CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AND LEGAL HISTORY

THE LAW SCHOOL’S CURRICULUM places the history of law and the ongoing story of the Constitution in context so that students can better understand both the past and present legal landscape.

With more than 30 faculty members in constitutional law and legal history, Virginia offers an unparalleled variety of lecture courses, seminars and clinics in the field.

J.D.-M.A. PROGRAM IN HISTORY
In cooperation with the University of Virginia’s Corcoran Department of History, the Law School allows students to obtain a J.D. and an M.A. in history in three years. As part of the program, J.D.-M.A. candidates present drafts of their theses to faculty. Several veterans of the dual-degree program have gone on to successful careers in legal academia, and recent graduates have clerked for U.S. Supreme Court justices.

MORE: law.virginia.edu/history

RELATED CENTERS
Several centers at the Law School connect to topics relating to legal and constitutional history, and also serve as hubs for faculty scholarship and intellectual life for their respective fields.

DEAN RISA GOLUBOFF recently testified in her personal capacity at Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on the nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court. Goluboff has known Jackson personally and professionally since 1998. In her testimony, she compared Jackson to retiring Justice Stephen Breyer, whose seat Jackson filled and for whom Jackson and Goluboff clerked. Goluboff, a legal historian, is the author of “Vagrant Nation: Police Power, Constitutional Change and the Making of the 1960s” and “The Lost Promise of Civil Rights.”

VIRGINIA’S PROGRAM ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY creates a rich intellectual community of scholars and students with shared historical interests.

CLINICS

APPELLATE LITIGATION CLINIC
Students in this yearlong clinic engage in appellate litigation through actual cases before various federal circuit and/or state appellate courts of appeals.

CIVIL RIGHTS CLINIC
Students provide relief and legal support to people and communities that have been harmed by the criminalization of poverty and other forms of discrimination or deprivation of rights.

FIRST AMENDMENT CLINIC
This yearlong clinic gives students practical legal experience involving timely free-speech and press issues.

SUPREME COURT LITIGATION CLINIC
Students in this yearlong clinic handle actual cases, from seeking Supreme Court review to briefing on the merits.

The KARSH CENTER FOR LAW AND DEMOCRACY promotes civil discourse, civil engagement, ethics and integrity in public office, and respect for the rule of law.

The CENTER FOR THE FIRST AMENDMENT includes renowned scholars of both the religion clauses and the speech and press clauses of the First Amendment.

The CENTER FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE explores paths for reform via faculty efforts and features robust clinical and curricular opportunities.

The CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RACE AND LAW helps students fully understand the American legal landscape by promoting events and scholarship exploring the impact of race.

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CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

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**LEGAL HISTORY**
American Legal History Seminar

**THOMAS FRAMPTON** studies criminal law and constitutional criminal procedure within the historical context of racial and economic inequality.

**CHARLES BARZUN**'s classes and scholarship explore the connections among constitutional theory, jurisprudence and history.

**DEBORAH HELLMAN** focuses on equal protection and its philosophical justification, and the relationship between money and legal rights.

**LESLIE KENDRICK** is an expert on freedom of expression who teaches courses in torts, property and constitutional law.

**SAKIRSHNA PRAKASH** is an expert in presidential power and separation of powers. He is the author of books on the American presidency.

**BERTRALL ROSS** is focused on democratic responsiveness and accountability, as well as the inclusion of marginalized communities in administrative and political processes.

**FREDERICK SCHAUER** is one of the nation’s leading legal scholars and the author of numerous books on constitutional law, free speech and legal theory.

**LAWRENCE B. SOLUM** is an internationally recognized legal theorist who works in constitutional theory, procedure and the philosophy of law.

**JOY MILLIGAN**, a civil rights expert, studies the intersection of law and inequality, with a particular focus on race-based economic inequality.

**G. EDWARD WHITE**, a Pulitzer Prize finalist, recently completed a three-volume series, “Law in American History.”

**DAVID S. LAW’S** expertise is in the comparative study of public law and courts, he is a pioneer in the application of empirical social science methods to the study of legal texts.

**PROFESSOR DOUGLAS LAYCOCK** frequently returns to the Supreme Court to argue religious liberty cases. His most recent win was with Holt v. Hobbs, a case in which he represented an Arkansas prisoner who sought to wear a beard per his religious beliefs, but in contrast to prison policy. The justices decided unanimously in Holt’s favor.

**SAIKIRISHNA PRAKASH** won the 2018 Cromwell Book Prize for “Secession on Trial: The Treason Prosecution of Jefferson Davis” and the George and Anne Richards Prize for the best article published in The Journal of the Civil War Era in 2021, for “William Henry Ross: Pardon Broker.”

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