

PROFESSOR LEANNE PURDUM TEACHES STUDENTS ABOUT LEGAL ADVOCACY

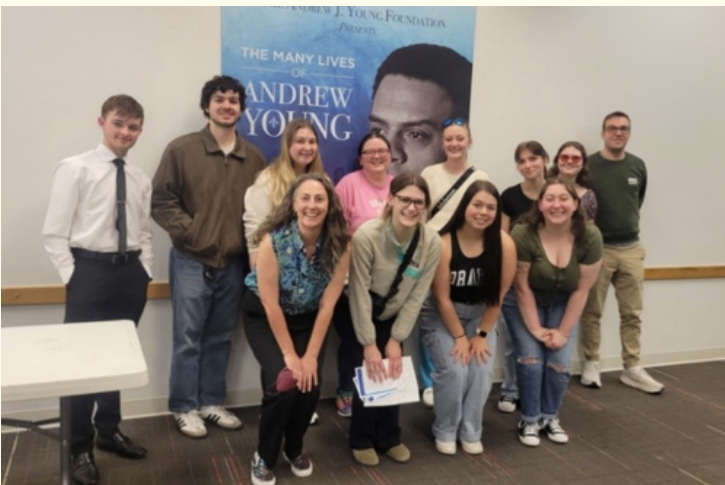
What's your background? How did you come to focus on the topic of legal advocacy?

I'm a legal geographer by training. My PhD work was as a volunteer legal services provider to detained women and children in South Texas. I also was the Law and Policy lead of the Athens Immigrant Rights Coalition in Georgia before I came here. From my studies and this organizing experiencing I became interested in how people are working to make changes to the legal system, and pushing against big social issues that can be really hard to change.

Tell us about your research. What are you working on right now?

I just published an article about family detention in *Geopolitics*. I'm currently working on summarizing it into a short blog post. I'm trying to take my 9,000 word idea and write it in 800 words. The article is about how the Obama administration threatened to separate migrant children from their parents, and how they used this argument as a tactic to support family detention in court documents. It's broadly about how violence is passed through seemingly mundane texts. I'm also working on my book!

- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14650045.2024.2311182>



What can students expect to learn in your classes?

I am always trying to add current events to my classes. We were lucky this semester to attend the lecture by Ambassador Andrew Young sponsored by the Slay Fund for Social Justice. It was a once in a lifetime chance for us to see him speak. The visit connected to other themes from the legal advocacy class such as protest, organizing, and the limits of civility in making change. One goal of this class is to help students envision where they can contribute to our society, and to know there are many roles beyond being an attorney. In legal advocacy I argue that scientists, artists, journalists, teachers, and many others have had lasting impact. Each of our students has something important they can offer.



You were recently part of a panel discussion "How to Make the World a Better Place?". How do we make the world a better place?

Take something you are worried about and find out who is already working towards making it better. Join them in their work. Get organized, listen to directly impacted people, and build broad coalitions. Don't be afraid to envision a world that is very different from the one we are in, or to question the way things function now. Also... dig up your lawn, leave the leaves, and plant native plants. (I've been learning a lot about biodiversity lately!)

OPPORTUNITIES OF INTEREST FOR LPS STUDENTS

LPS Student Advisory Board is currently recruiting New Members!

All LPS majors are welcome and encouraged to apply! For any questions, feel free to reach out to the new LPS SAB Instagram: @drake_lps

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pre-Law Event: New Course Preview & Drake Law School/Legal Clinic Tour
Wednesday, April 3 at 4:15 p.m

Students will have the opportunity to hear from Drake Law Professor, Melissa Weresh, about her new and unique course. (INTD 161: "Ethical Regulation- Law and Other Disciplines") and from Professor Suzie Pritchett, Director of Clinics and Experiential Education.