

University of Washington, Department of Economics
ECON 408: Economic Analysis of the Law

Spring 2020 Overall Course Schedule & Outline

Tuesday / Thursday; 1:30 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.
Classroom: Zoom Meetings (see Canvas)

Visiting Lecturer: Christina P. Tapia, Ph.D.

Email: ctapia@uw.edu

Office: Savery 341 (arranged office hours will be held via Zoom)

Office Hours: Please email (ctapia@uw.edu) to coordinate office hours by appointment.

Description:

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 work with professionals in the legal field. The objective of this course is to help students identify these career paths and to work with “real-world” applications that combine economics and law. To assist students, we will discuss various topics throughout the quarter including: Contracts, Torts, Antitrust, Mergers & Acquisitions, Property, 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.

Goals and Objectives:

- Students will have the opportunity to discuss and apply concepts from economics to various areas of the law.
- 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.
- 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. Students contemplating law school will be particularly interested in this course, as will students interested in the application of economics to legal issues.

Zoom Video Conferencing:

We will be using the Zoom app for our virtual classroom. **For the first week, the meeting link will be posted on Canvas. Subsequent meeting links can be found on the class calendar.**

Students are strongly encouraged to attend each class session “live” during the scheduled class time as this will be your best opportunity to interact with the instructor and ask questions. Recordings of class lectures will be posted on Canvas.

For our first class in Zoom (on March 31st), you are encouraged to go to the meeting link (available on Canvas) a few minutes early to be sure you can access Zoom and to set up your profile so that your name appears with your video image.

Course Segments and Readings:

Most readings will consist of articles or lecture notes prepared for each topic. **Additional resources and information (including lecture slides) for each segment will be posted on Canvas.** It is the student’s responsibility to check Canvas and review the available materials, in addition to taking notes during lecture. Please contact me (ctapia@uw.edu) right away if you have any trouble accessing materials on Canvas.

Class announcements with any updates will be sent through Canvas. *It is the student’s 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 hear about the latest announcements and files posted.*

Class 1 – March 31: Overview of Five Segments of Course; Sources of Law

Speakers:

Christina P. Tapia, Ph.D.; Visiting Lecturer, U.W.; Economist, Northwest Economics, LLC.
Bruce Lamka, J.D.; Partner (retired), Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP

Segment 1 - Introduction; Sources of Law and Legal Structure; Basic Principles

[Continued from March 31] April 2 (Th); Resume 4/23 (Th), 4/28 (Tu)

- Sources of law and structure of U.S. legal system
- Introduction to basic principles in law that will be discussed throughout the course
- Why do we need laws?

Speaker:

Bruce Lamka, J.D.
Partner (retired), Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP

⇒ **Segment 1 Assessment: Paper**

See Canvas for complete description of topic and deadlines.

[Optional] outline due by 9PM PDT, Monday, 4/6/2020

Paper due by 9PM PDT, Wednesday, 4/29/2020

Option to revise and resubmit by 5/15/2020

Segment 2 (Part 1) - Antitrust

April 7 (Tu), 9 (Th)

- Concepts and issues related to antitrust law
- Sherman Act

Speaker:

Chris Nelson, J.D.; Assistant General Counsel, Corporate, External, & Legal Affairs; Microsoft Corporation

Segment 2 (Part 2) - Mergers & Acquisitions; Artificial Intelligence

April 14 (Tu), 16 (Th)

- Concepts and issues related to mergers and acquisitions

Speaker:

Greg Sivinski, J.D.; Assistant General Counsel, Corporate, External, & Legal Affairs; Microsoft Corporation

⇒ **Segment 2 Exam:** April 21 (Tu), including both Antitrust and M&A

[Note: April 23 (Th) and April 28 (Tu) are continuation of Segment 1, above]

Segment 3 - Market Regulation

April 30 (Th), May 5 (Tu), May 7 (Th)

- What is a market?
- Discussion of market regulation, mechanisms, purpose, and requirements for a functioning market

Speaker:

David Griswold, J.D.; General Counsel and CCO; Pacific Current Group

⇒ **Segment 3 Exam:** Will be posted on Canvas

Additional details and due date to be announced

Segment 4 - Property

May 12 (Tu), [May 14, no class], May 19 (Tu), May 21 (Th)

- Economic analysis of property law and economic theory surrounding property rights.
- Coase Theorem and transaction costs

Speaker:

Kriss Sjoblom, Ph.D.; Research Director and Senior Economist, Washington Research Council

⇒ **Segment 4 Assessment - Writing Assignment:**

No class 5/26 – finish and submit writing assignment (will be posted on Canvas)

Segment 5 - Torts

May 28 (Th), June 2 (Tu), June 4 (Th)

- Purpose of tort law
- Economic concepts involved in tort law
- Liability and economic incentives

Speaker:

Christina P. Tapia, Ph.D.; Visiting Lecturer, U.W.; Economist, Northwest Economics, LLC.

⇒ **Segment 5 Exam:** Will be posted on Canvas

Additional details and due date to be announced

Grading:

As listed above, each of the five segments includes an assessment (three exams and two writing assignments). *It is your responsibility to check Canvas often for announcements, dues dates, assignments, and exams.* Additional details regarding each assessment will be announced during each segment. Your grade for the overall course will be the average of your segment assessment grades (there is no separate final exam). The class grading scale is available on Canvas and grades are not curved.

Additional Resources for Students:

U.W. Economics Resources for Students: <https://econ.washington.edu/resources-students>

U.W. Career and Internship Center: <https://careers.uw.edu/>

U.W. Undergraduate Advising: <https://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising/>

U.W. Disability Resources for Students: <http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/>

U.W. International and English Language Programs: <https://www.ielp.uw.edu/>

U.W. Health and Wellness: <http://depts.washington.edu/livewell/>

U.W. Libraries: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/>

U.W. Undergraduate Merit Scholarships, Fellowships & Awards:
<http://expd.uw.edu/scholarships/>

U.W. Student Coaching and Care: <http://depts.washington.edu/livewell/student-care/>

U.W. Student Legal Services: <http://depts.washington.edu/slsuw/>