

APPELLATE ADVOCACY (5344 / 15636)
FALL 2026 SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor Cassandra Jeu (Additional adjuncts TBA)
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Office: Clinics – 1st Floor 121L
Office Hours: Mondays 1:00 – 3:00

As Professor Jeu is a UHLC employee, she has office hours and can also meet by appointment. Adjuncts who are not full-time employees of the University of Houston do not have on-campus office hours due to their changing work schedules. Their office hours are by appointment, so please contact them directly to schedule a meeting at your mutual convenience. When contacting any of the professors regarding this class by email, please include the words “UHLC Appellate Advocacy” in the subject line to ensure that your email is returned in a timely manner.

CLASS MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

Appellate Advocacy is a face-to-face class, designed for a live lecture/demonstration format. Class will be held on Wednesdays from 6:00–9:00 in room TBA, with breakout rooms TBA. There are no remote options. Any necessary classes will be scheduled in accordance with UHLC policy.

Pursuant to UHLC policy, students must attend at least 80% of all classes (*i.e.* – students are allowed three absences for any reason without penalty). Attendance will be kept by a weekly sign-in sheet and enforced in accordance with UHLC policy. In accordance with UHLC policy, signing into a class and leaving early without permission is an Honor Code violation and may be reported accordingly. Nonadherence to UHLC’s attendance policy will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs and may result in a lowering the student’s final grade, an incomplete in the class, or a failing grade.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through and as a result of this course, students will demonstrate their competence in and improve their skills with respect to: (a) the knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law; (b) legal analysis and reasoning; (c) legal research; (d) problem-solving; (e) oral communication; (f) advocacy of legal argument by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a case and using authority and public policy to persuade others; (g) proper professional and ethical responsibilities; and (h) other professional/practice skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

COURSE INFORMATION / PREREQUISITE

This course introduces students to appellate advocacy, with a focus on oral advocacy. To enroll in this class, students must have completed two (full-time students) or three (part-time students) semesters of law school. Students research and analyze legal issues related to a hypothetical problem, then brief and argue the issues. This process develops and enhances students’ research and advocacy skills in the context of two large-scale projects. Unlike assignments in other classes where students neutrally presented the strengths and

weaknesses of a legal issue,¹ students' arguments must be persuasive. Zealous advocacy is an essential skill in practicing law, so attorneys need to identify and manage the strengths and weaknesses of their clients' positions.

Class periods include both a large group meeting (generally comprised of a lecture and/or demonstration(s)) and smaller group workshops. Students spend classroom time learning, then developing, skills and techniques to effectively communicate, and persuade. This is an experiential, simulation course. There is no final exam.

In this course, students should concentrate on developing and demonstrating the following skills:

- Framing the facts clearly, accurately, and favorably
- Finding the applicable law
- Reading and synthesizing cases to form an understanding of the applicable law
- Developing an accurate, coherent legal argument that is favorable to your client
- Structuring an oral argument that: provides a "roadmap" to the Court; promotes your strongest points; and preempts or responds to opposing counsel's arguments²
- Communicating your argument in a clear, concise, systematic, and persuasive manner
- Answering judges' questions in a clear, concise, and persuasive manner

TEXT/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this class. Assigned materials will be provided and made available via email or Canvas. For anyone especially interested in oral advocacy, the following optional texts contain extensive treatment of oral argument:

Brian K. Johnson & Marsha Hunter, *THE ARTICULATE ADVOCATE* (2d ed. 2016).

Alan L. Dworsky, *THE LITTLE BOOK ON ORAL ARGUMENT* (2d ed. 2018).

Bryan A. Garner & Antonin Scalia, *MAKING YOUR CASE: THE ART OF PERSUADING JUDGES* (2008)

SYLLABUS CHANGES

Please note that the instructors may need to make modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email.

CLASS STRUCTURE

Classes will consist of both a large-group meeting and small-group meetings. Large-group meetings will comprise of a lecture and/or demonstrations addressing a specific area/skillset that will be the focus of the following week's small-group meetings. Small-group meetings will focus on developing oral arguments and workshopping individual presentations and critique.

¹ For example, in a legal memorandum and/or client letter

² In class, I will refer to this as "clash."

Except for the two oral arguments taking place on October 14, 2026 and November 18, 2026, casual dress is permitted, and students are not required to wear courtroom attire. Regardless of dress, students must observe courtroom decorum in all other aspects during class. Students must wear courtroom (business) attire for the October 14 and November 18 oral arguments. If a student does already have business attire, please contact Professor Jeu as soon as possible, so alternative arrangements can be made. Owning business attire is not required to take the class.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TEXT AND WORK PRODUCT POLICY

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text and other work product (AI Generated Work Product). 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 and other work product in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI Generated Work Product, appears to have human-mimicking “intelligence” and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for material one might generate themselves. AI Generated Work Product can include computer code or programs as well as human language content and materials.

Your continuing enrollment in this course obligates you to not knowingly prompt, generate, or use any AI Generated Work Product in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Work Product from yourself or others. This obligation includes that your assessment materials in the course be without any contribution from AI Generated Work Product. This obligation specifically extends to not plagiarize any writing required of you for assessment in the course: AI Generated Work Product will be treated as from another/others in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any material generated for this course that is submitted to the instructor or presented in a class session, regardless whether it is graded content or not. Assessments include mid-terms and final exams. AI Generated Work Product may not be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non-proctored environment, such as a “take-home” final examination or paper.

COPYRIGHT VIOLATION

Students are strictly prohibited from reproducing any or all of the problem utilized in this year’s Appellate Advocacy course. If a student reproduces or distributes the problem in part or whole by any means, the student will automatically fail the course. In addition, the student will be reported for violating Honor Code Section 3.07 pertaining to Academic Materials.

RECORDING OF CLASSES

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. 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. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor’s recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor’s recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

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 to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

As noted in this syllabus, a copyright violation also will be considered an Honor Code violation.

In developing your oral arguments, you may receive limited assistance. In addition to studying the provided problem and/or briefs, you may discuss the issues and practice your arguments with the other students in this class who have been assigned to your practice group. A list of students in each practice group will be published as soon as the class roster has been finalized. You may research outside sources and ask UHLC librarians for assistance with how to conduct research in general, but not with researching the specific issue/problem. You may *not* consult with professors, practitioners, and/or students who are not in your assigned practice group in developing your arguments. If you have any questions whether something may be an Honor Code violation, please contact Professor Jeu before proceeding.

PREFERRED ADDRESS

Chosen names/prefixes/etc. are to be respected in our classroom, in order to practice the professional treatment you will need to give clients and colleagues. Please reach out to Professor Jeu to make us aware of your chosen name/prefix/etc. and/or if you have concerns about how we or your classmates address you. Any lapses made by your instructors should be attributed to failings of memory and/or honest mistake.

CLASS PREPARATION / PARTICIPATION

Since Appellate Advocacy is a skills-based class, student participation in class is required. After learning a skill necessary for a successful oral argument, students will practice that skill at home in preparation for in-class participation/practice the following week in a small-group setting. Professor Jeu and/or individual adjuncts will decide whether they prefer to first ask for volunteers in their small-groups or to call on students. Regardless of the method, every student attending class will be expected to come to class prepared and to participate. Failure to prepare for class will result in a student being asked to leave the class, and the student will be marked as being absent for the class.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

The primary course emphasis will be on learning and developing skills relevant to oral advocacy, in order to prepare students for judicial hearings and appellate arguments. Students will develop and present appellate arguments throughout the semester, participate in small-group sessions, and watch/critique student and practitioner arguments. By the end of the semester, students will argue both sides of a legal issue to demonstrate complete knowledge of the subject matter. Assessment in this class is formative. While oral arguments and class participation are, by nature, non-anonymous, students' written critiques will be graded anonymously using exam numbers instead of names.

Appellate Advocacy will be graded based on the following components:

- 35% Ten Minute Oral Argument (Side A) taking place on Wednesday, October 14, 2026
- 35% Ten Minute Oral Argument (Side B) taking place on Wednesday, November 18, 2026
- 26% Small group activities
- 5% Written critique of oral arguments to be turned into Professor Jeu via email by 12:00pm December 2, 2026.

Students' Oral arguments will be graded, based on the following categories:

- Overall effectiveness of the argument, irrespective of merits
- Reasoning and logic
- Knowledge of and ability to incorporate applicable legal authority
- Ability to counter the other side's arguments
- Knowledge of the record
- Roadmap: an organized explanation the argument's main points
- Conclusion: Judicious use of time, resulting in the appropriate conclusion; does not go over time; requested correct relief (if time is available)
- Extemporaneous Ability: Ability to answer questions directly, correctly, and completely; to answer with poise; and to resume argument after interruption
- Performance: Persuasiveness (irrespective of merits), courtroom etiquette/demeanor, poise, gestures, mannerisms, and professionalism

In addition to the problem and/or briefs that will comprise the basis of the two ten-minute arguments scheduled for October 14 and November 18, students may research, utilize, and incorporate materials (including, but not limited to secondary sources and case law) in their arguments. In other words, this is *not* a closed-material problem limited to the cases cited in the distributed problem and briefs. It is an *open-material problem* which students may develop through their own research. If there are any questions regarding this policy, please contact Professor Jeu immediately for further clarification.

The two major oral arguments for this semester will take place on Wednesday, October 14, 2026 and Wednesday, November 18, 2026. If you fall ill or experience an emergency that prevents you from attending a major oral argument, you must notify Professor Jeu by email as soon as possible, specifically detailing the reason you cannot attend. Depending on your reason and if practicable, your oral argument would be rescheduled; you would forfeit your grade for the missed argument; or you would be deemed eligible to take the class for an incomplete. Please be advised that since the Wednesday, October 14, 2026 and Wednesday, November 18, 2026 arguments will be given in pairs so that students have the opportunity to "argue" against opposing counsel, students who are absent for either argument may have to argue against Professor Jeu or another adjunct in front of a smaller panel, depending on the availability of the adjunct team.

Students' oral arguments will be graded by at least two people teaching this course (depending on the total class enrollment and available number of adjuncts, as well as available technology). The final argument grade will be the average of the professors' grades. Oral arguments are not graded on the merits of the arguments. In other words, students are not graded/judged on whether they have a "winning" or "losing" argument. Rather, grades depend on the overall quality of a student's work. It is well-accepted that "real world" lawyers often know that they have a weaker argument and an uphill battle when going into court. That having been said, a successful lawyer will be well-prepared and present the best argument possible in the best manner possible.

Small group activities include a five-minute oral argument advocating almost any topic you know a lot about and feel strongly³ and weekly assignments. Students must demonstrate good-faith effort with respect to all assignments. Students will be downgraded if they demonstrate that they have not prepared for a small-group exercise (*i.e.* – if they have not put forth a good-faith effort to prepare and practice an assignment).⁴ Students will be upgraded if they demonstrate consistent and outstanding class contribution.

You will be assigned oral arguments to watch and critique. After watching the arguments, you will write and submit a paper, not exceeding four pages (12-point Times New Roman Font, double spaced). The paper should be a critique of the arguments' strengths and weaknesses (irrespective of the merits), focusing your comments on what you thought the advocates did that was effective and ineffective. You may use the same categories your oral argument grades will be based on (see above) as a guide of what to consider when writing your paper. You must turn in your paper via email to Professor Jeu at ccjeu@central.uh.edu by 12:00pm on December 2, 2026.

Class participation includes, but is not limited to: class attendance, engagement during class lectures, and conducting oneself in a professional manner. Students' grades may be raised or lowered by a third of a letter grade on the basis of class participation.

Appellate Advocacy is subject to UHLC's mandatory grade policy for upper-division courses. Please refer to the student handbook for details with respect to the weighted average. This course has a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (*i.e.* – pass/fail) option available. To pass the course, a student must earn the equivalent of a C or above.

TITLE IX / SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a “responsible employee” 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 at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

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 timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website:

³ The only topic off-limits in the five-minute oral argument is any permutation of: “My pet/child is the (superlative) pet/child.” The five-minute oral argument should advocate any (other) topic you know a lot about and feel strongly about. Examples include things like, “*How I Met Your Mother* has the worst television finale ever;” “College athletes should be guaranteed their promised scholarships, regardless of injury;” or “Ryan Gosling should have won the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his performance in *Barbie* over Robert Downey Jr.”

⁴ For example, do not use your computer or phone during class for non-class related activities, especially during other students' oral arguments.

<https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call (713) 743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Brue Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community (CSAC) is where you can go if you need help but don't know where to start. CSAC is a "home away from home" and serves as a resource hub to help you get the resources needed to support academic and personal success. Through CSAC's Cougar Cupboard, all students can get up to 30 lbs of FREE groceries a week. Additionally, CSAC provides 1:1 appointments to get you connected to on-and off-campus resources related to essential needs, safety, advocacy, and more. The Cougar Closet is a registered student organization advised by our office and offers free clothes to students so that all Coogs can feel good in their fit. CSAC also hosts a series of cultural and community-based events that fosters social connection and helps the cougar community come closer together. Visit the CSAC homepage or follow CSAC on Instagram: [@uh_CSAC](https://www.instagram.com/uh_CSAC) and [@uhcupbrd](https://www.instagram.com/uhcupbrd). YOU belong here.

WOMEN AND GENDER RESOURCE CENTER (WGRC)

The mission of the WGRC is to advance the University of Houston and promote the success of all students, faculty, and staff through educating, empowering, and supporting the UH community. The WGRC suite is open to you. Stop by the office for a study space, to take a break, grab a snack, or check out one of the WGRC programs or resources. Stop by Student Center South room B12 (Basement floor near Starbucks and down the hall from Creation Station) from 9 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 26/7 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 are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

Need Support Now? - If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 26/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat 988lifeline.org.

RESOURCES FOR ONLINE LEARNING

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website (<https://uh.edu/power-on/learning/>). Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, Blackboard, and Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

SECURITY ESCORTS AND COUGAR RIDE

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. The security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety, please call 713-743-3333. Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called “Cougar Ride” that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at <https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/>.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND LECTURES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>	<i>Small Group (Hours 1 – 2)</i>	<i>Lecture (Hour 3) *</i>
8/26/26	Read assigned problem and briefs (students will receive the briefs prior to class)	Hour 1: Introduction to oral arguments, structure, roadmap, and theme. Hour 2: Watch an oral argument	Critique an oral argument
9/2/26	Oral argument 1 – (almost!) any topic ⁵	Oral argument 1	Oral argument 1
9/9/26	Prepare introduction and roadmap	Introduction and roadmaps	Body of the argument and dealing with cold panels
9/16/26	Prepare argument	Cold panel argument	Answering questions and pivoting back
9/23/26	Research and refine argument	Hot panel argument	Tone and identifying important facts
9/30/26	Research and refine argument	Run argument	Conclusions (long, medium, short)
10/7/26	Research and refine argument	Practice conclusions	The flip: how to approach it and why it's important
10/14/26	Research and refine argument	<i>Oral argument 2 (35% of your total grade)</i>	<i>Oral argument 2 (35% of your total grade)</i>
10/21/26	Prepare the other side's introduction and roadmap	Run flip introductions and roadmaps	Clash (pre-clash, rebuttal, and responding)
10/28/26	Research and refine flip argument	Clash exercise	Refining your presentation: ticks and filler words
11/4/26	Research and refine flip argument	Run flip argument	Courtroom decorum
11/11/26	Research and refine flip argument	Run flip argument	Run flip argument
11/18/26	Research and refine flip argument	<i>Oral argument 3 (35% of your total grade)</i>	<i>Oral argument 3 (35% of your total grade)</i>

* - Class Lectures subject to change.

⁵ As stated earlier, the only topic off-limits in the five-minute oral argument is any permutation of: “My pet/child is the (superlative) pet/child.” The five-minute oral argument should advocate any (other) topic you know a lot about and feel strongly about. Examples include things like, “*How I Met Your Mother* has the worst television finale ever;” “College athletes should be guaranteed their promised scholarships, regardless of injury;” or “Ryan Gosling should have won the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his performance in *Barbie* over Robert Downey Jr.