ADVANCED CONSTITUTIONAL LAW SEMINAR:
THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN ALABAMA
LAW 630: SPRING 2018

Course Overview:

Many national civil rights and civil liberties advances, as well as international human rights progresses, are attributable to the brave men and women who brought claims as litigants and lawyers in Alabama and who exercised their constitutional rights to demonstrate peacefully in order to defeat inequality. This Advanced Constitutional Law Seminar will examine the lives of the Alabamians, the volunteers, the community organizers, the clergy, the lawyers, the judges, as well as, the cases and issues which have been central in shaping civil rights laws. We will study the major cases and events occurring in or connected to Alabama that have shaped our nation both then and now. During the semester you will be responsible for selecting a lecture topic from among those listed below and facilitating the class discussion of issues involved. By the end of the semester you will complete a paper that analyzes and contextualizes a current or historical civil rights issue through primary research, secondary research, or both. Your paper will address the contemporary or historical context of the issue you choose, as well as an accompanying legal analysis of the same via this Alabama lens.

Course Objectives: At the conclusion of this course, students will have:

(a) gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of civil rights history in Alabama and the relevance to contemporary social justice movements;
(b) improved their legal research and writing skills;
(c) polished their abilities to present and communicate effectively; and
(d) become empowered, as future graduates of The University of Alabama School of Law, to fight for social justice causes throughout their careers as lawyers.

Course Requirements:

(1) Reading: All readings are due to be completed on the dates listed infra and to be discussed during the class meeting for which they are assigned.

(2) Writing: There is one research paper due at the conclusion of the semester on or before the scheduled exam date in this course. The paper must be submitted electronically to me via email at anil@zarzaur.com. The writing assignment should follow the formatting conventions outlined herein.

(3) Conference: You will schedule one (1) in person or telephonic conference with me during the semester to discuss the topic idea and associated research for your final paper. The conference may be held at my law office, Zarzaur Mujumdar & Debrose, 2332 2nd Avenue North, Birmingham, Alabama 35203 or at The University of Alabama School of Law. You are primarily responsible for what we will discuss in conference. You should be prepared to discuss any questions you may have, as well as any feedback that I have.
(4) Presentation: Each student will be responsible for facilitating the discussion of the lecture topic in one (1) class during the semester. All students should email me (anil@zarzaur.com) by 3:30pm CST on January 29, 2018, with the student’s top three (3) choices for which lecture topic the student would like to facilitate.

Required Texts:

Optional Texts:
- Jack Bass, Taming the Storm: The Life and Times of Judge Frank M. Johnson and the South’s Fight Over Civil Rights (1993).
- E. Culpepper Clark, The Schoolhouse Door: Segregation’s Last Stand at The University of Alabama (rev. ed. 2007).


- Solomon S. Seay, Jr., *Jim Crow and Me: Stories from My Life as a Civil Rights Lawyer* (2009).


- Jock M. Smith, *Climbing Jacob’s Ladder: A Trial Lawyer’s Journey on Behalf of “the Least of These”* (2002).


**Grading:**

*Writing Assignment:* Your grade in this course is derived exclusively from your score on the final paper due on or before the date of the scheduled exam for this class. The Law School’s policy regarding grading is available at: [http://www.law.ua.edu/academics/academic-policies/](http://www.law.ua.edu/academics/academic-policies/). Additional information regarding grading is set forth in the Law School’s Student Handbook available at: [http://www.law.ua.edu/misc/handbook.pdf](http://www.law.ua.edu/misc/handbook.pdf).

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance is required. More than two (2) unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your final grade by two percentage points (-2%) for each unexcused absence. The Law School’s expectations regarding class attendance generally are further set forth in the Student Handbook available at: [http://www.law.ua.edu/misc/handbook.pdf](http://www.law.ua.edu/misc/handbook.pdf).

**Office Hours:**

I will hold office hours by appointment. I am available to schedule office hours via email at (anil@zarzaur.com) and cell: 205.410.1185.

**Cell Phone, Tablet, and Laptop Usage Policy:**
Please turn off and put away your cell phone before class. You are not to use your cell phone in the classroom for any reason. We will take a short break during each class meeting. If you need to check messages or return emails and texts you may do so outside the classroom during the break. I understand that needs may arise which would require you to keep any eye on your cell phone during class, and if you are expecting an important call during class, please simply let me know in advance of class. Your tablet or laptop is to be used during class for the purposes of improving your academic experience only – not for personal reasons. You may not use your tablet or laptop to text, browse the internet, play games, or for any other purpose unrelated to class. You have a responsibility to yourself and your classmates to be fully engaged in the learning process throughout the class and a corresponding responsibility not to distract yourself and your classmates. Further information regarding the use of computers and electronic devices in the classroom is available in the Law School’s Student Handbook which may be accessed at: http://www.law.ua.edu/misc/handbook.pdf.

Disability Statement:

The Law School’s Disability Policy is available at: https://www.law.ua.edu/students/disability-policy/.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Vice Dean James Leonard at (205) 348-5927 or ileonard@law.ua.edu so that the student’s needs for accommodations can be evaluated and addressed properly and timely. The Office of Disability Services (“ODS”) is located at 1000 Houser Hall. ODS can be reached at (205) 348-4285 (Voice), (205) 348-3081 (TTY), or (205) 348-0804 (Fax).

Academic Misconduct:

All students enrolled in The University of Alabama School of Law are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The Law School expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Accordingly, the Law School subscribes to an honor code for which you are fully responsible and which applies directly to you. The University of Alabama School of Law School Honor Code is available at https://www.law.ua.edu/misc/Honor%20Code%202013.pdf. You are required to read and understand the Honor Code for this course.

Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student. The Law School’s policies regarding academic misconduct will be followed in the event of any allegations of academic misconduct and are described in the Honor Code.

For a further discussion of what constitutes academic misconduct, you also are responsible for reviewing the following website to ensure that you completely understand what constitutes plagiarism: https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism?wssl=1.
**Formatting Requirements**

* indent paragraphs at least five spaces  
* use Times New Roman typeface and twelve-point (12pt) font  
* set left and right margins at 1.25 inches  
* set top and bottom margins at one (1) inch  
* number each page and although the page number may drop below the 1 inch bottom margin, the text may not  
* double-space the lines of the text, except that the text of block quotations must be single-spaced and indented equally from the left and right margins  
* single-space your point and subpoint headings  
* do not alter the standard line height  
* justify the right and left margins

**Schedule of Lectures and Assignments:**

* Class One – January 22, 2018  
  Lecture: Helen Keller: A Framer of American Civil Rights and Civil Liberties  
  Reading: *Scottsboro* (Preface, Chapters One – Four)  

* Class Two – January 29, 2018  
  Lecture: The Scottsboro Boys: Racial Justice and the Right to a Fair Trial  
  Reading: *Scottsboro* (Chapters Five – Nine)  

* Class Three – February 5, 2018  
  Lecture: Jesse Owens: Running the Race Against Racism  
  Reading: *Scottsboro* (Chapters Ten – Thirteen)

* Class Four – February 12, 2018  
  Lecture: Tuskegee Airmen: Battling for Freedom at Home and Abroad  
  Reading: *Stride Toward Freedom* (Introduction, Chapters One – Five)

* Class Five – February 19, 2018  
  Lecture: The Montgomery Bus Boycott: Working with the Right Client to Achieve Social Justice  
  Reading: *Stride Toward Freedom* (Chapters Six – Eleven)  

* Class Six – February 26, 2018  
  Lecture: Nat King Cole and the Fight Over the Meaning of Marriage in Alabama
Reading: *Bus Ride to Justice* (Introduction, Chapters One – Seven)

* Class Seven – March 5, 2018
  Lecture: The Freedom Riders: Desegregating Interstate Travel Through Courts and Buses
  Reading: *Bus Ride to Justice* (Chapters Eight – Fourteen)

* SPRING BREAK – March 12, 2018

* Class Eight – March 19, 2018
  Lecture: Letter from Birmingham Jail: How to Exercise Perfect Command of Rhetoric in Your Writing & The Birmingham Children’s Crusade: Engaging Media to Communicate the Message
  Reading: *Bus Ride to Justice* (Chapters Fifteen – Twenty-Two, Epilogue)

* Class Nine – March 26, 2018
  Lecture: The Stand in the Schoolhouse Door: Desegregation in Education After *Brown v. Board*
  Reading: *Thirteen Loops* (Introduction, Part I)

* Class Ten – April 2, 2018
  Lecture: The 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing and the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  Reading: *Thirteen Loops* (Part II)

* Class Eleven – April 9, 2018
  Lecture: The Selma to Montgomery March and the Voting Rights Act of 1965
  Reading: *Thirteen Loops* (Part III)

* Class Twelve – April 16, 2018
  Lecture: Michael Donald: Using the Civil Justice System to Advocate for Victims of Crime
  Reading: *Just Mercy* (Chapters One – Six)

* Class Thirteen – April 23, 2018
  Lecture: Fighting for Social Justice Today – What You Can Do
  Reading: *Just Mercy* (Chapters Seven – Twelve)

* FINAL PAPER – DUE no later than May 7, 2018