



June 10, 2020

Dear Students of YYLS,

We are canceling and postponing today's class in solidarity with #ShutDownAcademia and #Strike4BlackLives. Our apologies for the short notice.

Over the past few weeks, the American people have taken to the streets, to the halls of government, and to community institutions to protest historical and ongoing racial injustice in our nation. We stand in solidarity with those who are working to make this country a better, more just place. At the same time, we are called not only to affirm Black Lives Matter, which we do, but to go further. This includes rethinking the ways systemic racism permeates various aspects of our everyday lives.

Today, faculties and staff around academia are participating in #ShutDownAcademia and a #Strike4BlackLives to call for justice. Free classes about the legal aspects of a sitcom, taught for charity, might seem beyond the scope of such a call; in addition to not being affiliated with any formal institution, they are offered in order to raise money for victims of COVID-19. Further, today's class itself would have focused substantially on racial justice. Nevertheless, we have determined that we want to spend today examining not just our work but ourselves.

As our faculty have acknowledged, there are serious issues of racial justice that are implicated by the series. Even when it was on the air, the show was criticized for not having any major Black characters, and for tokenizing minor ones. In many ways, whiteness is a defining feature of the series as a whole. (We have a class on the syllabus later in the semester dedicated to this.) Nevertheless, we would be remiss in our duty if we pressed on without pause and deliberation. We have decided to postpone our lecture planned for today to allow for better reflection and to focus our efforts on meaningful legal change focusing on justice for all. We appreciate your understanding and look forward to reconnecting soon.

Yada Yada Law School Dean and Faculty