LAWYERS CANNOT FULLY UNDERSTAND THE AMERICAN LEGAL LANDSCAPE without studying the impact of race.

The Law School founded the Center for the Study of Race and Law in 2003 to provide opportunities for students, scholars, practitioners and community members to examine and exchange ideas related to race and law through lectures, symposia and scholarship.

The center also coordinates with the Law School to offer a concentration of courses on race and law, and serves as a resource for faculty whose teaching or scholarship addresses subjects related to race.

CURRICULUM Virginia offers courses in civil rights and anti-discrimination law, but equally important is a wide array of courses in constitutional law and history. These offerings reflect the ways in which the struggle for civil rights shaped — and continues to shape — our country and institutions.

EACH YEAR THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RACE AND LAW BRINGS A VISITING PROFESSOR TO TEACH A SHORT COURSE. PAST VISITORS INCLUDE:

RICHARD BANKS, Jackson Eli Reynolds Professor of Law, Stanford Law School
DOROTHY BROWN, professor of law, Emory Law School
DEVON CARBADO, professor of law and former vice dean of the faculty, UCLA School of Law
MICHAEL KLARMAN, Kirkland & Ellis Professor of Law, Harvard Law School

BEFORE BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION, the early civil rights movement explored avenues to create equality for African-Americans that have mostly been abandoned today, argues PROFESSOR RISA GOLUBOFF in her groundbreaking book on the history of civil rights law, "The Lost Promise of Civil Rights".

THE LOST PROMISE OF CIVIL RIGHTS, RISA GOLUBOFF

Brown isn’t only the end of segregation, it’s the end of an era of experimentation. In pushing us in that one direction, we lose the other possible directions that had existed before Brown. And in particular we lose images of civil rights and civil rights claims that were more concerned with economics, that were more concerned with material inequality than with stigma or classifications on their own."
COURSES AND SEMINARS

African-American Lawyers from the Civil War to the Present
American Legal History
Civil Rights Litigation
Civil War and the Constitution
Constitutional History I: Articles of Confederation Through the Civil War
Constitutional History II: From Reconstruction to Brown
Crime and Punishment
Criminal Adjudication
Criminal Investigation
Employment Discrimination
Family Law
Immigration Law
International Human Rights Law
Judicial Role in American History
Juvenile Justice Reform
Land Use Law
Law and Education
Law and Social Movements: Insights From Critical Race Theory
Profiling
Race and Law
Race and Law: Landmark Cases
Slavery and the Constitution
Social Science in Law
Special Education Law
Urban Law and Policy

CLINICS

Immigration Law Clinic
International Human Rights Law

"LOOKING BACK TO THE NATION’S FIRST LAW"

Act of 1866, a law passed by Congress soon after the Civil War ended.
“Almost anything that’s happened in civil rights touches on the Civil Rights Act of 1866.”

As president of the SOUTHERN POVERTY LEGAL CENTER, alumni RICHARD COHEN ’79 has confronted the most challenging problems in civil rights and social justice. Since joining the center in 1986 as its legal director, Cohen has battled hate groups fueled by changing demographics and immigration, and has defended legal measures designed to promote racial equality before the U.S. SUPREME COURT.

“Almost anything that’s happened in civil rights touches on the Civil Rights Act of 1866.”

PROFESSOR GEORGE RUTHERGLEN says in his new book, “Civil Rights in the Shadow of Slavery” examines the legacy of the Civil Rights Act of 1866.”