

Legal Studies 178: Legal History Seminar McClain Spring 13

Because this is a research seminar, there is no syllabus as such. In lieu of that, here is a description of what we do. The theme of the course is judicial biography. Each student is asked to do a substantial research paper on a judge from the past who contributed significantly to the shaping of the American legal order. We spend the first few weeks of the semester reading examples of judicial biography and discussing research strategies and techniques. Reference librarians from the main and Boalt Hal libraries make presentations on the resources, paper and digital, in their collections that seem most relevant to a course of this sort. After this phase of the course is completed, each student makes a presentation on his or her project and gets feedback from me and fellow class members. Students submit drafts of the papers a few weeks before the end of term, and I return them with comments. A final version of the paper is due at the end of the semester and is the main basis for the grade. There is no final exam.