Veterans’ Legal Assistance Program
Externship
Law 675; §004
1-3 Credit Hours

Returning Students
Syllabus - Fall 2018
No required classroom component.

Professor:
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Adjunct Professor
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Course Description:

Welcome back to the Veteran’s Legal Assistance Program (“VLAP”) Externship at SIU School of Law. The VLAP provides legal assistance to area veterans who cannot afford or do not have access to legal representation in the appeals of claims for compensation for service-connected disabilities; and petitions for the upgrade of other-than-honorable discharges for military members with posttraumatic stress (“PTSD”) or victims of military sexual trauma (“MST”).

Course Objectives:

1. The student will become familiar with Title 38, USC, Veterans, and will apply various sections in research, writing, and advocacy for veterans filing appeals in disability compensation claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs, and petitions for discharge upgrades.

2. The student will have the opportunity to represent veteran clients in appeals of disability compensation claims before various levels of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

3. The student will expand his/her research and writing skills through a comprehensive memorandum covering the factual and legal issues presented in a disability claims appeal; coordinating the administrative forms to pursue the appeal; and outlining a course of action to succeed in the appeal.

4. The student will improve his or her ability to learn from face-to-face interaction with clients and gain experience in representing a client in a claims appeal.
Student Performance Evaluation:

The externship is graded on a modified Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory scale (S, S+, S-, U). To complete the course for:

3 credits, students must complete 140 extern hours (10 hours a week);
2 credits, 94 extern hours (6.7 hours a week); and
1 credit, 47 extern hours (3.4 hours a week).

The American Bar Association standards for accrediting law schools contains 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.”

Extern Hours. Hours spent meeting with or talking to veterans about claims or potential claims; researching a potential client’s claim; reviewing and organizing a client’s records; researching a client’s claim; drafting briefs and memos; observing court proceedings; planning and preparing intake/clinic days; assisting at intake/clinic days; meeting with instructor to discuss cases, planning and preparing CLEs or other attorney training; and staffing the VLAP office all count toward your extern hours. Other work may also be credited toward extern hours with instructor approval.

Extern hours will be tracked in .1 hour increments, documented in Clio and then “bills” submitted to the instructor for approval. Hours are due at the end of each week.

Course Materials:

Military Service and the Law, IICLE publications, 2018. (“MSL”)

The VBM is available for reading in the VLAP office or on Lexis. MSL is available as a downloadable PDF through the law school library’s website.

TWEN Usage:

We will use a TWEN course for discussion boards, reading materials, and assignments.

Mandatory Course Assignments:

1. Weekly meeting with instructor to review status of cases.
2. Case work product: As assigned by the instructor.
3. Participate in a minimum of one scheduled group clinic/intake session. Date, time, location TBD.
4. Extern Hour Submission Forms totaling appropriate number of Extern hours for registered credits. Submitted weekly.
3 credits = 140 Extern hours; 2 credits = 94 Extern hours; 1 credit = 47 Extern hours. **You will receive an Unsatisfactory grade if you do not complete the required hours.**

5. Final brief/memo on status of assigned case(s).
6. Course critique/suggestions for improvement memo.

**Weekly meeting schedule and assignments:**

At the beginning of the semester, you and the instructor will decide on a weekly meeting time to review the status of current cases and upcoming events and assignments. This meeting time will be your regular time each week. If you are unable to attend during the scheduled meeting time, you are responsible for rescheduling the meeting or making arrangements suitable to the instructor.

**711 License Requirements:**

A JD student enrolled in a law school approved by the American Bar Association can apply for a 711 license in order to render legal services in the State of Illinois for a qualified legal assistance program or law school, provided you:

- Have completed one-half of the total credits required for graduation from SIU, and
- Are in good academic standing and eligible under our school’s criteria to undertake the activities authorized by the license.

With a 711 license, and under the supervision of a licensed Illinois attorney, students are able to counsel clients, negotiate settlements, represent clients in mediation and other nonlitigation matters, prepare legal instruments, prepare briefs and other documents to be filed in court, and appear in appellate courts, trial courts, and administrative tribunals of the state, subject to specific limitations and qualifications set out in Rule 711.

See the instructor for additional information or to discuss applying for your 711 license in the VLAP.

The application for a 711 license can be found at: [http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Administrative/forms/711/](http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Administrative/forms/711/)

**Policies**

**Independent Work; Ban on Collaboration:**

*You are allowed to discuss assignments with any other student, but you are not allowed to rely on any written materials from another student. 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, ask your professor.*
**Notice of Recording:**

Primarily to assist our students with disabilities or other health issues, SIU School of Law routinely records all classes at the law school. Audio and video recording of classes by students themselves (as opposed to recording by the IT Department) is prohibited. It is an Honor Code violation to create or distribute such recordings when the instructor has prohibited either action (Honor Code I.E.1.g). If you require an accommodation to record this course yourself, please work with Associate Dean Buys to request the appropriate accommodation.

**Emergencies Procedure:**

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](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Safety’s website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://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.

**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 come 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](mailto: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](mailto:judiray@siu.edu), and her phone number is 618-453-3135.

**UPDATED: 8-11-2018**