

## Syllabus – Fall 2016

Excluding materials for purchase, syllabus information may be subject to change. The most up-to-date syllabus is located within the course in HuskyCT.

### Course and Instructor Information

**Course Title:** Economics of the Law

**Credits:** 3

**Prerequisites:** ECON 2201

**Professor:** Dr. Steven P. Lanza

**Email:** steven.lanza@uconn.edu

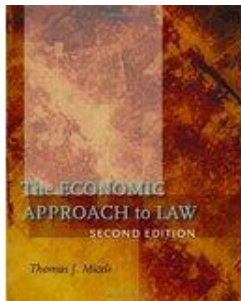
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays from 1:00 - 2:00 PM, and by appointment.

**Course Web Page:** <https://lms.uconn.edu>

### Course Materials

Required course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.

The text is available through a local or online bookstore. The [UConn Co-op](#) carries many materials that can be shipped via its online [Textbooks To Go](#) service.



**Required Materials:**

***The Economic Approach to Law*** by Thomas J. Miceli, Stamford University Press, 2nd Edition, 2009.

*Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT, through an Internet link.*

### Course Description and Objectives

This is a one-semester course in economics of the law. The course provides a basic introduction to the application of economic theory to the study of law. We will use the tools of microeconomics to explore cases and concepts in the areas of property, contract, tort and constitutional law.

Economics of the law is one of the fastest growing subfields of economics. It is also receiving increased attention at law schools across the country. But even if you don't become an economist or a lawyer, you should find the course interesting because the law touches all aspects of our business and personal lives.

Students are expected to attend class, complete the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss those readings in class. Students will also complete an independent research assignment that will give them the opportunity to test the incentive effects of legal rules.

## Course Outline

Week of	Text Reading	Case Reading	Topics
August 30	Chapter 1.1, 1.2, 1.4	<i>Ross v. Wilson</i>	Law and Economic Efficiency
September 6	Chapter 1.3, 6.1, 6.2	Hardin, The Prisoner's Dilemma, <i>Fontainebleau</i>	The Nature of Property Rights, The Coase Theorem without Transaction Costs
September 13	Chapter 6.2, 6.5	<i>Ploof v. Putnam</i> <i>Feist v. Rural</i>	The Coase Theorem with Transaction Costs Intellectual Property
September 20	Chapter 7.2, 7.3	<i>Hawaii Housing, Loretto</i>	Eminent Domain
September 27*		Appendix: The Basics of Multiple Regression	Online Class: Multivariate Regression
October 4	Chapter 4.1 – 4.3.2, 4.3.4	<i>Ricketts v. Scothorn</i> , <i>Matthews v. Mabey</i> , <i>Williams v. Walker</i>	Contracts: Consideration, Duress, Unconscionability
October 11	Chapter 4.3.3	<i>Wilkin v. 1<sup>st</sup> Source</i> , <i>Harris v. Tyson</i>	Contracts: Mistake
October 18			<b>Midterm</b>
October 27	Chapter 5.1 – 5.3.3.1	<i>Eastern SS Lines</i> , <i>Hadley v. Baxendale</i> , <i>Madariaga, Arduini</i>	Remedies for Breach
November 1	Chapter 2.1 - 2.3.4	<i>Carroll Towing</i> , <i>Haeg v. Sprague</i> , <i>Scott v. Alpha Beta</i>	The Hand Rule, Contributory and Comparative Negligence
November 8		<i>Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut</i>	Discussion Board: Public Choices
November 15	Chapter 2.3.5, 3.1	<i>Sturm, Ruger v. Day</i> , <i>Escola v. Coca Cola</i>	Punative Damages, Product Liability
November 22			<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>
November 29			Catch Up/Review
December 6*			Online Class: Paper Presentations
December 13			<b>Final Exam</b>

\*Denotes Online Class using Blackboard Collaborate

## Course Requirements and Grading

### Summary of Course Grading:

Course Components	Weight
Participation	10%
Research Paper & Presentation	35%
Midterm	25%
Final	30%

**Grading Scale:**

Grade	Letter Grade	GPA
93-100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
83-86	B	3.0
80-82	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
73-76	C	2.0
70-72	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.3
63-66	D	1.0
60-62	D-	0.7
<60	F	0.0

**Participation**

Students are expected to come to class regularly and to participate in class discussions.

**Research Paper and Presentation**

Economists view legal constraints (monetary damages, fines, imprisonment, etc.) as implicit prices for certain behaviors. In theory, then, these prices can be set to steer actions in socially desirable directions. You are to test this hypothesis using multivariate regression techniques and real-world data. In particular, I'd like you to try to model how differences in certain laws (after controlling for other explanatory variables) at a point in time result in different outcomes across the 50 states. For example, you might believe that state highway fatalities depend on speed limits and other factors, like the number of licensed drivers and their average age. So you would estimate your model using multivariate regression (easily done with Excel or other statistical software packages) and then prepare a short 5-10 page write-up of your results, including the regression output, as well as a short PowerPoint presentation to be shared with the class on our last meeting day.

**Midterm**

A timed and proctored midterm exam will be administered halfway through the course. The midterm will only test the material covered to date in the course.

**Final**

A timed and proctored final exam will be administered at the end of the course. The final will be comprehensive and include material from the entire course.

**Feedback and Grades**

The instructor will make every effort to provide feedback and grades in a timely manner. Expect a response to emailed questions within 24 hours. If you do not receive a response within that time, ask again.

**Email**

I will communicate with you via your UConn email address (usually [firstname.lastname@uconn.edu](mailto:firstname.lastname@uconn.edu)). It is your responsibility to check this email account for messages. If you have a personal email address that you prefer to use, forward your UConn email to that address.

## Using Blackboard Collaborate for Online Meetings

I have scheduled two online meetings during the semester which will be facilitated by Blackboard Collaborate, a web conferencing system. Collaborate also allows for virtual office hours and for the possibility of meeting remotely should inclement weather or other exigencies require the cancellation of a regular class meeting.

You may join a Blackboard Collaborate session either by email invitation or through a link to our virtual classroom in HuskyCT.

For further details on participating in a Blackboard Collaborate session, please consult the Essentials for Participants and Quick Reference guides which can be found under the Collaborate link in HuskyCT.

You should also consult Blackboard's on-demand online learning resources for Collaborate participants which can be found at <http://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/v12/Participant>. There, you can explore links with information on getting started, configuring your session, navigating the interface and more.

## Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. Details can be found at: <http://provost.uconn.edu/syllabi-references/>

Students are also expected to follow the following copyright and netiquette and communication standards:

### Copyright

Copyrighted materials within the course are only for the use of students enrolled in the course for purposes associated with this course and may not be retained or further disseminated.

### Netiquette and Communication

At all times, course communication with fellow students and the instructor are to be professional and courteous. It is expected that you proofread all your written communication, including discussion posts, assignment submissions, and mail messages. If you are new to online learning or need a netiquette refresher, please look at this guide titled, [The Core Rules of Netiquette](#).

In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. This section provides a brief overview to important standards, policies and resources

### Adding or Dropping a Course

If you should decide to add or drop a course, there are official procedures to follow:

- Matriculated students should add or drop a course through the [Student Administration System](#).
- Non-degree students should refer to [Non-Degree Add/Drop Information](#) located on the registrar's website.

You must officially drop a course to avoid receiving an "F" on your permanent transcript. Simply discontinuing class or informing the instructor you want to drop does not constitute an official drop of the course. For more information, refer to the:

- [Undergraduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)

### Academic Calendar

The university's [Academic Calendar](#) contains important semester dates.

## Academic Support Resources

[Technology and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

## UConn-Stamford Writing Center

The Writing Center can provide students with help in understanding writing assignments, coming up with ideas, formulating a thesis statement, grammar and mechanics, etc. To make an appointment go to <http://advapp.uconn.edu> and select "The Source (Stamford Writing Center & Q Center)" in the dropdown menu. The Center's email address is [uconn.stamford.writing.center@gmail.com](mailto:uconn.stamford.writing.center@gmail.com).

## Software Requirements and Technical Help

The technical requirements for this course include:

- Word processing software
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)
- Internet access
- Respondus LockDown Browser

This course is facilitated online using the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, students have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through [HuskyTech](#). Students also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

## Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in computer technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

## Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the university's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.