



UNIVERSITY OF **HOUSTON** LAW CENTER



2025 U.S. SUPREME COURT UPDATE

Legal experts from the University of Houston Law Center will discuss the 2024-2025 United States Supreme Court term, highlighting some of this year's major decisions.

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

2:00-5:00 PM Central Time

via Zoom

Approved for 3.0 hours of Texas MCLE credit

Agenda

2:00-2:10 PM

Opening Remarks

Leonard M. Baynes

Dean, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz

Cullen Distinguished Chair

Professor of Law

University of Houston Law Center

2:10-2:30 PM

Trump v. CASA

Reviewing challenges to an executive order on birthright citizenship as part of its “shadow” docket, the Supreme Court considered whether federal district courts can issue nationwide injunctions.

Seth J. Chandler

Law Foundation Professor of Law

University of Houston Law Center

2:30-2:50 PM

Mahmoud v. Taylor

The Supreme Court weighed in on a parent’s right to opt out of LGBTQ+ inclusive story books at a public school on the basis of religion.

David R. Dow

Cullen Professor of Law

University of Houston Law Center

2:50-3:10 PM

United States v. Skrmetti

The Supreme Court considered whether a Tennessee law banning gender affirming treatment for minors is unconstitutional.

Laura Portuondo

Assistant Professor of Law

University of Houston Law Center

Agenda

3:10-3:30 PM

Ames v. Ohio Dep't of Youth Servs.

In this reverse discrimination case, the Supreme Court confirmed that a majority-group plaintiff alleging employment discrimination under Title VII cannot be held to a heightened evidentiary standard.

Emily Berman

Professor of Law

William B. Bates Distinguished

Chair in Law

Assistant Dean of Faculty Development

University of Houston Law Center

3:30-3:50 PM

Louisiana v. Callais

The future of Louisiana's congressional map with implications for redistricting cases nationwide is at stake in this Voting Rights Act case that will be re-argued next term.

David Froomkin

Assistant Professor of Law

University of Houston Law Center

3:50-5:00 PM

Roundtable Discussion with Dean Baynes and All Panelists

BIOGRAPHIES



LEONARD M. BAYNES

Dean, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen

Distinguished Chair

Professor of Law

University of Houston Law Center

Leonard M. Baynes, now the currently longest serving law dean in Texas, made history in 2014 with his appointment as the first dean of African descent of the University of Houston Law Center.

During his deanship, the UH Law Center's entering credentials increased from a median LSAT score of 159 to 161 and a median GPA of 3.47 to 3.75 with almost 20% of the students from first-generation college backgrounds and over 80% of first-generation law school backgrounds. Also, during his tenure, the ultramodern \$93 million, state-of-the-art John M. O'Quinn Law Building opened in 2022. Dean Baynes initiated an award-winning Pre-Law Pipeline Program designed to create more opportunities for first-generation, economically challenged, and under-resourced college students.

In 2020, Dean Baynes was named to the Lawyers of Color Power List by the Lawyers of Color Foundation. In 2022, he was recognized by the AALS with the Clyde Ferguson Award and by his alma mater, Columbia University School of Law, with the Paul Robeson Award. Dean Baynes has written more than 35 law review articles and in 2020 published a casebook titled *Communications Law in the Public Interest* with Wolters Kluwer.

BIOGRAPHIES



EMILY BERMAN

Professor of Law

William B. Bates Distinguished Chair in Law

Assistant Dean of Faculty Development

University of Houston Law Center

Professor Emily Berman is a constitutional scholar with expertise in executive power and national security law. Her scholarship identifies areas of law where executive power is subject to inadequate restraints and proposes novel mechanisms for imposing checks and balances and democratic accountability on the executive branch. Professor Berman teaches Constitutional Law, Federal Courts, and National Security.

Professor Berman received her A.B. in political science from Duke University and her J.D., *magna cum laude*, from New York University School of Law, where she was the editor-in-chief of the *NYU Law Review*. She also received an LL.M. in International Law from NYU. After graduating from law school, Professor Berman clerked for the Hon. John M. Walker, Jr. of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to joining the University of Houston Law Center faculty in the fall of 2014, she taught for two years as a visiting assistant professor at Brooklyn Law School. She previously was a Furman Fellow and Brennan Center Fellow at New York University School of Law and held positions as counsel and Katz Fellow in the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center for Justice.

Professor Berman's work has been published in top journals, such as the *Minnesota Law Review*, the *Iowa Law Review*, the *Boston University Law Review*, the *Fordham Law Review*, the *Indiana Law Journal*, and the *New York University Law Review*; her opinion pieces have appeared in *Just Security*, *Lawfare*, *The Atlantic Online*, the *National Law Journal*, *Legal Times Online*, and *CNN.com*, among others.

BIOGRAPHIES



SETH J. CHANDLER

*Law Foundation Professor of Law
University of Houston Law Center*

Seth J. Chandler is a Law Foundation Professor of Law at the UH Law Center who specializes in constitutional law and the application of mathematics and computer science to law. Professor Chandler won a prestigious university-wide teaching excellence award in 1995, was a first year winner of the Innovator Award from Wolfram Research, received the President's Medal from Loyola University for extraordinary service in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and has been called on twice to testify before Congress on the Affordable Care Act. Professor Chandler has a broad Internet presence, including a YouTube Channel for his course Analytic Methods for Lawyers. He is also developing expertise in Large Language Models for use by Lawyers. He practiced with Munger, Tolles & Olson in Los Angeles and Williams & Connolly in Washington, D.C. before beginning his academic career in 1990 at the UH Law Center. Professor Chandler teaches constitutional law, insurance law, Analytic Methods for Lawyers, and other courses.



DAVID R. DOW

*Cullen Professor of Law
University of Houston Law Center*

Professor David R. Dow joined the University of Houston Law Center faculty in 1988. He graduated with a B.A. in History from Rice University and earned his M.A. in History and his law degree from Yale. Upon graduation, he clerked for the Honorable Carolyn Dineen King, judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Professor Dow is also the founder of the Texas Innocence Network. Often working with UH Law Center students, he has represented more than one hundred death row inmates in their state and federal appeals. His areas of expertise include contracts, constitutional law and theory, and death penalty law. He has written extensively on these subjects as well as on equal protection, law and literature, and federal jurisdiction.

BIOGRAPHIES



DAVID FROOMKIN

*Assistant Professor of Law
University of Houston Law Center*

David Froomkin is an assistant professor of law at the University of Houston Law Center and an affiliated faculty member in the Department of Political Science, with primary scholarly interests in administrative law, election law, and democratic and constitutional theory. His research focuses on the structure of government and of the democratic process, drawing on political science and political economy as well as analysis of the text and structure of the Constitution.

Professor Froomkin received a B.A., *cum laude*, from Columbia University in 2015, a J.D. from Yale Law School in 2022, and a Ph.D. in Political Science (awarded departmental distinction and university distinction) from Yale University in 2024. His dissertation received the Leonard D. White Award from the American Political Science Association for the best dissertation in the field of public administration.

His scholarship has been accepted for publication in journals including the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, the *Yale Journal on Regulation*, and *Political Studies*. In addition to other ongoing projects, he is currently completing a book manuscript that develops a new conceptual and normative theory of the separation of powers as a government structure that can reinforce rather than vitiate legislative supremacy.



LAURA PORTUONDO

*Assistant Professor of Law
University of Houston Law Center*

Professor Laura Portuondo is a constitutional law scholar with expertise on reproductive rights and justice, gender equality, and the First Amendment. Her scholarship addresses tensions between First and Fourteenth Amendment law and offers novel theories for reconciling them. Professor Portuondo's work has been featured in the *Duke Law Journal*, the *UCLA Law Review*, the *Journal of Law and Religion* (peer reviewed), and the *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*.

Professor Portuondo received her B.A. in English *summa cum laude* with distinction from Yale College. She earned her J.D. from Yale Law School where she was an editor of the *Yale Law Journal*. Following law school, she clerked for the Hon. Robert A. Katzmann of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the Hon. Jed. S. Rakoff of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. She also worked as a judicial strategy fellow at the Center for Reproductive Rights and as a Fellow with the Program for the Study of Reproductive Justice at Yale Law School.

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