

# 2019-2020 Humanities Center Brown Bag Series

## Litigation and the Opioid Crisis

The upsurge of litigation against opioid manufacturers, distributors, and sellers currently proceeding through the US court system—with nearly 3000 state and local governments as plaintiffs—raises a number of complex legal, political, and strategic issues. Although offering a wide array of legal theories, most of the local government lawsuits have been consolidated in a multi-district litigation, currently being overseen by a federal judge in Ohio. The state government lawsuits are mostly proceeding separately in state courts. This multiplicity of theories and plaintiffs may lead to conflict and competition between different plaintiffs, as state and local governments compete to control the legal strategy deployed in the cases and the resources that may be garnered from successful rulings or settlements.

This presentation explores the trajectory of the litigation as well as the implications of conflict between state and local governments as the opioid lawsuits proceed. The presentation also will examine how legal trends of preemption and privatization affect the ongoing litigation strategies and likely outcomes. The ongoing opioid litigation raises political and strategic concerns about incentives, resource allocation, and legal authority.

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TO THE PUBLIC

WAYNE STATE  
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**Wednesday, February 5, 2020**

**12:30PM—1:30PM**

**Rm. 2339**

**Faculty Administration Building**



**Lance Gable, J.D., M.P.H.**  
**Associate Professor**  
**Law**

**Lance Gable** is an Associate Professor of Law at Wayne State University Law School. Gable, an internationally known expert on public health law and bioethics, served as interim dean of Wayne Law from September 2016 to August 2017.

His research addresses the overlap among law, policy, ethics, health and science. He has published journal articles on a diverse array of topics, including public health law, ethics and policy; international human rights; bioterrorism and emergency preparedness; mental health; research ethics; and information privacy. He is also co-editor and co-author respectively of two books: *Research with High Risk Populations: Balancing Science, Ethics and the Law* and *Legal Aspects of HIV/AIDS: A Guide for Policy and Law Reform*.

Gable holds a bachelor of arts degree in political science from Johns Hopkins University and master of public health degree from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He earned his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center.

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