

Syllabus for Transition to the Profession (Law 199.1–.2), Spring 2024

I. Overview & Learning Outcomes. Transition to the Profession (“TTP”) is an **optional 1-credit, 1-semester, pass/fail 1L course** exploring what the American Bar Association calls “professional identity” in law: “what it means to be a lawyer,” especially in light of (1) obligations to clients and society and (2) the values, guiding principles, and well-being practices that are “foundational to successful legal practice.”

TTP pursues two of UNC Law’s official [learning outcomes](#): that students develop abilities (1) to exercise skills needed for well-rounded, competent, and ethical participation in the legal profession—especially communicating and collaboratively learning—and (2) to think critically about professional identity and professional and ethical responsibilities—especially the legal profession’s foundational privileges, obligations, values, guiding principles, and well-being practices. TTP aims specifically to empower each student to create an individualized plan to do the following:

1. nurture a professional identity compatible with well-being and personal goals and circumstances;
2. effectively navigate the 1L spring semester and post-1L summer;
3. register wisely in April for all 2L courses, which in turn affect 3L course options;
4. complete the post-1L J.D. requirements, including Experiential, Professional Responsibility, and Rigorous Writing Experience credits;
5. deepen the fortitude and insight that help law students wisely choose and thrive in legal careers.

Roughly 80% of TTP’s work is mandatory for all 1Ls, even if they don’t enroll in TTP:

1. UNC Law requires 1Ls to complete work that totals about **35** hours: Spring Orientation; Academic and Registration Advising; Festival of Legal Learning; events that prepare students to work in law offices; and related preparatory or follow-up work.
2. TTP requires **42.5** hours total (the amount all law courses must require for 1 credit): those already mandatory 35 hours plus 7.5 more hours of TTP instruction.

II. Faculty. TTP’s **faculty team**, led by Craig Smith (Clinical Professor & Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; crgsmith@email.unc.edu; Room 5063; tel. 919-962-7059), consists of the following full-time and adjunct professors and deans:

- **Robert Birrenkott**, Adjunct Assistant Professor & Associate Dean for Careers and Professional Development, rbirrenkott@unc.edu; Room 4067; tel. 919-962-8516.
- **Lucinda Gardner**, Adjunct Assistant Professor & Director of Student Services, lucindag@email.unc.edu; Room 5021; tel. 919-962-4118.
- **Bianca Mack**, Adjunct Assistant Professor & Associate Dean for Student Affairs
- **Kaitlyn Parker**, Adjunct Assistant Professor & Senior Director of Student Engagement
- **Kelly Podger Smith**, Adjunct Assistant Professor & Senior Associate Dean

III. Sections & Class Sessions

Section 1 has students from College A and RRWA §§ B4 & B6.

Section 2 has students from Colleges C & D and RRWA § B5.

Except in Week 1, classes occur **Fridays in 5048** as follows:

- TTP § 1 meets 10:50 AM–11:50 PM
- TTP § 2 meets 1:00–2:00 PM

Only on **Thursday, Jan. 11**, in lieu of Jan. 12, Spring Orientation Parts 1–2 occur **at 2:30 & 3:40 PM**:

- TTP § 1 meets on Jan. 11 in **5046**
- TTP § 2 meets on Jan. 11 in **5048** as usual

IV. Schedule of Classes

Week	TTP Class Sessions
1	Th., Jan. 11, 2:30 & 3:40 (§ 1 in 5046; § 2 in 5048). Spring Orientation Part 1&2. (No class on Fri., Jan. 12.)
2	[1/15 MLK] Fri., Jan. 19. Spring Orientation Part 3 (TTP Class 3)
3	Jan. 26. Professional Identity & Licensure Requirements (Class 4)
4	Feb. 2, 2:30-5:30 PM. Student Festival of Legal Learning (Classes 5–7)
5	Feb. 9. Professional Identity: Well-Being Aspects (Class 8)
6	[W-being Days] Feb. 16. Experiential Learning & Professional-Identity Development (Class 9)
7	Feb. 23. Preparing for the 2L & 3L Years; Enrolling in 2024–25 Courses (Class 10)
8	Mar. 1. Pathways Through the JD: Choosing Upper-Level Courses (Class 11)
9	[Mar. 8—no class session]
	[Spring Break]
10	[Mar. 22—no class session]
11	[Mar. 29—no class session]
12	Apr. 5. Summer Employment and Opportunities (Class 12)
13	[Apr. 12—no class session. Outside Class: Meet the Tar Heels]
14	Apr. 19. Reflection & Celebration (Class 13)

As in all courses, professors reserve the right to change the syllabus, announcing changes as early as possible.

V. Materials. We may post some materials on our course’s Canvas site. No other texts are required.

VI. Honor Code UNC’s [Honor Code](#) is in effect, and we treat it seriously. If you have questions, it’s your responsibility to ask us about the Code’s application.

VII. Expectations Related to Professional Identity, Conduct, & Communication

- We view human dignity as inviolable. We acknowledge that law and legal conventions developed in the past and warrant critical reflection and discussion.
- We welcome diverse perspectives—a diversity that encompasses race, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, religion, class, age, sexual orientation, political beliefs, abilities, and more. We encourage everyone to share experiences and viewpoints, and we do not expect a student to speak for anyone else.
- We expect us all to give one another the benefit of the doubt, including when we inadvertently express ourselves less sensitively than we might.

VIII. Mandatory Attendance & Class Recordings

See also UNC School of Law [Minimum Class Attendance Policy](#)

You must attend *at least* 80% of class sessions. Thus only 2 absences can be either unexcused or not made up. We’ll take attendance by log.

- Some absences are “excused,” including personal/family illness or emergency, pregnancy or disability as approved by UNC’s Accessibility and Resource Services (ARS), and up to two religious observances.
- If absences place you below the 80% minimum, you must notify us and “make up” a sufficient number of excused absences. “Making up” an excused absence requires completing course work as we instruct.
- All classes are recorded. Watching a recording is presumptively a first step in making up an excused absence.

IX. Accommodations & the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS)

UNC facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the [ARS Website](#) for contact information and a link to the [Student and Applicant Accommodations Policy](#), or email ars@unc.edu.

X. Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, etc.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, stalking, and related retaliation are prohibited at UNC. If you have experienced these types of conduct, you are encouraged to report the incident and seek resources for your specific needs either on campus or in the community. Campus resources include the Director of Title IX Compliance or Director of Equal Opportunity and Compliance and Title IX Coordinator (eoc@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPs](#)), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu). Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

XI. UNC's Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)

[CAPS](#), at <https://caps.unc.edu/>, is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs.

- *CAPS's Embedded Counselor at the law school is Tora Taylor-Glover: ttaylor-glover@unc.edu, (919) 966-3658.*
- For 24/7 service, go to [CAPS](#) online or call 919/966-3658.
- For a walk-in evaluation or to learn more, you may visit CAPS during business hours (M-F, 8am-5pm) at the [Campus Health Services](#) building, third floor.