

WRS: Health & Technology

Course Information Overview

Course Name	WRS: Health & Technology (7397/20617)
Semester	Spring
Year	2026
Class time(s) and day(s)	10:30am -12:00pm MW
Class Location	TBD
Casebook	None
Mode of Instruction	Face to Face
Name of Instructor	Professor Leah Fowler
Office	430F
Contact Information	lfowler@central.uh.edu/ 713-743-8824(o)
Office Hours	TBD or by appointment
Faculty Assistant	Jeremy Tidwell (jltidwe3@central.uh.edu)
Final Exam Date	None
Final Exam Mode	Final Paper (10,000-12,000 words)

Course Description and Objectives

This seminar explores the intersection of health, law, and technology while also developing key skills in academic legal writing. All readings and materials are available online or on Canvas.

At the end of this class, students should be able to:

- Analyze how health technologies both shape and are shaped by legal and regulatory regimes;
- Formulate a novel thesis about a topic at the intersection of health and technology by conducting advanced legal research, including preemption checks and source evaluation;
- Draft, revise, and finalize a 10,000-12,000-word piece of academic legal scholarship that demonstrates rigorous analysis, incorporation of peer and instructor feedback, clear organization, and rubric-compliant formatting;
- Communicate scholarship effectively by delivering one 10-15-minute presentation and responding to questions; and
- Lead one scholarly discussion by selecting a relevant law review article, preparing 5–7 focused questions, and facilitating dialogue that (i) accurately states the assigned article’s claims and contributions, (ii) surfaces competing perspectives, and (iii) ends with clear takeaways for law, policy, practice, and research.

Course Expectations

The class involves seminar-style discussions with aspects of a writing workshop woven throughout. I expect everyone to read the assignments carefully and to come ready to

discuss. Where classes focus on an aspect of the student's writing project (e.g., introductions or outlines), I expect the writing to be developed enough to discuss in class. We will read, edit, and comment extensively on each other's drafts as we work together toward completing our papers. Your enthusiastic engagement makes courses like this enjoyable, and I hope we can learn a great deal from one another.

Modes of Assessment

Grades will be based on three things: engaged class participation (15%), an in-class presentation of your paper idea (15%), and a final paper (70%).

Class Participation (15%)

Class Discussion

Engagement in class discussion is a vital part of this course's design. Thus, consistent failures to prepare for or engage in our meetings will be detrimental to your participation score. I expect students to come to class on time and prepared, contribute readily to the conversation but not dominate it, make thoughtful contributions based on the readings that advance the conversation, and show an interest in and respect for others' contributions.

Lead Discussant

Once per semester, each student will act as Lead Discussant. In this role, the student will select and assign the reading, develop discussion questions and learning objectives, and guide in-class discussion. Students will submit the reading and 5 anticipated discussion questions one week before their assigned day to lead the class discussion.

Procertas

Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency with select aspects of Microsoft Word using Procertas. Procertas is an online platform that helps lawyers learn core office technology.

In-Class Presentations (15%)

Class presentations will occupy our final several meetings (the exact number will depend on the class size). Presentations should be 10-15 minutes long, and we'll have about 15 minutes of questions following each (totaling about 30 minutes per student).

In preparation for your presentation, you are required to prepare and submit, at a minimum, a complete draft of the introduction of your paper to your classmates so they can prepare questions. The introduction will be due one week before your scheduled presentation and submitted through the designated Discussions section on Canvas. If a rough draft of your paper is complete, you may submit that instead. Timely completion of the written assignments throughout the semester means that this document should not require any additional preparation.

Students should come prepared to ask questions during each presentation. Presenters should be prepared to answer questions from their classmates (and me).

Final Paper (75%)

Each student must write a paper for this seminar about some legal topic related to health and technology. Papers must be at least 10,000 words (including footnotes) and no more than 12,000 words (including footnotes). In order to help you structure your writing process, there are five important deadlines:

1. February 4 (by 5pm): Deadline to submit one paragraph describing paper topic and thesis
2. February 18: Deadline to meet with Professor Fowler to discuss paper topic and thesis
3. March 11 (by 5 pm): Deadline to submit a 5-page (single-spaced) summary of your paper and preliminary list of sources
4. April 1 (by 5pm): ~7,000 word draft due
5. May 1 (by 5pm): Final draft due

Many of these deadlines are also paired with a peer feedback exercise. Please see Canvas for additional instructions.

Failure to meet these deadlines or complete these assignments will result in a reduction in the final paper grade.

Students may not submit work they previously completed in any prior course or for a student law journal.

Communication

Please use your official UH email address and Canvas for communication related to this course.

Office Hours

I will be available for office hours every week at a predetermined time. No appointment is necessary during these times; just visit my office (430F). You can also schedule a meeting with me (in person or via Zoom) by emailing me at lfowler@central.uh.edu. Your questions are always welcome, and I am happy to help with any concerns you might have—whether they are related to the class or life and law school more generally.

Syllabus Changes

I have designed this class to adapt to your specific interests and needs. Many of the readings will be driven by you and your classmates' paper topics. As a result, the assigned topics and readings are not settled. Dates are also not settled, as some of the timing will depend on enrollment. All readings will be available on Canvas at least a week before they are assigned.

The following are examples of possible topics:

Selected Health & Technology Topics

- Health Influencers
- Wellness Technologies
- Artificial Intelligence
- Transhumanism and Radical Life Extension
- Genetic Engineering
- Cloning
- Artificial Organs
- Citizen Science
- Brain-Computer Interfaces

Selected Writing Topics

- Giving and Receiving Substantive Feedback
- Academic Legal Research
- How to Write a Law Review Article
- Editing
- The Law Review Submission Process

Attendance Policy

As noted in the [student handbook](#), the Law Center has a minimum 80% attendance policy for students. Absences in violation of law center policy may be sanctioned by a reduction in the final grade or, in egregious cases, by involuntary withdrawal from the class. You are responsible for managing your absences from class and ensuring that your total number of absences does not exceed the threshold for the class.

Remote Presence

I do not allow remote participation in my class.

Recording of Class

Students may not record all or part of class, live stream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures without my advanced written consent. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center](#). If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform.

Honor Code

The [UHLC Honor Code](#) applies to all aspects of this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed a

pledge to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

Professionalism

Our classroom is a learning space where each student is treated with respect and dignity and where everyone is provided the opportunity to participate, contribute, and succeed. I encourage you to speak up and share your views throughout the semester. I also expect every class member to remember that in this learning environment, we will engage respectfully and with professionalism toward each other. In the words of the [Texas Lawyer's Creed](#), "[a] lawyer should always adhere to the highest principles of professionalism."

AI-Generated Text

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text (AI-Generated Text). Examples of the technology include what are known as "generative" large language models (LLMs), and a specific implementation what is well known in the general public is ChatGPT. These systems can generate text in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI-Generated Text, appears to have human-mimicking "intelligence" and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for written material one might generate themselves. AI-Generated Text can include computer code or programs as well as human language content.

You may use AI tools in this course. However, you must disclose the full extent of that use if I ask. Please reference the AI Policy on Canvas for full details.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The University of Houston has many resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment, and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops, and connections to other support services on and off campus. For assistance, visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let's Talk location in person or virtually. Let's Talk is a daily, informal, confidential consultation with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

[The Student Health Center](#) offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm to schedule an appointment.

[The A.D. Bruce Religion Center](#) offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now? If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454 or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the [UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy](#), all of your instructors (including me) are “responsible employees” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the [Title IX website](#).

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment, or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure the timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the [website](#), calling 713-743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@central.uh.edu.