

College of Law launches new interdisciplinary initiative

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA has a proud tradition of scholarship and teaching in the field of legal history. Among the many legal historians who have taught at the University of Iowa are Professors Percy Bordwell (d. 1970), Donald Sutherland (d. 1986), and Henry Horwitz (emeritus 2004).

Building on this tradition, the College of Law has founded the Program in Law and History, with the aim of bringing together faculty and students to foster research and teaching at the intersection of law and history.

Four faculty with sustained scholarship in legal history are at the center of the new Program. In alphabetical order, they are: Thomas P. Gallanis, recently hired as the N. William Hines Chair in Law; Herbert Hovenkamp, the Ben and Dorothy Willie Chair in Law; Linda Kerber, the May Brodbeck Professor in Liberal Arts and Sciences; and Lea VanderVelde, the Josephine Witte Chair in Law. Gallanis and Hovenkamp have secondary appointments in the Department of History, and Kerber has a secondary appointment in the College of Law.

Each of the four is an award-winning legal historian. Gallanis received the Selden Society's David Yale Prize for an article judged "a distinguished contribution to the history of the laws and legal institutions of England and Wales"; Hovenkamp and Kerber have separately received the American Historical Association's Littleton-Griswold Prize for the best book in American legal history; and VanderVelde has been named a 2010 Guggenheim Fellow for her research on

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slavery and freedom in the law of the American frontier.

The Program has broad appeal across departmental boundaries. A total of twenty-two faculty—in law, history, and other departments—with interests at the intersection of law and history are affiliated with the Program. Their interests range from Latin American to Islamic legal history, and from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century. (See the list of faculty and scholarship areas.)

Four projects are the focus of the Program.

The first is to sponsor a series of Legal History Workshops, designed to promote the discussion of scholarship in progress. Each workshop features a legal historian from Iowa or another university. The draft of his or her work is circulated in advance, with constructive criticism encouraged.

The second project is to sponsor an annual lecture in legal history, to be named after the late Donald Sutherland. Sutherland taught at Iowa his entire

career and was one of the pre-eminent historians of medieval English law. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, where he earned his doctorate in medieval history. He joined the Department of History at Iowa as an instructor in 1958, becoming full professor in 1967. In 1985, he was appointed Carver Professor of History and Law. Sutherland died unexpectedly of a heart attack in 1986. The aim of the Donald W. Sutherland Memorial Lecture in Legal History is to honor his memory by providing a major public address by an accomplished legal historian, either from the University of Iowa or from another university. The Sutherland Lectures will be webcast and made available on the College of Law website.

The third project is to promote awareness of the College of Law's superb library resources in legal history. The Law Library, recently ranked number 1 in the country, has an extensive array of sources for research in legal history. The Rare Book Room houses rare and irreplaceable books, manuscripts, and special collections. The Law Library owns two significant antiquarian collections. The first is the Leist collection, consisting of German, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Canon Law volumes. The Law Library purchased the 3,000 volume Leist Collection in 1920. The second rare book collection is from the estate of William Gardiner Hammond, the first Chancellor (Dean) of the College of Law. The Hammond Historical Collection contains about 1,200 volumes of early English and civil law materials.



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— PROFESSOR THOMAS P. GALLANIS

The fourth project is to promote the teaching of legal history, both to law students and to graduate students. The Program’s first Ph.D. candidate will begin this Fall. Wendy Blasius, who already holds a J.D. degree, will start working on her doctoral degree in history, supervised by Gallanis and Kerber. Blasius plans to concentrate on the history of Anglo-American criminal procedure, with an eye toward securing a teaching position in a university history department.

Overall, the Program aims to foster interdisciplinary research and teaching, to benefit faculty and students alike. “I want the intellectual energy of the faculty to carry over to our students,” Gallanis explained. “I hope the Program will be another way for the faculty to reach out and include students in exciting interdisciplinary work.”

Faculty and scholarship areas

Randall Bezanson

Constitutional history; history of the freedom of the press

Arthur Bonfield

History of publishing and free speech in early modern England

William Buss

History of American influence on the Australian constitution

Lois Cox

Notable American trials of the 20th century

Ann Estin

History of the family; history of gender

Thomas P. Gallanis

English legal history; Continental European legal history; history of procedural law

Laura Gotkowitz

Latin American law and justice in the 20th century

N. William Hines

History of the Iowa law school; history of legal education

Herbert Hovenkamp

History of American law and economic thought

Carolyn Jones

History of taxation in America

Linda K. Kerber

History of women/gender and the law

Michael E. Moore

Medieval canon law; medieval kingship and political culture

Kevin Mumford

History of race, sexuality, and culture; legal history of race and homophobic discrimination

Angela Onwuachi-Willig

History of anti-miscegenation statutes; history of the multiracial family

Jacki Rand

Federal Indian policy and law

John Reitz

Continental and comparative legal history; history of institutions relating to the rule of law

Alexander Somek

Constitutional history; history of legal scholarship

Ahmed Souaiaia

Islamic legal history

Allen Steinberg

American social, legal, and urban history; the history of criminal prosecution and criminal law in American cities

Elke Stockreiter

Islamic law and gender in colonial and post-colonial Africa

Lea VanderVelde

American women’s legal history; history of slavery; frontier history

Gerald Wetlauffer

Theories of law and systems of belief in 20th century American law