1. **Main syllabus**
I will have the one-page, main syllabus for the entire semester posted on the UC website. It gives you an idea of what topics and pages we’ll cover.

2. **Required Casebook**
The required casebook is Richard Fallon, et al., Hart and Wechsler’s The Federal Courts and the Federal System (7th ed. 2015). Professors Hart and Wechsler, at Harvard and Columbia law schools, respectively, in the 1950s, are credited with creating the course and publishing the first casebook devoted to the topic. The various editions are: Hart & Wechsler (1st edition 1953); Bator, Wechsler, Shapiro & Mishkin (2d and 3rd editions); Fallon, Meltzer & Shapiro (4th and 5th editions); and the current authors. The downside of the casebook is that it’s long, and considered by some to be treatise-like and not reader-friendly. As suggested by the authors on the first page of the preface (see p. v), they are aware of these criticisms and have attempted to respond to them in recent editions. As pointed out on p. v, they suggest that students are not obligated to read footnotes prepared by the authors, as compared to footnotes in cases that the authors leave in. We’ll follow that advice, so I won’t expect you to have read footnotes prepared by the casebook authors, unless I refer to them in mini-syllabi or in class.

3. **Study Aid**
No study aid is required. I recommended one study aid, Linda S. Mullenix, et al., Understanding Federal Courts (LexisNexis, 2d ed. 2015). I won’t be referring to that aid or others in class.

4. **Mini-syllabi and TWEN**
I have prepared a mini-syllabus for each class, which has assigned pages for each class, and questions and comments on the cases and materials on those pages which you can ponder before each class. I will post the mini-syllabi on TWEN (www.lawschool.westlaw.com) on a weekly basis before each class. I will also periodically post on TWEN other material and information relevant to the class.

5. **Specially Prepared Students**
To get everyone involved in class discussion, I will ask about 3 to 5 students to be "specially prepared" for each class. Participation by non-specially prepared students in each class is of course welcome and expected as well.

6. **Seating Chart and Attendance**
I will hand out a seating chart in the second or third class. The attendance policy is that you are expected to attend every class. If important professional or personal reasons, or some other circumstance, prevent you from attending a particular class, I will consider it a professional courtesy to myself and your classmates if you would tell me (not the whole class) ahead of time or, if that’s not possible, after the fact. I will keep track attendance, and reserve the right to take attendance into account in grading (see below). Excessive absences may be cause for not being permitted to take the
exam. If for some reason you are not prepared for a particular class, I would still strongly encourage you to attend. As you probably know, as of 2015 UC now requires that attendance be formally kept for all classes, so do that I’ll likely pass around every class a seating chart to be signed.

7. Grading
The final grade will be based primarily, though not exclusively, on the final exam. Unless I tell you otherwise, the final exam will consist of essay questions, and will be partial open-book, meaning you may take any materials into the exam room, except for commercially prepared outlines, nutshells, hornbooks, etc. (including the study aid I recommended). Before the exam I will post on TWEN at least one copy of a prior exam for this course. In assigning a final grade, I will also take into account class attendance, and the amount and quality of class participation, both from those specially prepared and from volunteers. In the past, I have typically used adding (or, in theory, lowering) one or more grade levels to reflect these latter factors, in addition to my grading of the final exam (e.g., possibly raising a grade from B to B+). Given the number of students signed up this semester, the upper-level class grading curve will apply.

8. Laptops and Accessing the Internet in Class
Laptops or other electronic devices are ok in class for note-taking or other class-related activities. However, I will ask you as a matter of professionalism, civility, and courtesy to your classmates and myself, to not use those devices during class to surf the internet, send or receive messages, or to engage in other non-class activities. If voluntary compliance proves impossible, I reserve the right to limit or ban the use of these devices during class.

9. Contacting Me and office hours
I can be contacted at michael.solimine@uc.edu. I typically do not post office hours, since I’m usually in each weekday during regular business hours. You are welcome to come by at any time, with or without an appointment.

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Highlights of the Introductory Chapter (please read the text of pp. 1-47 of the casebook; reading footnotes are optional, see point #2 above). You should read all these pages for their gist, but we’ll concentrate on the following points.

1. Historical development of the federal courts.
   (a) Madisonian Compromise (pp. 7-9)
   (b) scope of jurisdiction (pp. 13-18)
   (c) Evarts Act of 1891 (pp.29-30)
   (d) review by the Supreme Court (p. 30)
   (e) non-Article III (i.e., Legislative) courts and judges (pp. 36-41)

2. Separation of powers, or federalism, or both, as underlying themes for all of the cases and material in the course.