First Class—Please read the assignment and be prepared to discuss the questions below. See you soon.

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Text: Ellman et al., Family Law: Cases, Text, Problems (2010 5th edition) (There is a ‘new’ abridged 5th edition, but it does not have new material; they have just corrected typos and the index. A used, 2010 5th edition is just as good.)

Phones should be off and you should not be on the internet during class.

No Laptops During Class

This course does not lend itself to laptop note-taking. Surveys at other schools (and previous students who have taken this course at Hofstra) indicate that students are more satisfied with the learning environment in no-laptop courses. Although some students prefer to use laptops, a larger number of students in the surveys say that classrooms are quieter, they can hear the teacher and other students better, and they feel more engaged in the classroom experience with fewer distractions. Accordingly, in Family Law you may not use a laptop, or any other electronic device, during class. If these devices are on your desk during class, or in your lap, I will assume you are using them.

Class #1 Chapter 1. Introduction
pp. 3-20 A. The Themes of Family and Family Law

1. What is the “revolution in families” and how does it affect the direction of family law?
2. Does the State have a legitimate interest in privileging certain kinds of families?
3. Should ‘marriage’ be at the center of family law?
4. What is the purpose of family law? What are its limits?