

Syracuse Law Review Symposium: Speaker Biographies

Ramona Carroll Albin

University Biography Link: <https://www.samford.edu/law/directory/Albin-Ramona>

Associate Professor of Law, Sanford University Cumberland School of Law

J.D. Education: University of Texas School of Law



Before joining the Cumberland School of Law faculty in 2017, Ramona Albin worked as an assistant United States attorney for the Northern District of Alabama for more than 10 years. Albin handled criminal trial and appellate litigation. She was also chief of the Appellate Division and argued numerous cases before the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Earlier in her career, Albin worked as an assistant district attorney in Texas and Massachusetts. Albin graduated from Wesleyan University and the University of Texas School of Law. She also received a Master of Public Health from Boston University.

She is a member of the Alabama, California, Massachusetts, Michigan and Texas bar organizations and is admitted to practice before the federal district courts in the Northern and Middle Districts of Alabama, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court.

Jennifer Scharf

Vice Dean for Career Services ; Co-Director, Advocacy Institute; Director of Trial Advocacy, University of Buffalo

J.D. Education: University of Buffalo School of Law



Scharf is the Vice Dean for Career Services, Program Director of the Advocacy Institute, Director of Trial Advocacy, University at Buffalo School of Law. She has donned multiple hats in the law school from teaching litigation-based courses as an adjunct faculty member and coaching trial teams to serving as director of our Trial Advocacy Program. Scharf previously worked as a trial attorney, practicing primarily in labor and employment, personal injury, and health law, and former law firm manager.

Christine Bartholomew

University Biography Link:

<https://www.law.buffalo.edu/faculty/facultyDirectory/bartholomewChristine.html>

Vice Dean for Student Achievement; Faculty

Director of the Advocacy Institute; Professor, University of Buffalo

J.D. Education: University at California, Davis



Christine Bartholomew is a professor of law at University at Buffalo School of Law. She is a seven-time winner of the law school's only teaching award, the Faculty Award. In 2021, she was awarded the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. She also received the 2019 Jacob B. Hyman Distinguished Professor Award and the 2020-2021 Mid-American Conference Institutional Award for Outstanding Faculty for Student Success.

She teaches evidence, antitrust, and civil procedure, and her scholarship focuses on the interplay of these topics, particularly in complex litigation. She is a member of the American Law Institute, an associate editor for the *ABA Antitrust Law Journal*, and her academic publications have appeared in many leading academic journals, including *Duke Law Review*, *UCLA Law Review*, *Fordham Law Review*, *Virginia Law Review*, and *Vanderbilt Law Review*. Her work has been cited by state and federal courts, as well as garnered media attention. She has been quoted in *Slate*, featured in *The Conversation*, quoted in major news outlines including *USA Today*, *Reuters*, and *Mother Jones*.

Marian Grace Braccia

University Biography Link: <https://law.temple.edu/contact/marian-g-braccia/>

Director of the LL.M. in Trial Advocacy

Program; Practice Professor of Law, Temple University Beasley School of Law

J.D. Education: Temple University Beasley School of Law



Braccia is the Director of the LL.M. in Trial Advocacy and a Practice Professor of Law at Temple University Beasley School of Law, where she brings particular expertise in courtroom technology, e-discovery issues, and trial skills. Prior to joining the full-time faculty, Professor Braccia taught Introduction to Trial Advocacy and an experiential course in criminal prosecution for several years as an adjunct in Temple's trial advocacy program. She has also served as a coach for Temple's National Trial Team.

Professor Braccia is an accomplished litigator, having served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Philadelphia District Attorney's office from 2006 to 2018 under D.A.s Abraham, Williams, Hodge, and Krasner. In addition to serving as a trial attorney in Major Trials and the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Unit, in 2012 Professor Braccia was appointed to a supervisory position in the District Attorney's Charging Unit, and in 2014 launched Philadelphia's Domestic Violence Diversion Program, assuming a caseload in excess of 200 dockets, monitoring participants' treatment progress, and reporting on program statistics to the DOJ's Office of Violence Against Women. In August 2017, she took on added responsibilities as Director of Information Technology for the DA's Office.

She presents frequently on gender bias in the courtroom, particularly as it impacts transgender and gender-diverse people and cisgender women. Braccia also teaches lawyers in Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, and Peru the fundamentals of American trial advocacy through Temple's Chilean pre-LL.M. program. She also teaches Evidence Law to Chinese legal professionals as part of the Temple-Tsinghua LL.M. degree program.

Christopher Behan

University Biography Link: <https://law.siu.edu/faculty-staff/law-faculty/behan-chris.php>

Current Employment: Professor, Southern Illinois University

Simmons Law School

J.D. Education: Brigham Young University's J. Reuben Clark Law School



Professor Christopher Behan joined the faculty at Southern Illinois University's Simmons Law School in 2006 following nearly eleven years of distinguished service in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps. During his military career, he served in a wide range of legal roles—including prosecutor, defense counsel, administrative and operational law attorney—and concluded his service as an Associate Professor of Criminal Law at the Judge Advocate General's School in Charlottesville, Virginia. At SIU, he has held multiple leadership positions, including Acting Dean (2017–2018) and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (2014–2017).

Professor Behan earned his LL.M. in Military Law, specializing in Criminal Law, from the Judge Advocate General's School, where he was named to the Commandant's List. He received his J.D., magna cum laude, from BYU's J. Reuben Clark Law School, where he was a member of the Order of Barristers and the National Moot Court Team, and his B.A., magna cum laude, in English from BYU. His teaching and scholarship focus on military justice, evidence, national security law, and trial advocacy. Beyond SIU, he teaches advocacy programs for the National Institute of Trial Advocacy, Justice Advocacy Africa, and various legal organizations nationwide, and has served on the faculty of the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada.

Veronica Finkelstein

University Biography Link: <https://law.wilmu.edu/faculty/veronica-finkelstein.aspx>

Current Employment: Associate Professor, Wilmington University School of Law

J.D. Education: Emory University School of Law



Professor Veronica J. Finkelstein is an accomplished litigator and educator who brings extensive federal practice experience to her teaching at the Wilmington University School of Law. Before entering academia full time, she served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Department of Justice's Philadelphia office, where she became senior litigation counsel and received the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys Director's Award for Superior Performance in 2014. During her tenure, she handled complex civil and criminal matters—including tort, employment, medical malpractice, and child exploitation cases—and led training programs for attorneys and paralegals. Earlier in her career, she clerked for the Honorable Jane Cutler Greenspan of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and practiced construction litigation at Duane Morris LLP and Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman PC.

A nationally recognized teacher of advocacy, Professor Finkelstein has taught at the DOJ's National Advocacy Center and serves as a program director for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. She previously taught at Drexel, Emory, and Rutgers Law Schools, earning Rutgers Law Adjunct Professor of the Year multiple times and Drexel's Carl "Tobey" Oxholm III Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Law Community. A graduate of Emory University School of Law with honors, she is co-author of *Ethical Lawyering: A Guide for the Well-Intentioned* and a member of the Order of Barristers.

Gary Gildin

University Biography Link: <https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/directory/gary-s-gildin>

Professor of Law, Penn State Dickinson Law

J.D. Education: Stanford Law School



Professor Gary S. Gildin joined the Dickinson Law faculty in 1979 after earning his J.D. from Stanford Law School and practicing civil litigation at Sonnenschein Carlin Nath & Rosenthal (now Dentons) in Chicago. He served as Dean of Dickinson Law from 2013 to 2019 and has held distinguished roles including U.S.–Canada Fulbright Visiting Chair in International Humanitarian Law at the University of Ottawa, Assistant Public Defender in Cumberland County, and law clerk to Judge Sylvia H. Rambo of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

A leading scholar and teacher, Professor Gildin has authored more than 40 publications and co-authored Trial Advocacy Basics (2nd ed.) for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. He received the Roscoe Pound Foundation's Jacobson Award for Excellence in Teaching Trial Advocacy and has delivered over 60 lectures nationwide. His courses span trial advocacy, civil liberties, constitutional law, and evidence, among others. Beyond academia, he has argued pro bono cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and the Third Circuit, contributed to legal reform projects in Tajikistan, Armenia, and Ukraine, and regularly leads continuing legal education programs for attorneys. His career reflects a deep commitment to advancing advocacy, constitutional rights, and the global practice of law.

Jules Epstein

University Biography Link: <https://law.temple.edu/contact/jules-epstein/>

Edward D. Ohlbaum Professor of Law

Director of Advocacy Programs

J.D. Education: University of Pennsylvania Law School



Professor Jules Epstein is the Edward D. Ohlbaum Professor of Law and Director of Advocacy Programs at Temple University Beasley School of Law. A leading authority on criminal law and evidence, he began his career with the Defender Association of Philadelphia and later became a partner at the renowned civil rights and criminal defense firm Kairys, Rudovsky, Messing, Feinberg & Lin LLP, where he remains of counsel. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, he previously served as a professor and Director of the Taishoff Advocacy, Technology, and Public Service Institute at Widener Law.

Professor Epstein has authored numerous articles and books on criminal law, forensic evidence, and trial advocacy. His recent work focuses on capital cases, eyewitness reliability, and forensic science. He has taught death penalty law nationwide, continues to litigate capital appeals, and has served as an expert witness on eyewitness identification. Nationally, he was a member of the U.S. Department of Justice's National Commission on Forensic Science (2013–2017) and co-edited *Scientific Evidence Review* and *The Future of Evidence* for the ABA. He also teaches evidence and capital case law for the National Judicial College and serves on Pennsylvania commissions addressing wrongful convictions and jury instructions.

Brandon Draper

University Biography Link: <https://www.tsulaw.edu/faculty/Brandon-Draper.html>

Assistant Professor, Texas Southern

University Thurgood Marshall School of Law

J.D. Education: University of Maryland School of Law



Prior to joining the Law School, Professor Draper served as the Director of the Trial Advocacy Center for South Texas College of Law Houston, where he taught Ethical Dimensions of Criminal Practice, Evidentiary Foundations, Trial Advocacy 1, and Texas Criminal Procedure 2024-2025.

Prior to joining academia, he served as a prosecutor in New York and Texas, where he specialized in economic crimes. Professor Draper teaches Criminal Law and Evidence.

Alexandria Serra

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexandria-serra>

Advocacy Teaching Fellow, University of

Missouri – Kansas City School of Law

Education: Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, Kansas State University (M.B.A.)



Serra is the Advocacy Teaching Fellow at the University of Missouri–Kansas City School of Law, where she teaches trial and appellate advocacy and coaches mock trial. Her scholarship examines how emerging technologies are reshaping constitutional protections in criminal law.

Laura Rose

University Biography Link: <https://www.usd.edu/research-and-faculty/faculty-and-staff/laura-rose>

Associate Professor and Trial Advocacy

Fellow, University of South Dakota

J.D. Education: University of Texas School of Law



Professor Laura Anne Rose is an Associate Professor of Law and the Heidepriem Trial Advocacy Fellow at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law, where she teaches Evidence and Trial Techniques and serves as Head Coach of the National Trial Team. She also advises the Alternative Dispute Resolution Board and represents six states as the Region 12 representative on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Legal Advocacy Educators. A graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, Professor Rose is nationally recognized for her innovative advocacy teaching and her leadership in building USD's trial program, which was featured on the national podcast Class Action.

An active member of the national trial advocacy community, Professor Rose frequently presents at leading advocacy conferences, including Stetson's Educating Advocates, Temple University's Online Advocacy Forums, and the Training Advocates Conferences. She serves as an instructor for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and the Trial Advocacy Consulting and Training Group, appearing in every For Women By Women training since its inception. Co-author of Mastering Trial Advocacy and Mastering Trial Advocacy Case Problems and Exercises, her scholarship explores evidence and pedagogy. Her award-winning article, "Advocacy in Action," earned first place in Stetson's national Advocacy Writing Competition.

Michael Murray

University Biography Link: <https://law.uky.edu/people/michael-murray>

University Research Professor and Spears-Gilbert Professor of Law, University of Kentucky, J. David Rosenberg College of Law

J.D. Education: University of Kentucky, J. David Rosenberg College of Law



Michael Murray, University Research Professor and Spears Gilbert Professor of Law, has been teaching full time at the College of Law since his appointment in 2018. Previously, he was a Visiting Professor of Law in 2016-2017, when he taught Legal Writing, Professional Responsibility, and Advanced Legal Research and Writing at the College of Law.

Professor Murray graduated from Loyola College in Maryland and from Columbia Law School, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar. He was a member of a national champion Jessup International Law Moot Court team at Columbia, and Notes Editor of the Columbia Journal of Transnational Law. After law school, he clerked for United States District Judge John F. Nangle of the Eastern District of Missouri, who was then the Chair of the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation. Murray also practiced commercial, intellectual property, and products liability litigation for seven years at Bryan Cave law firm in St. Louis. After leaving private practice, Professor Murray taught at the law schools of Saint Louis University, University of Illinois, Valparaiso University, University of Michigan, and University of Massachusetts, and internationally in Florence, Italy, and Cambridge, UK. Professor Murray currently has published twenty-seven books and forty law review articles on artificial Intelligence, blockchains, crypto currency and NFTs, advocacy, legal research and writing, rhetoric, copyright, art law, and other topics.



Laura Frase

University Biography Link: <https://www.untDallas.edu/lawschool/law-directory/laura-frase.php#:~:text=Professor%20Frase%20received%20her%20undergraduate,and%20toxic%20tort%20defense%20litigation.>

Current Employment: Assistant Professor, UNT Dallas College of Law

J.D. Education: St. Mary's University School of Law

Professor Laura A. Frase joined the UNT Dallas College of Law faculty in 2018 and previously served as Director of Advocacy Programs. Her teaching and scholarship center on client interviewing, negotiation, dispute resolution, and the psychological and cognitive biases that shape decision-making. A seasoned attorney, she practiced in Dallas for more than 30 years, specializing in insurance defense and toxic tort litigation, where she managed a national docket and served as National Coordinating and Settlement Counsel for multiple clients.

Professor Frase earned her J.D. from St. Mary's University School of Law, where she served on the Law Journal Board and Mock Trial teams, her M.A. in Dispute Resolution from Southern Methodist University, and her B.A. in International Relations from Rhodes College. Her article "Refining Our Thinking About Thinking: Battling the Sway of Cognitive Biases in Negotiation" (51 Cumb. L. Rev. 347) will appear in *Mediation in an Evolving World: Theory and Practice* (2024). Nationally recognized for her expertise, she serves on two committees developing the NEXTGEN Bar Examination and is an invited member of the Texas Bar Foundation. Professor Frase frequently lectures and trains professionals on negotiation and decision-making across legal and nonprofit sectors.



Anthony Ghiotto

University Biography Link: <https://law.illinois.edu/faculty-research/faculty-profiles/anthony-ghiotto/>

Teaching Associate Professor of Law

Director of the Kimball R. and Karen Gatsis Anderson Center for Advocacy and Professionalism, Director of Trial Advocacy, University of Illinois

J.D. Education: Emory University School of Law

Professor Tony Ghiotto is the inaugural Director of the Kimball R. and Karen Gatsis Anderson Center for Advocacy and Professionalism at the University of Illinois College of Law, where he also serves as Director of Trial Advocacy and Teaching Assistant Professor of Law. He leads the College's nationally recognized trial and moot court programs and teaches foundational and advanced trial advocacy. His scholarship focuses on advocacy within criminal procedure and national security law, with publications in the *Harvard National Security Journal*, *Buffalo Law Review*, and *North Dakota Law Review*.

Before joining Illinois, Professor Ghiotto taught at Campbell University School of Law, where students twice named him "Professor of the Year." A veteran of the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps, he served nearly twelve years in roles including prosecutor, Staff Judge Advocate, and legal advisor to the Air Force's Judge Advocate General. He also contributed to the Defense Legal Policy Board's investigation into civilian casualty responses and deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Still serving as a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve, Professor Ghiotto holds degrees from the University of Illinois, Emory University School of Law, and the Air Command and Staff College.