



The United States Legal System: An Introduction

Margaret Z. Johns, Rex R. Perschbacher

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This book is designed to introduce incoming law students to the U.S. legal system in order to prepare them to get the most out of law school from the day it begins. Authors Johns and Perschbacher do not assume a great deal of prior knowledge and begin by explaining what legal education is all about. There is then a chapter on the legal profession — who are all those lawyers, how are they regulated, and what are they doing? The book then covers the structure of our legal system, looking at the complex relationship between the states and the federal government as well as at the institutions of both. Finally, two important sources of law are considered: legislatures and courts. The book examines some of the ways that legislation is interpreted and some of the ways that the law evolves through the judicial process.

For this edition, the authors revised and updated all the chapters, introducing new material on the current state of legal practice and its challenges. They kept the centerpiece of chapter 6, *Lockyer v. San Francisco*, but added context regarding the on-going litigation on same-sex marriage that currently is in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Chapter 6 retains its focus on efforts of the City of San Francisco and its then-Mayor, Gavin Newsom to bring same-sex marriage to the City on their own. The authors use *Lockyer v. San Francisco* to raise very interesting questions about the rule of law and separation of powers.

This book not only can serve as a crucial introduction for all law students but would also work well in an undergraduate course geared to pre-law students or a more general course about our contemporary legal system.

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