Spring 2024 Syllabi – Institutional Policies

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Accessibility

Faculty are committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let your professor know immediately so they can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made. Creative solutions can be considered if they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

Attendance

Law schools approved by the American Bar Association must require regular class attendance, as per ABA Standard 308(a). Regular attendance also helps you test and deepen your understanding of the material and key concepts.

Maximum absences

Southwestern recognizes that some absences may, in rare instances, be unavoidable. Students may need to miss an occasional class because of illness, personal and family emergencies, job interviews, law school activities and functions, religious and cultural observances, and for other compelling reasons. Although students are encouraged to keep faculty informed, students do not need to submit documentation to support an absence. As a professional school, Southwestern will assume absences are for compelling reasons and will be taken only when necessary. Students who are absent for more than 20% of regularly scheduled class sessions in a course will not have attended sufficient class to earn credit and may be administratively withdrawn (WA) and may appeal under the Administrative Withdrawal Policy.

Students who receive advance approval from a faculty member to watch an in-person class session via Zoom due to illness or another compelling reason (not available for January Intersession courses) are not considered to be present for purposes of attendance, may not check into class via Qwickly, and will be marked absent. These absences count toward the maximum numbers of absences a student may accrue before being administratively withdrawn from the class. Students who check-in without being physically present during an in-person class will be referred to the Honor Code Committee.

Unless otherwise approved as a disability or pregnancy accommodation, or absent a successful appeal under the Administrative Withdrawal Policy, students who are absent for more than 20% of the class sessions will not earn academic credit for the course. An absence for any reason counts toward the maximum of the 20% absences permitted.

Note that students enrolled in a January intersession course must attend all class meetings to receive unit credit. Late arrival or early departure could result in being marked absent.

You can view the Attendance Policy on the Institutional Policies page.

Qwickly Attendance app

Faculty take attendance using Qwickly Attendance. To "check in" for each class session:

- Go to the Qwickly Attendance section on the Canvas course page.
- Enter the four-digit code that your professor gives you.

Faculty typically take attendance at the beginning of class but may choose to take attendance during the middle of class or the end of class.

Conduct that can result in an absence

If a student is not in their seat (or logged into Zoom with the camera on, if remote) at the beginning of class and does not check into Qwickly during the allotted time, the student is considered absent. You may check in only for yourself. Checking in for someone else violates the Student Honor Code.

Faculty reserve the right to count students as absent if they come to class unprepared and have not communicated with the professor about their situation before class, leave class early, leave class repeatedly, or engage in inappropriate conduct, such as distracting other students with unrelated videos.

Remote students

Faculty expect students who have been approved for remote attendance by Southwestern to keep their cameras on. If a remote student experiences a low-bandwidth or other internet issue or has a specific reason they need to participate with the camera off for all or part of the class session, they should make every effort to coordinate with the professor in advance. If the professor notices that the camera is off and the student has not communicated with the professor in advance, the professor will contact the student to discuss the matter—especially if the professor called on the student during class and the student did not respond. And as explained above, the professor may choose to mark the student absent if it appears that student was not engaged in the class.

Course Requirements

Class preparation

Faculty expect students to review the assigned materials thoroughly before the corresponding class session. You will learn more if you come to class prepared. Coming to class prepared is also part of students' responsibility to our community of learners. Lack of preparation can impact other students' experience.

Guidelines for participating in class online

If a student is approved to attend class via Zoom, below are tips to enhance participation:

- Position the camera to avoid glare in the background.
- Eliminate visual, auditory, and distractions around you.
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- Log in early and stay after our class for the same kind of discussion and questions that happen before and after our in-person class sessions.

You can use a virtual background to enhance privacy or reduce some distractions in your workspace. The law school has created several Southwestern Law-themed backgrounds that students are welcome to use.

Using laptops in class

Please remember that non-class-related internet use on laptops during live classes is unprofessional and detrimental to students' own learning. For those in the physical classroom, you may also distract other students. Please do not access non-course materials during class. Please silence all cell phones, tablets, and other electronic devices.

Credit Hours and Anticipated Work Outside the Classroom

Under ABA Standard 310, at a minimum, students need to devote at least two hours per week, per credit hour, outside of class, to each course. Please note that ABA Standard 310 provides a floor. Class preparation will vary by student and the amount of effort the student chooses to devote to the course. Southwestern encourages student to put in the amount of work each student needs to meet the learning objectives, understand the material, and meet their personal goals.

You can view the Determination of Credit Hours for Coursework policy on the Institutional Policies page.

Distance Education Policy

Courses that are fully online or have an online/remote component for more than 1/3 of the course are governed by Southwestern's Distance Education Policy, which is included in the Grading Policies, Honors, and Specialized Courses Policy.

Exam-related Emergencies

In the event of an exam-related emergency (e.g., illness), immediately contact Student Services Office at studentservices@swlaw.edu. Please also review Southwestern's Examination Policy.

Grades

In accordance with law school policy, assigned grades cannot be changed, except due to a mathematical or clerical error. Also, no grade can be changed—for any reason—ninety days after the final grade has been posted or the final examination/assessment has been made available to the student, whichever is later.

Online Student Identity Verification Policy

Southwestern Law School is committed to maintaining the highest level of academic integrity and complying with Standard 511 of the American Bar Association's Standards for Approval of Law Schools and the provisions of the U.S. Higher Education Opportunity Act concerning verification of student identity in distance education. The purpose of these regulations is to ensure that the person who receives credit for the course is the same person who did the work for the course. Each fully remote/online or hybrid course (i.e., more than one-third remote/online) must include a clear and actionable plan for verifying the identity of each student enrolled in the course. Please see Section B of the policy.

You can view the full Online Student Identity Verification Policy on the Institutional Policies page.

Policy on Preventing Discrimination and Harassment

Southwestern Law School prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of race (including hairstyle and hair texture), ethnicity, color, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age (40 and over), disability (mental and physical), medical condition, citizenship status, military service, veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by law in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services, or in the educational programs or activities Southwestern operates as required by: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Age Discrimination Act of 1967; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the California Fair Employment and Housing Act; and other federal, state, and local

laws that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Southwestern also requires employers using its placement services and facilities to abide by these standards and to ensure that no such discrimination occurs in hiring, promotion, or compensation for work assignments.

Policy on Recording Classes

Except as provided otherwise in this policy, professors have discretion whether to record their classes. This discretion means that a professor can record some or all class sessions, can choose to record no class sessions, can start or stop the recording during a class session, and can choose to record via audio or video, or can choose not to record any classes. If a professor chooses to record a class for other than ADA compliance purposes, the professor will make the recording available via the course Canvas page to all students enrolled in the class. Students are prohibited from recording classes by any means unless they receive permission from the professor or, for students with registered ADA accommodations, from the Accessibility Coordinator in the Student Services Office.

Classes will be recorded where required for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Class attendance remains essential, and recordings, when available, are not a substitute for regular attendance. Nothing in this policy modifies the Attendance Policy. A student who seeks class recordings as an accommodation under the ADA should file those requests with the Accessibility Coordinator (accessibility@swlaw.edu) pursuant to the Policy Statement Regarding Students and Applicants with Disabilities.

In accordance with this policy, students, faculty, and others are placed on notice that any class and discussions held during class may be subject to recording.

Recordings may not be available for reasons such as equipment or technology failure or human error. For compelling reasons (e.g., religious or cultural observances and prolonged absences due to medical issues), students may request that the professor record a class or authorize another student to record the class on their behalf. Requests to have a class recorded should be made at least 3 business days in advance of the class.

Southwestern strives to safeguard the intellectual property of its faculty and the privacy of its students, prospective students, and employees in online learning environments and other online events and activities hosted or sponsored by the law school.

To protect these interests, students and other participants may not copy, record, reproduce, screenshot, photograph, or distribute any content, including documents, audio, video, images, and other visual content from online courses and events.

This restriction on copying and distribution includes but is not limited to:

- Recorded and live lectures (including images derived from such recordings, like screenshots)

- Live discussions or meetings;
- Discussion boards;
- Simulations;
- Posted course materials;
- Exams, quizzes, and other assessments (whether graded or ungraded);
- Faculty feedback forms;
- Visual materials that accompany lectures/discussions, such as slides;
- Virtual whiteboard notes, etc.; and
- Images of students, faculty, or other participants.

You can view the full Class Recording Policy on the Institutional Policies page.

Reasonable Accommodations

Students who need accommodations should contact the Accessibility Office within the Student Services Office. The office is located in W102 and can be reached at (213) 738-6888 or accessibility@swlaw.edu.

Southwestern Law School strives to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Southwestern will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for students with medical, attentional, psychological, learning, or temporary disabilities.

Accommodations are not provided to give a student an unfair advantage over other students, but simply to allow a student with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to be successful. A student has the responsibility to meet with the Student Services Office as early as possible to discuss their request for special accommodations. Students who do not seek accommodations need not make their disabilities known.

Further information regarding procedures, policies and documentation required is available in the Accessibility Services section of the Southwestern website, as well as the on the Institutional Policies page.

Religious and Cultural Observances

The Student Services Office handles student requests for accommodations for religious and cultural observances, including holidays. Students seeking an accommodation should contact the Student Services Office as early in the semester as possible. Students should carefully review their course syllabi early in the semester and note potential conflicts. Any accommodation for a religious or cultural observance cannot compromise or fundamentally alter the essential components, substance, or requirements of a particular course or program of study. For more details, please review Southwestern's Religious and Cultural Observances Policy.

Special Rules Regarding Electronic Devices

Students may not record a class or other session with the professor without the professor's prior permission. If a professor grants permission to record, that permission is conditional upon the student's agreement to share it with any classmate who makes a reasonable request.