

Jerry C. Edwards

West Virginia University College of Law
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Academic Appointments

West Virginia University College of Law

Associate Professor of Law

2025–present

Education

University of Florida Levin College of Law

Juris Doctor, *magna cum laude*, 2017

- Order of the Coif
- Managing Editor, *Florida Law Review*
- Research Assistant to Professor E. Lea Johnston

University of South Carolina

Bachelor of Science in Sport and Entertainment Management, *cum laude*, 2014

Publications

Academic Freedom's Inflection Point, 67 BOSTON COLLEGE LAW REVIEW ____
(2026) (forthcoming)

Federal Funding Restrictions, Academic Research, and the First Amendment, 114
GEORGETOWN LAW JOURNAL ONLINE ____ (2025) (forthcoming)

Book Review, Samantha Barbas, *Actual Malice: Civil Rights and Freedom of the Press* in New York Times v. Sullivan, 7 LAW & HISTORY REVIEW: THE DOCKET
(2024) ([Link](#))

Using State Constitutions to End Wealth-Based Detention: Florida as a Case Study, 76 FLORIDA LAW REVIEW FORUM 28 (2024) ([Link](#))

Safeguarding the Search for Truth: Carving Out Academic Freedom's Place in a Domain Dominated by Government Speech, 19 HARVARD LAW & POLICY REVIEW 93 (2024) ([Link](#))

Legal Practice Experience

Staff Attorney

2021–2025

American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Florida, Inc.

- Led the ACLU of Florida's efforts to combat censorship in higher education

- Worked to end Florida’s unconstitutional practice of detaining indigent persons using unaffordable bail

Assistant Solicitor General

2020–2021

Kansas Attorney General’s Office – Solicitor Division

- Served as lead counsel for civil cases on appeal, assisted with the drafting of briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court, and consulted on significant legal issues involving the state of Kansas

Law Clerk to Senior Circuit Judge Eugene E. Siler, Jr.

2019–2020

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

- Conducted legal research, composed draft bench memoranda and opinions, and worked on matters from the Third, Sixth, Ninth, and Eleventh Circuits

Law Clerk to District Judge David C. Guaderrama

2017–2019

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas

- Oversaw half of the docket in one of the busiest districts in the country, drafted orders resolving dispositive motions, and aided with the preparation for hearings and trials

Selected Cases

Austin v. Lamb, No. 1:25-cv-16 (N.D. Fla.) (First and Fourteenth Amendment challenge to a Florida law broadly defunding diversity, equity, and inclusion in the state’s public colleges and universities) (lead counsel for Plaintiffs)

Pernell v. Florida Board of Governors, 641 F. Supp. 3d 1218 (N.D. Fla.) (First and Fourteenth Amendment challenge to Florida’s Stop W.O.K.E. Act, a law limiting the discussion of race and gender in public colleges and universities) (ACLU of Florida’s lead counsel for plaintiffs)

Pernell v. Andrade, No. 23-10616 (11th Cir.) (appeal on the question of whether the state legislative privilege is qualified in cases brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983) (lead counsel for plaintiffs)

Tallahassee Bail Fund v. Marshall, No. 4:22-cv-297 (N.D. Fla.) (prevailed after a bench trial in an Eighth and Fourteenth Amendment challenge to Fla. Stat. § 903.286) (lead counsel for plaintiff)

Fla. Bar v. Girley, No. SC22-0859 (Fla. 2024) (co-authored an amicus brief arguing that the First Amendment does not permit the Florida Bar to sanction attorneys for out-of-court speech critical of the legal system) (lead counsel for amicus curiae) ([SSRN](#))

Presentations

Guest Lecturer, *Speech Restrictions in Higher Education*, Seattle University School of Law Constitutional Law II Course (April 8, 2024)

Panelist, *Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Work in the Wake of SFFA*, American Constitution Society (Oct. 26, 2023)

Presenter, *The Fight to Protect Racial Justice Speech in Education*, Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) Annual Conference (Sept. 20, 2023)

Presenter, *Exploring the Legal Challenges to Recent Laws Aimed at Dismantling Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives*, NAACP Legal Advocacy Training Institute (July 30, 2023)

Presenter, *The Fight for Inclusive Education*, ACLU National Board of Directors Meeting (June 11, 2023)

Panelist, *Banned Books and Censorship in Schools Panel Discussion*, Georgetown University Law Center (Mar. 22, 2023)

Presenter, *Anti-CRT Legislation: Pernell v. Florida Board of Governors*, University of South Carolina Law School Race and Law Course (Jan. 19, 2023)

Presenter, *Academic Freedom and Employment Protections for University Employees*, United Faculty of Florida (Aug. 3, 2022)

Research Interests

Free Speech, Legal History, Constitutional Theory, American Political and Constitutional Development, Academic Freedom, Government Speech

Courses

Constitutional Law, Civil Rights, Torts, Constitutional History

Bar Memberships

Florida

Kansas (inactive)

U.S. Supreme Court

Eleventh Circuit

Tenth Circuit

Sixth Circuit

Middle District of Florida

Northern District of Florida