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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Maurer School of Law
Bloomington

Meet our new faculty: Jenn Oliva

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by joboyd

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Professor **Jenn Oliva** joined Indiana Law earlier this summer as a professor of law and as Val Nolan Faculty Fellow. Prior to joining the IU Maurer Law faculty, Professor Oliva served as Professor of Law and Co-Director of the UCSF/UC Law Consortium on Law, Science & Health Policy at the University of California College of Law, San Francisco. She has also served as Associate Dean for Faculty Research & Development and Director of the Center for Health & Pharmaceutical Law at Seton Hall University School of Law where she was selected as the law school's 2021 Professor of the Year (Paula Franzese Excellence in Teaching Award) and 2022 Faculty Researcher of the Year. She currently serves as Chair of the AALS Section on Law, Medicine, and Health Care. We asked her a few questions about her background and research.

We'll start with the basics: What was the appeal of joining the Maurer School of Law? Why now?

JO: I am privileged to have the opportunity to join the Maurer School of Law. The law faculty is comprised of exceptional scholars and teachers who are also terrific colleagues and friends; the staff is wonderful, highly-skilled, and kind; and the students are top-notch. As an added bonus, the Bloomington community is fabulous and I get to live just down the road from my lovely and very supportive in-laws, who live in Fishers, Indiana.



Professor Jenn Oliva

You're an Army veteran (Hooah!). What inspired you to go into law? Did you always know you wanted to go to law school?

JO: When I graduated from West Point, I elected to become a Military Police officer. During my time policing the force, the United States was involved in combat overseas and many soldiers returned to the states traumatized and injured. Several of those soldiers became criminal military justice-involved as a consequence of their physical and mental health injuries. It became my strongly-held view that those soldiers deserved compassion and state-of-the-art health care and not a military criminal legal system response. As a result, I decided to go to law school and become a health care attorney.

How did you get into academia?

JO: I was very fortunate. While I was working in the FDA Law practice group of a large law firm in Washington, D.C., I got the opportunity to teach at a law school in place of a wonderful academic colleague who had received a prestigious fellowship and, thus, had to take a leave. I loved that experience so much that I decided to go on the academic market for a full-time position.

You're an award-winning teacher. How do you connect with students inside and outside the classroom? What do you like most about teaching?

JO: I honestly love everything about teaching law students. It's my favorite part of my job. The students give me joy and constantly teach me new things, including what's hip in the world these days. I am high energy in the classroom and I use a lot of different pedagogical techniques to ensure that all my students stay engaged in the course and have the maximum opportunity to learn and thrive. I also make every opportunity to get to know my students outside the classroom by, among other things, being available routinely for office hours and meet-ups, participating as faculty advisor to student groups, supervising student notes, and encouraging them to serve as research assistants. There is nothing more rewarding than watching your students graduate and go out into the world and make it a better place.

Your research has won accolades, too. Can you talk a bit about the areas that interest you most? Any particular projects you're excited to work on/continue here?

JO: My research and teaching interests include health law and policy, privacy law, evidence, torts, and complex litigation. I am currently finalizing a co-authored article at the intersection of environmental and health law that will be published by the *UCLA Law Review* this summer and working with a disability law colleague on a third article in a trilogy of publications about state prescription drug monitoring programs. I also am working on article tentatively titled *The "New" Drug War* and am lucky to one of a group of interdisciplinary scholars who recently received a generous research grant from the NIH to study the impacts of pharmaceutical industry messaging on the opioid crisis among U.S. military veterans.