

Law and Economics Fall 2017 GMU Syllabus

[Economics](#) 415-001 (#74486), meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30-11:45am during Fall 2017, in Robinson Hall B, Room 111.

Instructor: Robin D. Hanson, Assoc. Professor, [Economics](#) (rhanson@gmu.edu, <http://hanson.gmu.edu>)

Office Hours: Officially Tuesdays 9:15-10:15am, but I'm usually in at [Carow Hall](#) 10A. Email or call ahead (703-993-2326) if you want to be sure I'll be in.

Catalog Entry:

Econ 415 Law and Economics. Credits 3 *Prerequisite: ECON 306 or permission of instructor.* An economic analysis of the law. Topics include an introduction to legal institutions and legal analysis; application of economic concepts to the law of property, contracts and torts, criminal law, and constitutional law; the economic efficiency of the common law; and a public choice perspective on the evolution of the law.

Required Text:

David D. Friedman, [Law's Order: What Economics Has to Do with Law and Why It Matters](#), Princeton Univ. Press 2001, ISBN 9780691090092. [Free online!](#)

Recommended Texts:

A. Mitchell Polinsky, *Introduction To Law and Economics, 4th Edition* Aspen Publishers, 2011, ISBN 9780735584488.

Robert Cooter and Thomas Ulen, *Law and Economics, Sixth Edition*, Addison Wesley 2013, ISBN 9780132540650

Goal of Class

Gain familiarity with basic facts and issues in the economics of law, and an ability to use basic economics to argue for particular legal outcomes.

Assignments:

- **Class Participation** Please contribute to class discussions.
- **Quizzes** Three in-class quizzes will be given. Each quiz will emphasize the lectures *and* text readings since the previous quiz. Quizzes are open book, open notes.
- **Defended Opinions** Three times you will write a defense of your opinions on a legal topic. The assigned topics will be unusual, in order to encourage you to think them through yourself, rather than looking up what others have said. Limit your writing to two pages.

Legal Opinion Topics

1. Property: TBD
2. Contract: TBD

3. Crime: TBD

Due Dates:

- Quizzes: 26Sept, 26Oct, 14Nov
- Defended Opinions: 26Oct, 14Nov, 7Dec
- Final: Dec 19, 10:30am-1:15pm.

Grade Weights: Class Participate 5%, 13% per Quiz and paper, 17% final.

Week	Text Chapters	Lecture Topics	Notes
29,31 Aug	F1-3, P1-2, C1-2	Law Intro, Econ Review	
5,7 Sep		<i>No Class This Week</i>	
12,14 Sep	C3	Law and Legal Institutions	
9,21 Sep	F4, C4	Coasean Analysis	
26,28 Sep	F5,10, P4, C4	Property	<i>Quiz Tuesday</i>
3,5 Oct	F11, C5	Property Continued	
10,12 Oct		<i>No Class This Week</i>	
17,19 Oct	F12, P5, C6	Contract	
24,26 Oct	F13, P8, C7	Contract Continued	<i>Quiz/Paper Thursday</i>
31 Oct, 2 Nov	F14, P6, C8	Tort	
7,9 Nov	F14, P7, C9	Tort Continued	
14,16 Nov	C10, P16	Legal Process	<i>Quiz/Paper Tuesday</i>
21 Nov	F15, P10, C11	Legal Process Continued	<i>No Class Thursday</i>
28,30 Nov	F18, P11, C12	Crime	
5, 7 Dec	F17	Private Law	<i>Paper Thursday</i>
19 Dec		Final Exam, 10:30am-1:15pm.	

Disability Notice

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.