

## ClassCrits XV

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS, PAPERS & PARTICIPATION

**When: March 20 – 21, 2026**

**Where: Mitchell Hamline Law School, Saint Paul, MN**

**Submission Deadline: December 15, 2025**

**Proposal Types:** Individual Presentations, Panels, Junior Scholar Works-in-Progress

**Conference Theme: Making Progress in a Regressive Era**

Since the beginning of the Twenty-First Century, advances made for equity in the workplace and in society have faced backlash from the courts, legislatures, and the executive branch at the federal, state, and local levels. The successful legal challenges to measures put in place to ensure that people of color, women, and other disadvantaged and historically discriminated populations are given equal treatment have led to an almost complete destruction of those measures.

Plaintiffs have won by claiming that any actions to ensure that members of equally qualified but historically disadvantaged groups are not overlooked is in fact discrimination against white, cis, heterosexual males. These backward-looking moves have been reflected in both judicial decisions and in state and local legislation that restricts autonomy and undermines the long-standing fight for equality. It has been exacerbated by the current administration's bullying of institutions of higher education and law firms. Examples include:

- *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, and *303 Creative v. Elenis*, as well as the recent decisions of *Skrimetti v. U.S.* and *Mahmoud v. Taylor* have severely eroded the rights of women and marginalized groups.
- Schools such as the University of Pennsylvania as well as top law firms have capitulated to the bullying, though others have refused to acquiesce.
- Legislation building on a newfound freedom to discriminate have been successful in reversing the gains made by disadvantaged groups who seek full participation in the American Dream.
- In yet an even more extreme regressive step, the Supreme Court in *Dept of Homeland Security v. DVD* severely eroded the Due Process rights of all peoples residing in the United States. The administration led by convicted felon Donald Trump is now targeting for deportation people of color, regardless of their residency status. Indeed, it now threatens denaturalization or rendition of its critics and political enemies.

These activities fortify a theocratic movement with regard to the First Amendment to the point of weaponizing it; any action which adversely affects Christian sects is declared infringing on their religious freedom, even when they are operating in the stream of commerce, or when they wish to use public funds for religious education, or when a woman's right to bodily autonomy is inapposite to their religious beliefs.

Advocates for regressive policies and laws long for the days when they were judged by the color of their skin (white), their gender (male), and their sexuality (heterosexual), rather than their abilities, as witnessed by the recent confirmation of a white supremacist, wholly unqualified and utterly incompetent heterosexual white man to serve as Secretary of Defense. As further evidence of this deterioration, through a series of Executive Orders, the current administration has undermined efforts to end discriminatory practices.

The Civil Rights Era of the mid-Twentieth Century, whose reforms were designed to bring about equality of opportunity, has come crashing down, along with many of the foundations of our Democracy.

**In the face of all of this, we must find new paths to continue to progress — or at a minimum prevent further backsliding — in the face of these regressive policies, laws, and court decisions. Class Crits XV seeks presenters and participants who wish to be part of this discussion.**

**We invite the following submissions:**

- **Individual Proposals**

Individual paper proposals should include a title and short abstract, along with the presenter's name, contact information, institutional affiliation (if any), and a short speaker bio (1-3 sentences). Individual papers (other than works-in-progress submissions, see below) will be grouped by the conference organizers into panels.

- **Panel Proposals**

Panel proposals may use a variety of formats, including traditional paper presentations, roundtables, and audience discussions. Please indicate the format of the proposed panel, and include a proposed panel title, a short description of the overall topic, and a list of confirmed panelists, with contact information. For panels comprised of individual presentations, please include titles and short summaries of each presentation and a short bio (1-3 sentences) for each panelist or panel organizer.

- **Works in Progress**

We extend a special invitation to junior scholars (i.e., graduate students, aspiring faculty members, or faculty members with less than two years of experience in a full-time position) to submit proposals for works in progress (WIPs). A senior scholar as well as other scholars will comment upon each work in progress in a small, supportive working session. Due to the increasing popularity of our WIPs program, we will be limiting the number of WIPs at this year's conference to twelve (12) papers. Works-in-progress submissions should be clearly identified as "Work-in-Progress" and should include a title, short abstract, name and contact information, and a 1-3 sentence bio identifying the author's current status as a student or new or aspiring faculty member. Scholars submitting WIPs who are not selected to workshop their paper may have the opportunity to participate on a regular conference panel. We anticipate selecting WIP papers addressing topics with which ClassCrits members have expertise. Priority will also be given to WIP authors who are committed to the ClassCrits community.

**Please upload your submissions for consideration by December 15, 2025 at the following link: <https://www.conftool.org/classcrits-xv/>**