

Professor Mark Osler's work advocates for sentencing and clemency policies rooted in principles of human dignity. In 2016 and 2019, the graduating class chose him as Professor of the Year, in 2015 he won the Dean's Award for Outstanding Scholarship, and in 2013 he received the Outstanding Teaching award.

Osler's writing on clemency, sentencing and narcotics policy has appeared in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Atlantic, and in law journals at Harvard, Stanford, the University of Chicago, Northwestern, Georgetown, Ohio State, UNC, William and Mary and Rutgers. His University of Chicago Law Review article (with Rachel Barkow) was highlighted in a lead editorial in The New York Times, in which the Times' Editorial Board expressly embraced Barkow and Osler's argument for clemency reform. He is also the sole author of a new casebook, Contemporary Criminal Law (West, 2018).

A former federal prosecutor, he played a role in striking down the mandatory 100-to-1 ratio between crack and powder cocaine in the federal sentencing guidelines by winning the case of *Spears v. United States* in the U.S. Supreme Court, with the Court ruling that judges could categorically reject that ratio. He has testified as an expert before the United States Sentencing Commission and the United States House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.

Osler's 2009 book *Jesus on Death Row* (Abingdon Press) critiqued the American death penalty through the lens of Jesus' trial. His second book, *Prosecuting Jesus* (Westminster/John Knox, 2016) is a memoir of performing the Trial of Jesus in 11 states. He currently serves as the Ruthie Mattox Chair of Preaching at First Covenant Church-Minneapolis, and held the Byrd Preaching Chair at St. Martin's-by-the-Lake Episcopal Church in 2012. In 2011, he founded the first law school clinic specializing in federal commutations, and in 2015 he co-founded (with Rachel Barkow) the Clemency Resource Center, a one-year pop-up law firm that prepared clemency petitions. Between the two projects, over 100 people have been freed from prison.

The character of Professor Joe Fisher in the Samuel Goldwyn film [American Violet](#) was based on Osler, and in 2014 he was the subject of profiles in [Rolling Stone](#) and [The American Prospect](#). He is a graduate of the College of William and Mary and Yale Law School.