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# BLAW 301

Spring 2024

## Writing Assignment

### Due Date:

- Turn in your **Writing Assignment**, via Canvas, by *midnight, Thursday, March 28.*

### Directions:

#### Step One: Research

Conduct research on *United States v. Rahimi, Case Number 22-915*, which is a case the Supreme Court is hearing this term. As background, in 2008 the Supreme Court held—for the first time—that individuals have a Second Amendment right to bear arms. Since then, various restrictions on gun ownership have been challenged. For example, last term, the Supreme Court held that a New York law requiring a permit to carry a concealed gun in public was unconstitutional because the permit requirement violated the Second Amendment.

At issue in *United States v. Rahimi* is law that prohibits the possession of a firearm by a person subject to a domestic-violence restraining order. Mr. Rahimi—who was a person subject to a domestic violence restraining order—was prohibited from purchasing a gun, and Mr. Rahimi argues this violated his Second Amendment right.

Start with neutral sources that explain the issues in the case. Some good resources include:

- [Scotusblog.com](https://www.scotusblog.com)
- [Oyez.org](https://www.oyez.org)
- [Constitutioncenter.org](https://www.constitutioncenter.org)

After you have read some starting-point resources and have a solid understanding of the case, search for news articles or websites/blogs/podcasts *that take a position* (i.e. are *not* neutral). Often, special interest groups or trade associations file supporting briefs in the case (called *amicus curiae* briefs), which you also might find a good resource and to which you can cite (available at SCOTUSblog).

## Step Two: Write a Paper

Write a *two-page, double-spaced paper* in which you:

1. State precisely the **legal question** that the case addresses.
2. Give a short description of the **key arguments on each side, citing sources as appropriate**. I do NOT have a preference on which citation style ( e.g., MLA, APA) you use. You should cite *at least three sources stating different positions*. (NOTE: Do **not** cite three sources that all reach the same conclusion or three sources that all take a neutral view. The point is to find and evaluate arguments from different points of view.)
3. State **your own<sup>1</sup> reasoned opinion** as to what decision you think the Supreme Court should reach, considering the relevant arguments and the surrounding context (e.g. how the decision in this case may affect future events or future cases and/or how this decision is shaped past events or cultural forces).

Take care **not to plagiarize**. Do not quote without citation. Do not paraphrase your sources without citation. And, above all, do not use parts or the whole of a paper written by anyone else (or even by you in another course). Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and possible academic misconduct proceedings.

I will refer to a rubric when grading your papers. The rubric is available for you to view as a pdf document on Canvas along with this assignment.

**The Writing Assignment is due via Canvas before midnight on  
Thursday, March 28.**

**Good luck!**

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<sup>1</sup> I do not care which side of the case you ultimately support. Really. Your grade solely depends on the quality of your research and analysis, not on whether I agree with your opinion.



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