



## Engaged Teaching in the Face of COVID-19

With the COVID-19 pandemic forcing the suspension of face-to-face teaching in the middle of the Spring Semester, we start this Newsletter by discussing the efforts of our faculty members in moving their classes to the remote environment. Every member of our faculty devoted countless hours to adapt their classes to Zoom delivery. Here are some notable examples:

One law school experience that all lawyers remember even decades after graduation is the first-year oral argument, which is designed to simulate a courtroom experience. With the pandemic closing courts and schools, some law schools decided to forgo that transformative and memorable experience this year. Not ours. After studying how the federal circuit courts are conducting arguments, **Anna Hemingway** and the other Legal Methods faculty members followed their lead and adapted how they taught and held oral arguments this year. Oral arguments were held on Zoom with benches of two to three judges, and either a student bailiff or a stopwatch program keeping time. The students were required to dress in courtroom attire, and the professors retained some, but not all, of the courtroom formality. For example, although the students were not required to stand for arguments, they still adhered to the formal introduction of "may it please the court."

**Michael Hussey** teaches from an engaging problem-method casebook in Federal Income Taxation. With the move to remote teaching this semester, he has been utilizing breakout rooms in Zoom. Students work in small groups sharing their answers to the problems with each other. Prof. Hussey pops in and out of each breakout room remotely just like he would do when circulating around a classroom

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checking in on small groups. The students then come together and share their answers and rationales with the larger group. He has found students to be very engaged.

In the face-to-face environment **Robyn Meadows** conducts the review session for her Remedies class in an "escape room" format. Prof. Meadows moved that session to Zoom using breakout rooms and student volunteers. There were 4 sets of exercises - problems, word scrambles, multiple-choice, term identification, all of which were remedies based. A group did one exercise, submitted their answers via email to Prof. Meadows and once she signaled the group's answers were correct, they moved on to the next set of exercises. Trusted student volunteers had the four exercises about a half hour before class and revealed the exercises via screen share (1 page at a time) with the group when signaled to do so. The members of the group worked together to solve each exercise. Prof. Meadows reported that it worked very well and that the groups competed with one another to finish first.

## Engaged Teaching (cont'd)

Part of the final grade in **Juliet Moringiello's** Secured Transactions course is based on a series of drafting exercises that produce a package of documents for a commercial loan. The students work on the documents in teams in which one student plays the role of the bank's lawyer and the other plays the role of a lawyer representing the owner of a small business. Several class sessions are devoted to negotiating those documents. When we moved to the remote environment, Prof. Moringiello moved those negotiating sessions to Zoom breakout rooms. She was then able to visit each group to discuss how legal doctrine guides drafting just as she would have in the face-to-face environment. After she marked the assignments, she shared examples with the class using Zoom screen share and a pen tablet so that she could illustrate good drafting to her class and make corrections on sample documents.



## In the Courts

COVID-19 has not prevented courts from issuing opinions in cases pending before them. On April 22, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, in *Commonwealth v. Britton*, cited **Jim Diehm's** article *New Federalism and Constitutional Criminal Procedure: Are We Repeating the Mistakes of the Past?*, which was published in the *Maryland Law Review* in 1996.

## In Print

*Trends*, a publication of the ABA Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources, recently published *Justice John Paul Stevens: An Appreciation*, by **John Dernbach**. Prof. Dernbach's article focused on Justice Stevens' opinions in cases involving environmental law. Prof. Dernbach also wrote a post for the American College of Environmental Lawyers blog. The post is *Court-Ordered Reductions of Greenhouse Gases? The Urgenda and Juliana Decisions*, published on January 22, 2020.

**Michael Dimino** has been weighing in on some of the most important issues facing our country today. His op-ed (co-authored with Charlie Gerow) *Government should be limited – even during a pandemic*, was published in *The Hill* on April 20, 2020.

**Juliet Moringiello's** latest article, *Notice and Assent Through Technological Change: The Enduring Relevance of the Work of the ABA Joint Working Group on Electronic Contracting Practices* (co-authored with Nancy Kim and John Ottaviani), is now in print in *The Business Lawyer*. Prof. Moringiello and her co-authors wrote the article for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary volume of *The Business Lawyer*.

Congratulations to **Chris Robinette**, whose article, *Raising Compulsory Automobile Insurance Amounts: A Case Study from the United States*, was published in the *Insurance Review*, the journal of the Polish Chamber of Insurance. Additional kudos to Prof. Robinette for writing this article with 3L student Dani Wachtel; it's always wonderful to give this kind of professional opportunity to our students.

**Amanda Sholtis** continues to make her mark as a scholar of law teaching. Her article, *Say What?: A How-To Guide on Providing Formative Assessment to Law Students Through Live Critique*, is now in print in the *Stetson Law Review*.

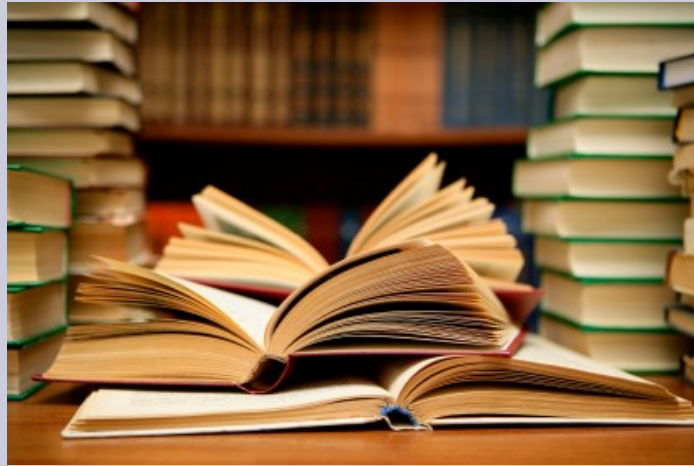




## Appointments

Our faculty serve the larger legal community in many ways. On February 1, 2020 **Michael Dimino** began his two-year term on the Dauphin County Bar Association Board of Directors.

**Juliet Moringiello** has been appointed as Chair of the Uniform Law Commission's Study Committee on Tenancy in Common Ownership Default Rules. The ULC has also appointed Prof. Moringiello to its Study Committee on Mitigation of Public Health Emergency Business Disruptions, a committee formed to respond to business issues arising from the COVID-19 crisis.



## Engaged Scholarship Keeps On Giving...

Last year, **John Dernbach's** book, *Legal Pathways to Deep Decarbonization in the United States* (co-edited with Michael Gerrard) hit the shelves. On April 14, 2020, it spawned a web site that, for each of the 35 chapters in the book, will link to existing and model laws that would implement many of the book's recommendations. So far it links to 1,565 resources to pursue 244 recommendations! See it yourself here: <https://lpdd.org>.

## In Print Soon

**John Dernbach** will be publishing his latest article, *The Role of Trust Law Principles in Defining Public Trust Duties for Natural Resources*, in the *Michigan Journal of Law Reform*. This is particularly special for Prof. Dernbach because he served as an editor of the *MJLR* while he was a student.

**Michael Dimino's** book, *The Best Candidate: Presidential Nomination in Polarized Times*, is available for pre-order from the Cambridge University Press. Michael co-edited the book with Eugene Mazo. Congratulations to Prof. Dimino, who has produced two books in the past year!

## Another Tax Season...

Is not yet over, but our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance clinic, led by **Michael Hussey** was required to suspend operations because of COVID-19. VITA served 145 clients this year, preparing federal, state, local, and property tax/rent rebates returns. In addition to Prof. Hussey, nine students, six alumni, and six other volunteers participated.

## Presentations in the Virtual World

We have been grounded from travel, but **Jill Family** will be presenting *An Invisible Wall and the Dangers of Internal Agency Control* at the Law & Society Association Migration & Citizenship Pre-Conference on May 27, 2020 (location: Zoom, Planet Earth).



## Before We Were Grounded...

Our faculty made presentations around the country on topics within their various areas of expertise.

**John Dernbach** was a featured speaker at the Gettysburg College Department of Environmental Studies Annual Lecture program on “An Environmental Amendment for Pennsylvania and the Nation: The Story of Pennsylvania’s Article I Section 27 and the Promise of the Green Amendment.” The program took place on February 27, 2020. Prof. Dernbach also moderated a panel on local law and decarbonization at a conference on climate disruption and decarbonization sponsored by the ABA Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources on February 19, 2020. The conference was held at Pace Law School in White Plains, NY.

**Michael Dimino** was busy with presentations until we all stayed home. On November 21, 2019, Prof. Dimino participated in a panel discussion about impeachment at the Annual Meeting of the Middle District of Pennsylvania Chapter of the Federal Bar Association on November 21, 2019. On February 13, 2020, he participated in a Federalist Society program on “How PA Selects its Supreme Court and How PA Should Select its Supreme Court,” at Penn State-Dickinson Law School in Carlisle, PA. On February 25, 2020, he co-hosted a panel on “Dauphin County CASA – The Law, the Implementation, and the Volunteers who make it all Happen,” at the Dauphin County Bar Association in Harrisburg.

**Jill Family** made two presentations at the Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in January 2020. She was a speaker on a Hot Topics panel on *Recent Developments in Regulatory Guidance: How Easily Can Agencies*



*Change Policy in Immigration and Civil Rights?* and she was a commentator at the *New Voices in Immigration Law* program. Prof. Family presented her work-in-progress *Litigating the Invisible Wall* at the University of Baltimore School of Law on February 27, 2020.

**Anna Hemingway** presented “The Traditional Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing Course: Does Subject Synthesis Serve Students Best,” at the Legal Writing Institute One-Day Workshop at the Penn State-Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, PA on December 6, 2019.

**Randy Lee’s** ethics CLE programs are a hit in Pennsylvania and beyond. He presented *A Man for All Seasons* for the Lehigh County Bar Association on November 26, 2019 and for the Cumberland County Bar Association on December 13, 2019 and an ethics CLE on *Harry Potter* for the New Jersey State Bar Association on December 6, 2019.

**Juliet Moringiello** was a panelist on “The Uniform Commercial Code and Emerging Technologies: Key Issues Needing Your Input,” at the ABA Business Law Section Cyberspace Institute and Winter Working Meeting in Phoenix, AZ on January 24, 2020.

On February 7, 2020 **Chris Robinette** participated in a panel on “New Theories of Tort Law” at the *Southwestern Law Review* symposium *New Frontiers in Torts: The Challenges of Science, Technology & Innovation* in Los Angeles, CA.



## Engaged Service with Students

**Anna Hemingway** and three students (2Ls Christopher Zivny and Tadd Turzcyn and 3L Salvatore Sciacca) staffed a legal information table for the Dauphin County Bar Association at the Homeless Veterans Stand Down at the Harrisburg Armory. They provided several homeless veteran with sources for information regarding custody issues, divorce issues, employment issues, and *pro se* representation.

## Speaking with Prospective Students

On March 24, 2020, **John Dernbach** presented a podcast as part of the LSAT Unplugged & Law School Admissions Podcast. Prof. Dernbach spoke about law school selection, online law school, essay exams, and the coronavirus. Interested? Watch here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_qOLF\\_THU8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_qOLF_THU8)



## Library Feature: Did You Know?

In addition to using Bepress and SSRN to promote, showcase and gather ranking statistics, HeinOnline also makes it easy for authors to exhibit their scholarly work. Most profiles include your name and articles, the number of times your articles have been cited by other articles and cases, and the number of times your articles have been accessed by other HeinOnline users within a rolling 12-month period. HeinOnline's "ScholarRank's Top 250 Authors" is based on analysis of all articles in HeinOnline. Additional enhancements include a photo, biographical information, your university/affiliation, and links to your web page and social media accounts.

In the coming months Widener Commonwealth will be further enhancing your HeinOnline profiles with ORCID IDs. ORCID is an independent non-profit organization that provides a persistent identifier to distinguish a particular author from other researchers and eliminate name ambiguities, while simultaneously showcasing research outputs and activities. ORCID is integrated into many systems used by publishers, funders, institutions, and other research-related services. Articles will then be displayed in HeinOnline and ORCID.

More information will be forthcoming.