

Professor Spencer
 Con Law, Adv: Structural Limit
 LAW 7570
 Section 1
 Fall 2019

Overall law school
 response rate: 70%

Total enrollment: 31
Number of responses: 24
Response rate: 77%

1. What is your overall impression of the instructor?

		Poor				Excellent
n = 24		0	0	0	0	24
		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Mode: 5.0	Median: 5.0	Mean: 5.0	SD: 0.0	Law school mean: 4.5

2. What is your overall impression of the course?

		Poor				Excellent
n = 24		0	0	1	8	15
		0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	33.3%	62.5%
		Mode: 5.0	Median: 5.0	Mean: 4.6	SD: 0.6	Law school mean: 4.2

3. Please compare the workload for this course to the workload in other courses.

		Very light			Very heavy	
n = 24		0	1	14	6	3
		0.0%	4.2%	58.3%	25.0%	12.5%
		Mode: 3.0	Median: 3.0	Mean: 3.5	SD: 0.8	Law school mean: 3.4

4. What were the best features of this course?

Professor Spencer's lectures were so engaging and interesting. I also appreciated how timely he made every topic. I felt like beyond just learning about our Constitution's structure I was learning how to be a better consumer of media and a better lawyer.

Professor Spencer was the best part of this course. There are areas of constitutional law that are not the most exciting or compelling compared to other areas (like the amendments) of the constitution. Despite these areas' interesting pitfalls, Professor Spencer made the material engaging. It was probably the most engaging 3 hour class I have taken in law school.

The discussion of relevant news stories at the beginning of class. Professor Spencer's ability to make complex ideas digestible.

Prof Spencer is very clear in how he explains every constitutional concept. The charts are exceptionally helpful and we go much more in depth than we did in 1L Constitutional Law.

Took a deep dive into a number of important con law topics; discussed legal and political issues in a fairly balanced manner.

I really enjoyed that while we had the overall "Con Law" readings to learn about the doctrines and history of how we got to the constitutional framework we currently have, that we often just took time to move away from the readings and discuss real world current events and just see where the discussion took us in a Constitutional Law sense.

Discussing current events relevant to this class was a great idea. Having a guest lecturer was also a good idea.

It was great to discuss current events, e.g., Trump Impeachment Inquiry. I also thought that the PP slides were very helpful. The response papers also allowed me to engage in greater detail with two journal texts; texts that I concededly would have skimmed otherwise.

The powerpoints are always very organized and easily accessible. The discussions are often tied into real-life scenarios (Trump impeachment, etc). Keeps class interesting and makes the material easier to understand.

Interactive exercises with classmates, staying engaged/relevant with current topics. Really appreciated the edited Supreme Court cases and the fact there wasn't an expensive unnecessary book required for the class.

I really appreciate the effort Professor Spencer puts in to teaching, particularly changing the plan for the day to talk about pertinent current events.

Very interesting material, the class had a nice balance of structural analysis and real world application, very well presented, and the diverse range of readings was appreciated.

The response papers%oÙÓI rarely if ever get feedback from professors on academic work in a class with an exam, so I appreciated the writing critiques.

The best features of the course were the readings, class discussions, and infusion of current events in our class discussions. I especially enjoyed and appreciated discussion of the current impeachment proceedings/investigation.

I enjoyed having the opportunity to engage in a deep dive in some of the issues that were only briefly discussed during introductory Con Law. Additionally, being able to discuss pressing Con Law issues as they were actively affected by the news was fascinating

I wasn't a big fan of Constitutional Law when I took it the first time around, and I took this course because it fit in my schedule. Professor Spencer was absolutely fantastic and made the material interesting and class was fun every day. I loved the in class exercises we did, and it was a more relaxed class than most. I really felt like we were able to come to class and have fun learning the material.

The hypo exercises were fun and enjoyable which made the material easier to learn. The information on the powerpoints was also helpful in reviewing materials.

Lecture and class was very engaging. Class discussions were actually helpful towards understanding the material. Even though I did not do well on the first response paper, Professor Spencer's comments taking the time to give me specific feedback and rewrites were incredibly helpful.

Professor Spencer is the most engaging instructor I've had so far at UConn Law. He is prepared to teach the material and conducts the class in an exciting way. I particularly enjoyed how much of class centered on applying constitutional doctrine to current events. I also enjoyed the opportunity to write response papers in the form of shortened law review articles. I enjoy reading and writing legal scholarship and haven't really be exposed to that kind of assignment in my other classes.

Professor Spencer. He is knowledgeable about the subject matter. He is honest about where he stands on issues, which is all students can really ask for. While presenting positions of his own, however, he presents a faithful representation of the counterargument, which is much appreciated--not to mention quite rare among the faculty at this law school.

The topics -- all really crucial areas of Constitutional law that I would have known nothing about. I started noticing everything we were learning was sneaking into other classes (like environmental law or admin) and helped me better identify constitutional issues. Also was great at taking real examples of current events and breaking them down (like impeachment hearings) to think critically.

Professor Spencer is, without a doubt, the best professor I've had so far at UConn Law (arguably, also the best professor at UConn Law, hand's down). He teaches effectively, but it's also clear that he cares about his students and is passionate about the material. He managed to make boring topics interesting. This class was also very helpful topically when it tied the material to the ongoing impeachment proceedings.

Basically, Professor Spencer is the best and he should teach whatever classes he wants because he's awesome at teaching and is just a wonderful person. 10/10 would highly recommend.

In-class discussions where we apply the concepts we're learning, whether to hypos or to current events. The writing assignments were challenging but enjoyable.

5. What were the least successful features of the course?

A few of the readings were too long. I found myself having to sacrifice certain readings to make sure I got through enough. Particularly this was true for a few journal articles that were just not realistic to get through.

Having a syllabus would have been more helpful. Also having the weekly assignments ahead of time so that we could read ahead if we needed to.

N/a

Writing two research papers along with a take home exam seems a bit too much and unnecessary. A lot of material was a repetition of 1L Conn law class - perhaps other aspects of Conn law can be discussed?

Some of the readings were very long and weren't really discussed in class

Once a week from 9:30am-12:15-12:30 is a lot of con law, and I think this course would be better spread over two class days through the week rather than in one big shot. Some of the law review articles could also have been pared down. If this class was spread over two days, readings would be more manageable for each class overall.

My only critique would be to request more advanced notice of what the readings would be each week. I often found myself scrambling to finish readings the night before because I couldn't start them earlier in the week.

I think the computer compromise didn't work. Halfway through people stopped following it. Also for those of us with illegible handwriting it makes life more difficult.

The class size, I would have liked a smaller room and class for a better discussion.

The least successful feature of the course was the lengthy readings that we did not always discuss. In addition, I do not think that it was appropriate for the professor to post the "weakest," "weak" examples of our classmates' response papers. That made me uncomfortable and I think that it would have been enough to just post the "strongest" example from the response paper.

Some of the discussion necessarily involved review of basic topics as opposed to new discussion and exploration of the topics, but I feel that we could have gotten away with quicker review of those topics and more analysis.

I really disliked the mini response papers students taking the final exam had to do. I know the amount that all the students were writing came out to about the same amount, but it seemed like a bit more work for students taking the exam because they also have to prepare and study at the end of the semester. I also didn't like that the syllabus said the final exam would be a 24-hour take home and a couple weeks before the exam we found out it was only 6 hours. I had already planned out my study schedule for the exam period, and didn't allocate as much time for this class as I would have if I had known from the beginning that it was a 6-hour exam.

Not having the materials ahead of time for class each week made getting the reading done challenging sometimes. It would have been helpful to have them maybe a week or two in advance in case you needed to read ahead.

Law review articles as reading, we rarely covered them in class, might be more helpful to give us excerpts of the law review articles like you did for some of the cases.

This is really just a result of scheduling, but the course was scheduled on a Thursday morning after I had three courses on Wednesdays. Due to this scheduling, I did not get to spend as much time with the material for this class as I would have wanted. Similarly, meeting once a week renders it difficult to retain information on a weekly basis.

This should really be an off the curve class with a class size of under 18. It should be in a smaller room that is more discussion friendly. When hot button current events are to be discussed in a class session, an email that morning or the night before would be helpful to encourage engagement.

I enjoyed the themes of a lot of the law review articles but some of them were so long I felt like I was skimming and gathered less than if I just read part of it. That's a me problem but I think condensing some of those articles would be helpful to the class.

That it was only once a week, and that he didn't bring donuts on the last day of class. :(

For some units, the length of the readings (longer cases and longer law review articles) wasn't always commensurate with what we covered in class.

6. Further comments that might be helpful to the instructor.

I enjoyed the break-out activities and the opportunity to write two smaller papers was excellent. However, I am slightly worried about how the curve will work out...

I did not have the best experience in my Intro to Con Law class, so I was really excited to have another attempt at a class because constitutional law has been an interest of mine since I was in high school.

Thank you for an incredible semester. I'm going to miss you and this course.

I am concerned about the grading for the course with regards to comparing students' term papers with the smaller essays and exam. I would make grading uniform next time the class is offered.

I did, however, actually enjoy being able to write more in depth with the smaller essays. I liked diving deeper into constitutional concepts.

Presenting "the other side" of a controversial argument (i.e. getting students to think whether they would take on the UConn students who were shouting the n-word) is very helpful in such a stifflingly one-sided academic environment. Keep challenging students' views - it is the best tool for honest growth.

Perhaps there could be some discussion about the first amendment--in my con law class, I received only a rudimentary overview of the 1st Amendment.

Excellent professor

I really appreciate how Professor Spencer pushes students to articulate arguments they don't agree with. It's a useful exercise.

I really enjoyed the class, especially the discussions on current events. I also really appreciated and enjoyed the energy, passion, and knowledge that the professor brought to every class.

Having the no laptop policy at the beginning of the class was challenging because all of the class reading was online, so printing everything out was a lot and got overwhelming.

Another feature that I enjoyed was going over current events at either the beginning or the end of class. It helped ground what we were learning in real life applications.

Maybe we'll do this in the exam review about to take place, but I think it would be helpful to have a clearer understanding regarding how well we are supposed to know certain subject matter.

Probably best to have everyone doing the same assignments and final exam (or preferably paper) for a course with over 18 students.

I would have loved a more structured syllabus, but i think that was just because we were figuring out what was working for the class.

I found the in-class exercises very helpful to synthesize the material and wish we did more.

Application of the doctrine to current events was a nice feature in several lectures, but the hypos were even more helpful (at least, to me).

7. Additional comments on the work required for this class.

The reading workload was very heavy and hard to manage but otherwise the work was reasonable.

N/a

Would be helpful to email out reading assignments a few days earlier. Sometimes we wouldn't get our next reading assignment until 2-3 days before class, but it would've been helpful to get it 5-6 days before class.

I think the two response papers/exam workload is a good breakdown. Takes a little pressure off the exam but isn't too burdensome during the semester

Perhaps moving the papers a hair earlier would make life easier on the students come the end of the year.

It was confusing having so many different types of assignments that people were doing to complete the course.

One of my favorite classes I have taken in law school thus far, mostly because of Professor's Spencer lectures and candid attitude.

Great subject matter. Nice to have a professor acknowledge that the Federalist Papers exist. Good work with this course.

The readings for each week were a bit heavy.

Some weeks, the readings were light, but other weeks they were much heavier. Making the readings more even, where possible, would be helpful. Also, reading edited versions of the cases (or specified page ranges) was preferable to reading the full opinions because, usually, there were parts of the full opinions that did not bear on what we covered in class. Still, reading the full cases and having to figure out what's important is surely valuable.