ADVANCED LEGAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES
SPRING 2017

Professor Heidi Ramos-Zimmerman
Room 226
618-536-4423
hramos@siu.edu
Office Hours: 3 PM to 5 PM - M, T, W. I have an open door policy, but appointments are recommended to guarantee there is no scheduling conflict.

Professor Trish McCubbin
Room 228
618-453-8759
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Office Hours: 3 PM to 4 PM - M and W. I have an open door policy, but appointments are recommended to guarantee there is no scheduling conflict.

Class Times: Thursdays 3 PM to 4:50 PM – Room 251

ASSIGNED TEXTS:

Required:
BarBri materials distributed in class

Recommended
Pass The Bar!, Riebe and Schwartz
Acing the Bar Exam, Darrow-Kleinhaus

PROFESSIONAL GOALS:

Advanced Legal Analysis and Strategies (ALAS) will introduce and reinforce bar examination study and test taking skills through in-depth exploration of each part of the bar exam (multiple choice (MBE), essay (MEE) and multi-state performance exam (MPT)). In addition, ALAS seeks to strengthen those ancillary skills – analyzing, studying and memorizing the substantive information – that directly influence student success on the bar exam. ALAS is not a replacement for a traditional commercial bar preparation course which seeks to provide all the necessary substantive information. Rather, it is a course meant to develop the skills necessary for bar exam success.
**GENERAL GRADING CRITERIA:**

This course will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. To determine whether a “pass” is warranted, points will be earned for each assignment or exercise. To receive a passing grade, you must earn 383 points total. These points may come from “submission points” or “quality points”. There will be no distinction between the two categories in adding up the final points. You will receive specific criteria and directions for each assignment or exercise as it is assigned.

**Submission points** are awarded when you submit assignments on time that comply with the given directions.

**Quality points** are awarded when you demonstrate understanding of and use of the necessary skills for bar exam success.

**Style** (word choice, precision and conciseness) and **mechanics** (grammar, spelling and other technical aspects) will also be considered on all assignments.

*You are required to get at least 75% of the points on each “simulation” exercise to pass the course. Work submitted that is scored less than 75% will be returned to the student for re-writing and re-submission.

Failure to tender any of the final assignments will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the course.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS:**

As you know, your professional legal career began when you started law school. As you look to completing law school and becoming practicing attorneys, both professors want you to continue learning and practicing the professional behavior expected of you as attorneys in the legal profession. To that end, please read and familiarize yourself with the following specifics:

**Assignments:**
You are responsible for all assigned reading (including exercises) whether or not it is covered in class. You must also complete all additional assignments as they are assigned during the semester. The syllabus reflects my best approximation of the time needed to cover each topic. If necessary, we will modify the schedule and advise you of any changes.

**Attendance:**
Class attendance is mandatory. **As a professional courtesy, please notify Professor Ramos and Professor McCubbin in advance if you must miss class.** You are allowed two absences in this class. If you miss two classes, we will contact the Associate Dean regarding your
absence; inform him of the potential result if you miss an additional class and the resultant effect on your grade. If you miss class three times, you may receive an UNSATISFACTORY for this course.

The School of Law's attendance policies, influenced by the Standards of Accreditation of the American Bar Association, requires regular and punctual class attendance by all students. At the beginning of each class, a class list will be passed around for initialing. No one may initial for another student. Please arrive on time to get credit for your attendance and to avoid disrupting the class in progress.

**Preparation:**
You are expected to attend and be prepared to participate in every class. The format of each class will consist of an overview of the day, lecture/discussion of the materials read for homework as well as new topics and moving beyond the course reading with discussion and practice of a particular bar exam part and the applicable test taking skills. While readings and exercises alone will not fully inform you, they are an important step in learning the process of studying for, memorizing and answering an exam question.

The American Bar Association standards for accrediting law schools contain a formula for calculating the amount of work that constitutes one credit hour. According to ABA Standard 310(b)(1), “a ‘credit hour’ is an amount of work that reasonably approximates: (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.” This is a 2-credit hour class, meaning that we will spend two 50-minute blocks of time together each week (a 100-minute block each Thursday). The amount of assigned reading and out of class preparation should take you about 4 hours for each week's class. Applying the ABA standard to the number of credits offered for this class, you should plan on spending a total of **6 hours per week (2 in class and 4 preparing for class) on course-related work.**

**Participation:**
Being prepared means completing any assigned readings and exercises, taking the time to understand them and being able to engage in class discussion regarding the materials. To facilitate class discussion, we will primarily seek volunteers, but reserve the right to call on students.

In this class, people of all ethnicities, genders or gender identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities are strongly encouraged to share their perspectives and experiences. If you feel your differences may, in some way, isolate you from our community, or if you have need for specific accommodations, please speak with Professor Ramos or Professor McCubbin early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help you become an active engaged member of our class and community. Please respect your fellow students’ opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind.
Deadlines and Extensions:
All written assignments are due on the dates indicated and should be turned in according to the instructions given. **Extensions will only be granted before an assignment’s deadline and only in the case of an unforeseeable emergency.** All assignments are due by 5 PM on the date specified in the Assignments chart. All assignments (including the simulations) are due electronically, via TWEN. Exceptions will be made in the case of handwritten work product.

Laptops, Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices:
During class, you may not use laptops, cell phones, or other electronic devices in any manner that is likely to interfere with your class participation or that of other students.

Recording of Class:
We no longer record all classes at the law school. Instead, we are recording classes for students as required for ADA compliance purposes. If your class is being recorded for ADA compliance purposes, we will notify you. Otherwise it is an Honor Code violation for a student to create or distribute such recordings [Honor Code I.E.1.g].

Independent Work/Ban on Collaboration:
You are not allowed to obtain help from any other person (including any other student) unless expressly authorized by the professor and then only to the extent expressly authorized. This ban on collaboration includes obtaining written materials from another student or communicating with another student about an assignment. This ban on collaboration applies to both graded and ungraded exercises. Permission to get help from someone else on one exercise does not necessarily give you permission to do so on another exercise. If you fail to comply with this requirement for independent work, you can be found in violation of the Honor Code, which can lead to serious penalties, including expulsion. An Honor Code investigation must also be reported to the Bar Examiners, even if you are cleared of any violation. When in doubt about how to proceed, ask your professor.

Ban on Plagiarism:
Plagiarizing another’s work, in whole or in part, is a violation of the Honor Code and can lead to serious penalties, including expulsion. An Honor Code investigation must also be reported to the Bar Examiners, even if you are cleared of any violation. The Honor Code defines plagiarism as:

*passing off another’s ideas, words, or work as one's own, including written, oral, multimedia, or other work, either word for word or in substance, unless the student author credits the original author and identifies the original author’s work with quotation marks, footnotes, or other appropriate designation in such a way as to make clear the true author of the work*
COMMUNICATION:

TWEN:
The professors will contact you frequently using TWEN – a Westlaw application. Please register for TWEN as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide your email address as part of the registration process. You can reach the TWEN website by going to www.lawschool.westlaw.com, signing in and selecting the course entitled Advanced Legal Analysis and Strategies – Spring 2017 – Professor Ramos-Zimmerman and Professor McCubbin. Please note that TWEN mail will sometimes be sent to your junk or spam folders. Adjust your email settings so that you receive your messages.

Email from Professors:
The professors will communicate with you through your “siu.edu” email accounts. Therefore, you should check your SIU mail regularly. If you use a different e-mail address, you should have your SIU mail forwarded to that address. If, during the course of the semester, you think you have not received group messages sent to your classmates (through TWEN or SRI mail), please consult with IT to solve the problem.

Communicating with the Professors via Email:
While we prefer face to face communication, you may contact us with your questions via email (hramos@siu.edu or mccubbin@siu.edu). While response times will vary, we will make every effort to respond quickly to your messages. On occasion, you may ask a question that is better answered during a face to face meeting. If that is the case, we may request that you see a professor in person so we can fully discuss your question.
GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE SIU LAW SCHOOL:

Emergency Procedures:
Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

Saluki Cares:
If you find yourself or another student struggling to cope with school or life know that the Salukis of SIU care! The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff students and their families, SIU will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For Information on Saluki Cares: (618) 453-5714, or siucares@siu.edu, http://salukicares.siu.edu/index.html. At the School of Law, Assistant Dean Judi Ray is also available to help students access university resources. Her email is judiray@siu.edu, and her phone number is 618-453-3135.

FINAL NOTE FROM YOUR PROFESSORS:

The goal of this course is to fill in the gap left by the commercial bar course provider and to instill, in students, the skills and confidence necessary to undertake bar study and ultimately be successful on the bar exam. As such, this course will not undertake to provide a review of all the substantive material typically studied in preparation for a bar exam. While some of that substantive material may be used during the course, it will be used as a vehicle for reviewing, learning and instilling the skills necessary for bar exam success. We hope to introduce you to this process of bar study in a way that is engaging and stimulating for you. Still, it will take a great deal of work to understand the concepts associated with this process, but your diligence and commitment to learning will propel you through it. We look forward to exploring the process with you in the coming weeks!
Professor Ramos-Zimmerman and Professor McCubbin
WEEKLY TOPICS

WEEK ONE (January 19) – Course introduction (syllabus, class rules, etc.)/Introduction to the bar exam/Why People Fail the Bar/Introduction to scheduling/In-person account of the bar exam by a recent graduate

WEEK TWO (January 26) – Review last assignment/Learning by the Numbers/Processing bar lecture notes/Multiple choice questions/Start Contracts Barbri BEAT lecture

WEEK THREE (February 2) – Review last assignment/Finish Barbri BEAT Contracts Lecture/Contracts essay questions (Essay outline due at the end of class.)

WEEK FOUR (February 6 - 10) – NO CLASS THIS WEEK, but must attend conference. Failure to attend the conference will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the course. Sign-up sheets on TWEN page.

WEEK FIVE (February 16) – Review last assignment/Start Property Barbri BEAT lecture

WEEK SIX (February 23) – Review last assignment/Finish Property BEAT Barbri lecture/In-class Property essay due at the end of the class

WEEK SEVEN (March 2) – Review last assignment/The Multistate Practice Test (MPT) – strategies and techniques/MPT outline due at the end of class

WEEK EIGHT (March 6 - 10) – NO CLASS THIS WEEK, but must attend conference. Failure to attend the conference will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the course. Sign-up sheets on TWEN page.

SPRING BREAK (March 11-19)

WEEK NINE (March 23) – Review last assignments/In-class timed MPT due at the end of class

WEEK TEN (March 30) – Review last assignment/ Discuss study environment and setting the atmosphere/Thoughts on memorization/In-class multiple choice questions

WEEK ELEVEN (April 6) -- MPT SIMULATION IN CLASS* Must participate and receive at least 75% of the points to pass the class

WEEK TWELVE (April 13) – Essay and Multiple Choice SIMULATION IN CLASS* – Must participate and receive at least 75% of the points to pass the class

WEEK THIRTEEN (April 20) – Presentation. Failure to attend will count as an absence in class.

WEEK FOURTEEN (April 24 - 28) NO CLASS THIS WEEK, but must attend conference. Failure to attend the conference will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the course.
Sign-up sheets on TWEN page.