

Lara Hope Schwartz

Experience

American University

School of Public Affairs

<i>Director, Project on Civic Dialogueⁱ</i>	2018-
<i>Professorial Lecturer</i>	2014-
<i>SPA Honors Program Director</i>	2016-21
<i>Faculty Fellow, Center for Teaching, Research, and Learning</i>	2018-19
<i>Adjunct faculty, Washington College of Law</i>	2003-04 2014-17

Founded and direct the Project on Civic Dialogue (formerly Project on Civil Discourse), which supports students in developing their skills as listeners and communicators and opening their minds to diverse perspectives. Develop resources for faculty to facilitate inclusive and rigorous dialogue in their classrooms; organize events on topics such as free speech, political discourse, and understanding diverse perspectives. Directed SPA Honors Program. SPA Awards: Outstanding Community Engagement 2020-21; Outstanding Service to the University Community in a term faculty appointment, 2019-20; Distinguished teaching by SPA term faculty member, 2015-2016. SPA Courses: The American Constitution; Law and the Political System; Changemakers- LGBTQ Equality; Campus Discourse- Rights and Responsibilities; Congress and Legislative Behavior; Introduction to Law; Introduction to Communications, Legal Institutions, Economics, and Government; Politics in the US; Washington, DC Lab; Community Service-Learning Program; Every Day is Constitution Day: The Constitution for Middle School Scholars; Civil Discourse Facilitator Training. WCL courses: Constitutional law; U.S. Constitution for international LLM candidates; Statutory and Regulatory Process; Legal Writing for LLMs; Sexual Orientation and the Law.

University of California National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement

Fellow 2019-20

Project title: "[Let Freedom \(and Respect\) Ring: Fostering Civil Discourse and Free Speech in the Classroom and Beyond.](#)" Created a course to help faculty set the stage for robust and respectful engagement in their classrooms. Led workshops for faculty, staff, and students on building inclusive learning environments; conducted focus groups on self-censorship and the challenges to robust and respectful speech on campus.

American Constitution Society for Law and Policy

Director of Strategic Engagement 2013-14

Led judicial nominations advocacy. Advised candidates on nomination process. Coordinated campaigns on access to justice, judicial nominations, and constitutional interpretation. supported organization president and communications staff with press outreach and statements.

Media Matters for America

Senior Counsel, Courts Matter Director 2013

Identified and corrected inaccurate reporting on the courts, civil justice, constitutional law, and other legal issues. Conducted outreach to civil rights groups, media, and consumer protection organizations. [Blog archive.](#)

American Association of People with Disabilities

Vice President of External Affairs 2011-12

Led communications, messaging, online outreach, lobbying, and media strategy for nation's largest cross-disability civil rights organization. Created messaging strategy for organization and its spokespeople. Created PSA that earned \$3 million in-kind donation of airtime. Drafted executive-branch policy recommendations. Cultivated connections with press. Served as organization spokesperson.

Thoughts, Words, and Plans

Writer and strategist

2009-11

Drafted op-eds, speeches, press releases, and other public writings for organization principals, philanthropists, and others. Created strategic plans, reports, advocacy documents, and marketing materials for civil rights organizations.

Human Rights Campaign

Legal Director

2006-09

Chief Legislative Counsel

2005-06

Senior Counsel

2002-05

Led legal department in nation's largest civil rights organization advocating for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community. Drafted advocacy documents, speeches, op-eds, testimony, messaging, and press releases. Led team that created executive-branch policy recommendations. Created educational campaigns. Developed legislation on tax and benefits. Appeared in major media outlets as organization spokesperson. Advocated for hate crimes legislation, judicial appointments, employment nondiscrimination, defeat of Federal Marriage Amendment, and repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Served as interim general counsel, providing advice on compliance with lobbying, ethics, intellectual property, and other legal matters. Produced educational materials and curriculum on the importance of the judiciary for LGBT equality.

Gilbert, Heintz, & Randolph LLP

Associate

2001-02

Litigation and complex dispute resolution regarding legislative redistricting and multi-party insurance coverage.

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, and Flom LLP

Associate

1999-00

Defended corporations, officers, and directors in SEC investigations. Represented clients in rulemaking proceedings. Represented high school student in Americans with Disabilities Act matter.

Honorable Ronald Lee Gilman, U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit

Judicial Clerk

1998-99

Researched legal issues. Drafted bench memoranda and judicial opinions.

Education

Harvard Law School

J.D. cum laude

1998

Co-editor-in-chief, *Harvard Negotiation Law Review*
Family and community mediator

Brown University

A.B. in English and American Literature
magna cum laude

1993

Commencement Speaker

Writing and Rhetoric Fellow, Rose Writing Fellows Program

Selected Publications

[Try to Love the Questions: From Debate to Inquiry in the College Classroom](#) (Princeton University Press 2024)

[Against University Statements](#)

[COVID-19 Creates a Differently Unfair System](#), Speech Spotlight, May 2020

[How to College: What to Know Before You Go \(And When You're There\)](#). (with Andrea Malkin Brenner)
St. Martin's Press (2019)
[Civil Discourse in the Classroom](#) (with Daniel Ritter), *Academe*, winter 2019.

ⁱ Formerly Project on Civil Discourse