. I will do my best to respond within 24 hrs. Office hours can also be arranged via email to set up by appointment.
- If you need tech support, contact Tech Support for the UW Seattle campus: [help@uw.edu](mailto:help@uw.edu) (<mailto:help@uw.edu>) or (206) 221-5000.

## Grading

As noted above, each module will include an exam OR a short writing project. Your grade for the course will be calculated as the average of your module grades. Grades will be determined using the following [scale](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1633510/files/104122076?wrap=1) (<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1633510/files/104122076?wrap=1>).

## Course Schedule Outline

**NOTE: The schedule outlined below may be adjusted. Watch Canvas for announcements regarding changes.**

Additional information (including lecture slides and/or notes) will be posted on Canvas. In addition, class announcements will be sent through Canvas. *It is your responsibility to check class announcements on Canvas to have the latest information regarding readings, exams, and scheduling. Please be sure to set your Canvas notifications accordingly to be notified about the latest announcements and files posted.*

### Week One

- Welcome & Start Module 1 (3/28)
  - Introduction to course
  - Why do we have laws? Herodotus, Pareto, and the English Enclosure Movement
  - Discuss Proposed Paper Topic (due 4/11)
  - Sources of law (US Legal System)
- Module 1 (cont'd): Foundations of Law and Economics; Rights and Remedies (3/30)
  - Discussion of Coase, Calabresi & Melamed, and Kronman articles (see Module 1 page for 3/30 with links to readings)

### Week Two

- Module 1 (cont'd): Overview of the law of contracts (4/4)
  - When is a promise enforceable? Remedies for breach of contract
  - Akerlof article (The Market for Lemons)
- Module 1: (cont'd) (4/6)
  - Basic principles of tort law
  - How courts resolve disputes
  - Duty, damage, and liability

### Week Three

- Module 2: Property (4/11, 4/13)
  - See page for Module 2 for readings

### Week Four

- Module 2 (cont'd): Property (4/18, 4/20)

- Discussion of property writing assignment (tentative due date Saturday, 4/29)

### **Week Five**

- Module 3: Torts (4/25, 4/27)
  - See page for Module 3 for readings & slides

### **Week Six**

- Module 3: Torts (5/2)
- Module 3: Torts (in-class *exam*) (5/4)

### **Week Seven**

- Module 4, Part 1: Competition, Antitrust (5/9 & 5/11)
  - See page for this module for readings & slides

### **Week Eight**

- Module 4, Part 2: Competition, M&A and Artificial Intelligence (5/16 & 5/18)
  - See page for this module for readings & slides

### **Week Nine**

- Module 4: *Exam (including Parts 1 & 2)* (5/23)
- Module 5: Market Regulation (5/25)

### **Week Ten**

- Module 5 (cont'd): Market Regulation (5/30 & 6/1)
  - *Writing Assignment* (tentative due date Monday, 6/5)

Over the quarter, we will also be hearing from the following additional speakers:

- Bruce Lamka, J.D.; Partner (retired), Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP
- Greg Sivinski, J.D.; Assistant General Counsel, Corporate, External, & Legal Affairs; Microsoft Corporation
- Chris Nelson, J.D.; Assistant General Counsel, Compliance & Ethics – Data & Operations Lead; Microsoft Corporation
- Kriss Sjoblom, Ph.D.; Research Director and Senior Economist, Washington Research Council
- David Griswold, J.D.; General Counsel and CCO; Pacific Current Group