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.

VIRGINIA offers courses in civil rights and anti-discrimination law, along with 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.

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RACE AND LAW each year brings a visiting professor to teach a short course.

Past visitors include:
- Ralph Richard Banks, Stanford Law School
- Khara M. Bridges, University of California, Berkeley School of Law
- Mohammad Fadel, University of Toronto Faculty of Law
- Michael J. Klarman, Harvard Law School
- Mari Matsuda, University of Hawaii at Manoa
- William S. Richardson School of Law
- Juan F. Perea, Loyola University Chicago School of Law
- Camilla Gear Rich, USC Gould School of Law

These courses represent the 2020-23 school years. Not all courses are offered every year.

COURSES AND SEMINARS
- American Legal History Seminar
- Asian Americans and the Law
- Civil Rights and Anti-discrimination Law
- Civil Rights Litigation
- The Civil War and the Constitution
- Criminal Adjudication
- Criminal Investigation
- Criminal Procedure
- Survey
- Critical Race Theory
- Designing Democracy: Participation Education
- Law Survey
- Employment Discrimination
- Family Law
- Identity, Law and Politics Seminar
- Immigration Law and Policy
- International Human Rights Law
- Land Use Law
- Latinos and the Law
- Law and Inequality
- Law and Place
- Law and Place of Law
- Poverty, Inequality and Education Reform
- Native American Law
- Poverty Law
- Poverty in Law, Literature and Culture
- Poverty Law, Advocacy and Policy

Race and Law
Allen’s UCLA dissertation, “A Web of Punishment: Race, Place, and School Policing,” examines the role and authority of school police officers, and why Black students are most vulnerable to negative interactions in low-income Black neighborhoods and schools.

“Boys of color made up 76% of all student involvement with the local school police department, and middle school- and elementary school-aged children accounted for one in four of the total arrests,” he said. “Students as young as 8 were being arrested for very minor instances of misbehavior, such as just speaking too loudly.”

Allen said his research centers on two questions: What can the public learn about the structure of American public education and criminal justice systems? And how can we better understand how law and policy shape these larger safety goals within schools?

“It is important to understand the perspective of all stakeholders,” he said. “This includes students, parents, teachers, school police officers and local policymakers.”