

# Call for Proposals

## *Women's Leadership in Law and Politics*

### SCHOLARS VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM

Sponsored by The Center for Constitutional Law &  
The Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron  
Friday, February 21, 2025

[The Center for Constitutional Law at Akron Law](#) and [The Bliss Institute of Applied Politics](#) seek proposals for a Scholars Virtual Symposium to be held on Friday, February 21, 2025. Akron's Center for Constitutional Law is one of four national centers established by Congress in 1986 for the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution to support legal research and public education on issues of constitutional import. Past presenters at the Center have included Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Justice Arthur Goldberg, Professor Reva Siegel, Professor Lawrence Solum, Professor Maggie Blackhawk, Professor Katie Eyer, Professor Harold Koh, Professor Kate Masur, Professor Julie Suk, and Professor Paula Monopoli, among many others. The Bliss Institute of Applied Politics is a bipartisan research, teaching and experiential learning institute dedicated to increasing understanding of the political process with special emphasis on political parties, grassroots activity, and civility and ethics.

The 2025 Scholars Symposium highlights questions of women's leadership in law and politics. Recent events have brought heightened visibility to women's political and leadership. Vice-President Kamala Harris became the presidential candidate. Women Justices reached a critical mass on the U.S. Supreme Court, constituting now four of nine Justices. Women's grassroots initiatives and activism brought reproductive rights to the national agenda through state voting referenda in the wake of *Dobbs*. This symposium brings together scholars from disciplines including law, politics, history, and gender studies to explore the contours of what women's political and legal leadership looks like. It will discuss trends, barriers, limitations, and impacts of women's leadership.

Suggested topics for this symposium may include, but are in no way limited to:

- Why women's representation in political and lawmaking institutions matters
- Barriers to women's political and legal leadership
- Women judges – trends, history, and impact
- Women as political candidates
- Bias in women's leadership – gender, racial, ethnicity bias, and DEI
- Personal attacks on women in leadership from AI, social media, and harassment
- The Hillary Factor – the antagonism to women candidates and the assumption women can't win
- The Kamala Factor – undervaluing women's power
- Grassroots women's groups, *e.g.* Moms for Liberty, Red Wine & USA, MeToo
- Proportional Representation Reform, *e.g.* Alaska, Congress's Fair Representation Act, international
- Comparative international women's leadership in law, courts, and politics
- Women's leadership in legal practice – firms, partners, MDL, arbitration, experts, judges
- Women's political equality as seen in constitutional jurisprudence, including *Dobbs*
- Pipelines to women's legal and political leadership
- Women as constitution makers (19th Amendment, ERA, global constitutions)

The symposium aims to ignite dialogue and discussion among scholars ruminating on these important issues. The price of admission, so to speak, is a short discussion paper to be published in the written symposium in the Spring 2025 edition of the Center for Constitutional Law's open-access journal, [ConLawNOW](#) (also indexed in Westlaw, Lexis, and Hein). Papers should be about 3,000 to 5,000 words (5-10 published pages). These may be derivative works of longer works or books published elsewhere.

Those interested in participating in the 2025 Constitutional Law Scholars Symposium should send an abstract, title, and CV to Professor Tracy Thomas, Director of the Center for Constitutional Law at Akron, at [thomast@uakron.edu](mailto:thomast@uakron.edu). Abstracts are welcomed beginning now, and should be submitted by December 1, 2024.