Dear Poverty Law students,

I am looking forward to our first class together next Tuesday. Could our topic be more timely? Issues of economic justice permeate our national politics. No doubt poverty serves as a major lever of oppression. And the law regulates everything economic and thereby "manages" poverty and the lives of poor people.

The specific focal points of our course will depend, in part, on your interests. Each year I adjust the course syllabus based on the interests of the current students. So, for our first class session, please be prepared to share the basis for your interest in Poverty Law, and also be ready to describe your own career objectives (which, of course, do not need to be related to poverty law at all).

As I will explain next week, this course requires you to select a research (or experiential) project that relates both to your own career interests and to issues of economic justice. By the end of the semester, you will produce a 20-25 page paper. It is my hope that your paper will accomplish three goals: (1) demonstrate research, writing, and analysis of professional caliber for use as a writing sample; (2) advance your mastery of the knowledge essential to your career specialty area; and (3) examine how your career specialty area relates to issues of economic justice and/or poverty. (Typically, one or two student papers from this course are published by law journals each year.)

We have a lengthy wait list of students who would like to join the course. So I ask you to please be present and prepared for each class session, beginning with our class next Tuesday. (If your plans have changed and you need to drop the course, please do so sooner rather than later, if at all possible.)

Finally, for our first class together, please read my article entitled Forty Years of Welfare Policy Experimentation: No Acres, No Mule,
No Politics, No Rights. This article situates the perennial political debate about "welfare" within socio-legal and historical contexts. It is available online at this link: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1752501.

See you next Tuesday!

JN