SYLLABUS
SENIOR SEMINAR: RELIGION AND THE LAW
(Law 590-003)
Professor Valerie J. Munson
Spring 2018

Office: Room 212
618-453-8658
vmunson@siu.edu

Required reading:
All required reading will be posted on the TWEN page for the course.

Individual Conferences:
I am happy to make myself available to you for individual conferences as much as possible. There will be one mandatory individual conference. If you wish to schedule an additional conference, please contact me by phone or email. It is best not to attempt to schedule a meeting with me in person right before, during, or after class as I generally do not have full scheduling information available to me at those times.

Class time and place:
Wednesdays and Fridays 11:00 – 12:15
Room 103

Course objectives:
In this course students will learn:

1. The key legal doctrines emanating from the religion clauses in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution: “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

2. How to write:
   a. a legal memo concerning a matter involving complex analysis;
   b. a letter to a client involving complex analysis;
   c. an Op-ed concerning a matter involving complex analysis.

3. How to facilitate the discussion of a topic of religion and law in the news.

Attendance:
You are expected to attend all class meetings. Only two absences will be allowed. Your absence from more than two class meetings will result in a reduction in your final course grade, and possibly a failing grade. In case of an unforeseeable, genuine emergency that requires you to exceed the two-absence limit, please contact me so that we may meet to determine whether you can complete the requirements of the class, and, if so, how.
Attendance will be taken daily by means of an attendance sheet. Your signature on the attendance sheet constitutes your representation that you have read the assigned material for the day and completed any other assigned task, and that you are prepared to fully engage in class discussion in the manner set forth below. If you are unprepared for class but would like to take an absence and still attend, do not sign the attendance sheet and leave me a note on the lectern before class begins with your name, the date and the notation “attending unprepared”.

You are expected to arrive on time to class. If you are tardy and arrive after class has begun, please feel free to join the class, but do not sign the attendance sheet. A day on which you are tardy will count as an absence.

**Class Discussion and Participation:**
You are expected to fully participate in class in a manner becoming future members of the bar. Such participation consists of considered comments or questions that are relevant, contribute to moving discussion and analysis forward, build on the comments of others, include support from the readings or other relevant authority, and reflect an understanding of the basic concepts in the readings, raise questions for study, or integrate experiences, other readings, or other reflections. THE SIMPLE EXPRESSION OF PERSONAL FEELINGS AND OPINIONS OF THE “TALK RADIO” OR “LUNCH CONVERSATION” VARIETY DOES NOT CONSTITUTE APPROPRIATE CLASS PARTICIPATION.

We will be discussing topics that are of considerable significance to many people and about which reasonable people may have differing beliefs and views. Consistent with your role as a future member of the bar, you are expected to conduct yourself at all times with the utmost courtesy and civility, according your classmates and professor respect, listening to them with an open mind, and thinking critically about your own point of view and that of others.

**Workload Expectations:**
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. or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in subparagraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.” The SIU School of Law Rules provide “All Senior Writing Seminars and elective courses designated under this rule as meeting the Senior Writing Requirement shall meet on a regular basis to focus on either the substantive law or the specific skills to be taught or both, with the opportunity to forgo up to four weeks of class meetings for intensive research, writing, and individual conferences on writing projects.” This is a 3-credit senior writing seminar, meaning that we will spend two 75-minute blocks of time together most weeks. The amount of assigned reading and out of class preparation should take you about 3 hours for each class session and six hours for the week during the weeks that class meets. Your research, writing and individual
conference on your writing projects should take you about 9 hours per week during the weeks that class does not meet.

**Plagiarism:**
Plagiarism is a clear violation of both the SIU School of Law Honor Code [http://www.law.siu.edu/Current%20Students/PDF/SOL%20Honor%20Code-Revised%2011-13-08.pdf](http://www.law.siu.edu/Current%20Students/PDF/SOL%20Honor%20Code-Revised%2011-13-08.pdf) and the SIU Legal and Ethical Conduct Requirements [http://bot.siu.edu/leg/policies.htm#7F](http://bot.siu.edu/leg/policies.htm#7F) Plagiarism will be treated severely and the penalties for any student who plagiarizes will include receipt of an “F” for the course and referral for formal academic misconduct proceedings which may result in expulsion from the law school. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, refer to the definition in the SIU Legal and Ethical Conduct Requirements at the above link.

**Use of Devices in the Classroom:**
The only appropriate use of devices such as laptop computers in the classroom is note taking or accessing information at my request or with my permission. All cell phones must be turned off (not to “vibrate”) during class. If emergency circumstances require that you be available by telephone during class, respect and courtesy dictate that you notify me of that fact before the start of class. Video recording during class is not permitted without my prior, written consent. Audio recording during class is not permitted without my prior, written consent. Use of any device for any purpose other than those referenced above is not permitted, without my prior, written consent. **Use of any device during class for communication, entertainment, or any purpose whatsoever other than those set forth above may well result in immediate expulsion from the course and/or a failing grade.**

**Disability Policy:**
Disability Support Services provides the required academic and programmatic support services to students with permanent and temporary disabilities. DSS provides centralized coordination and referral services. To utilize DSS services, students must go to the DSS to open cases. The process involves interviews, reviews of student-supplied documentation, and completion of Disability Accommodation Agreements. [http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/](http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/). Upon completion of a Disability Accommodation Agreement with DSS, students should bring the agreement to the School of Law Registrar’s Office to ensure the School of Law provides the proper classroom and examination accommodations.

**Saluki Cares:**
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](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.

Emergency procedures:
As required by the campus-wide SIU administration, I am providing the following information to you:

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, on BERT’s website www.beret.siu.edu, on the Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down), and in the Emergency Response Guidelines 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.

Assignments, Deadlines, and Grading:
1. Memo (4,500 – 5,000 words) – 40 points. Due Wednesday, March 21 by 5:00 p.m. by emailing to Professor Munson at vmunson@siu.edu.

2. Presentation on “Religion and the Law in the News” (March 28, March 30 or April 4) – 5 points.

3. Client letter (2,000 – 2,500 words) – 30 points. Due Wednesday, April 11 by 5:00 p.m. by emailing to Professor Munson at vmunson@siu.edu.

4. Op-ed (700 words) – 20 points. Due Friday, April 27 by 11:00 a.m. by emailing to Professor Munson at vmunson@siu.edu and by bringing a hard copy to class.

5. Professionalism - 5 points (timely submission of assignments, level of preparedness for class discussion [as measured by adequacy of response to questions by professor], quality of class participation [as measured by quality of voluntary participation in class discussion] and preparation for conference on memo. [as measured by completeness of draft and thoughtfulness of questions.])

Week 1
Wednesday, January 17
Class Topic: Overview of semester
Subject matter content
Writing content
Assignments, evaluation, and grading
First Amendment Religion Clauses - General Background
What is Religion?

Note: No advance preparation is required for this class.

**Friday, January 19**
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: History of First Amendment Religion Clauses
Establishments
Intellectual Influences

**Week 2**
**Wednesday, January 24**
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Basic First Amendment Standards
Free Exercise

**Friday, January 26**
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Basic First Amendment Standards
Free Exercise

**Week 3**
**Wednesday, January 31**
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Basic First Amendment Standards
Establishment

**Friday, February 2**
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Subjects of First Amendment Litigation
Week 4
Wednesday, February 7
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Subjects of First Amendment Litigation  
Religious Symbolism Outside the Public School Context

Friday, February 9
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Subjects of First Amendment Litigation  
Public Aid to Religious Schools, Organizations and Individuals

Week 5
Wednesday, February 14
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class and come to class prepared to discuss any assigned problem(s).

Class Topic: Overview of Subjects of First Amendment Litigation  
Church Property Litigation  
Religious Employment Litigation

Friday, February 16
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class.

Class Topic: Why and how to write a legal memo on a complex matter of law. (You will be given a specific fact pattern for which you are writing a legal memo at this class.)

Week 6  [No Class – Work on Memos]

Week 7  [No Class – Work on Memos]

Week 8  [No Class – Work on Memos] [Individual conferences with professor]

Week 9

SPRING VACATION  
Saturday, March 10 – Sunday, March 18
Week 10
Wednesday, March 21 [No Class]

Turn in memo by 5:00 by emailing to professor Munson at vmunson@siu.edu.

Last day to email Professor Munson the “Religion and Law in the News” topic you have chosen, with a link to or copy of the article. (Choice of topic is on a “first come” basis.)

Friday, March 23
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class.

Class Topic: Why and how to write a client letter on a complex matter of law

Week 11

Wednesday, March 28
Assigned Class Preparation: Prepare to give an overview of your chosen topic and facilitate a discussion of how the substantive law covered in this class applies.

Class topic: Presentations on “Religion and the Law in the News”

Friday, March 30
Assigned Class Preparation: Prepare to give an overview of your chosen topic and facilitate a discussion of how the substantive law covered in this class applies.

Class topic: Presentations on “Religion and the Law in the News”

Week 12

Wednesday, April 4
Assigned Class Preparation: Prepare to give an overview of your chosen topic and facilitate a discussion of how the substantive law covered in this class applies.

Class Topic: Presentations on “Religion and the Law in the News”

Friday, April 6
Assigned Class Preparation: Prepare to pose any questions you have about writing a client letter on the assigned subject.

Class Topic: Q&A on Client Letters

Week 13
Wednesday, April 11 [No Class]

Turn in client letter by 5:00 by emailing to professor Munson at vmunson@siu.edu.

Friday, April 13
Assigned Class Preparation: Read/watch/listen to materials posted on TWEN for this class.

Class Topic: Why and how to write an Op-ed

Week 14

Wednesday, April 18
Class Preparation: Bring copies of an Op-ed to distribute and discuss in class.

Class Topic: Examination of Op-eds

Friday, April 20
Class Preparation: Bring copies of an Op-ed to distribute and discuss in class.

Class Topic: Examination of Op-eds

Week 15

Wednesday, April 25
Assigned Class Preparation: Prepare to pose any questions you have about writing an Op-ed on the assigned subject.

Class topic: Q&A on Op-ed

Friday, April 27

Turn in Op-ed by 11:00 by emailing to professor Munson at vmunson@siu.edu. and bringing a hard copy to class.

Class Topic: Op-ed peer review exercise