

Law and Economics Fall 2019 GMU Syllabus

[Economics](#) 415-001 (#82804), meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00-10:15am during Fall 2018, in Carow Hall, Room 01.

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

Office Hours: Officially Tuesdays 10:30-11:30am, 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. [Free here](#)

David D. Friedman, *Legal Systems Very Different From Ours*, unpublished. [Free here!](#)

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 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. I will grade on how many relevant points you can make clear.

Legal Opinion Topics

1. TBD
2. TBD
3. TBD

Due Dates:

- Quizzes: 03-Oct,31-Oct,21-Nov
- Defended Opinions: 31-Oct,21-Nov,5-Dec
- Final: Dec 12, 7:30am-10:10am.

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

Week	Text Chapters	Lecture Topics	Notes
27,29 Aug	F1-3, P1-2, C1-2	Law Intro, Econ Review	
3,5 Sep	F4,C3,4	Institutions and Coasean Analysis	
10,12 Sep	F5,10,P4,C4	Property	
17,19 Sep	F11, C5	Property Continued	
24,26 Sep	F12, P5, C6	Contract	
1,3 Oct	F13, P8, C7	Contract continued	<i>Quiz Thursday</i>
8,10 Oct	F14, P6, C8	Tort	
15,17 Oct	F14, P7, C9	Tort Continued	<i>No Class Tuesday</i>
22,24 Oct	C10, P16	Legal Process	
29,31 Oct	C10, P16	Legal Process Continued	<i>Quiz/Paper Thursday</i>
5,7 Nov	F15, P10, C11	Crime	<i>No Class Thursday</i>
12,15 Nov	F18, P11, C12	Crime Continued	
19,21 Nov		Crime Continued	<i>Quiz/Paper Thursday,</i>
26,28 Nov	F17	Private Law	<i>No Class Thursday</i>
3, 5 Dec		TBD	<i>Paper Due Thursday</i>
12 Dec		Final Exam, 7:30am-10:10am.	