

Advanced Legal Analysis and Strategies

Law 639

Spring 2019

Professor McCubbin

Class:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 PM to 2:45 PM, Room 251

Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3 PM to 4 PM

Description of the Course: Advanced Legal Analysis and Strategies (ALAS) is designed to improve the test-taking skills and study habits that will help you master the bar exam. We will be working through each major segment of the bar:

1. the essays (called “MEEs”);
2. the multiple choice questions (called “MBEs”); and
3. the performance tests (called “MPTs”).

Throughout much of the semester, you will be analyzing and writing practice MEEs, MBEs and/or MPTs nearly every week. We will be doing some of these assignments in class and reviewing model answers together. You will also be completing some of these assignments outside of class and getting input through self-grading, individual feedback and/or conferences with me.

ALAS is not a replacement for the commercial bar prep course you will use in the summer before your bar exam. Our goal here is not to teach you the substance of all the many areas of law you have to memorize for the bar; the commercial course will cover that. Rather, this class hones the skills necessary for success on the bar exam.

Required Textbook: Wanda Temm, CLEARING THE LAST HURDLE (2d. ed. 2017)

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students will:

- understand the major components of the bar exam;
- appreciate the considerable amount of time and effort that goes into

successful bar preparation, and develop a schedule for their summer studies that minimizes personal distractions and maximizes efficient study efforts;

- be able to write properly formatted and structured essays and MPTs under timed conditions;
- develop an effective strategy for answering MBE (multiple choice) questions;
- understand how critically important it is to study and analyze the essay and MBE answers provided in the commercial courses to learn and memorize the substantive law; and
- be confident, efficient self-learners who can pass the bar on the first attempt.

Grading: This course is graded S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory), and you must pass every assignment in order to pass the course. The course is designed to help you, not to frustrate you or punish you, and therefore as long as you put in a good-faith effort on all the tasks, you likely will pass. As the professor, I will have full discretion to determine whether you have satisfactorily completed each assignment. I may periodically require you to compensate for an unsatisfactory assignment by redoing it, by completing a related task, or by taking other steps I deem appropriate.

Assignments: For each week of classes, I will post the assignments on TWEN a few days ahead of time. The assignment for the first week will be posted on TWEN in the “Weekly Assignments” forum by the end of the day on Friday, January 11.

Attendance: Attending class is critically important since we will be practicing and reviewing various bar-type questions and materials in each session, and it is very difficult to duplicate our in-class work after the fact. However, I understand that emergencies do come up, so you will be allowed three absences this semester. If you miss class four times or more, you will receive a grade of “unsatisfactory” for this course.

Tardiness: Do not arrive late to class. If you enter class after I begin, do not sign

the attendance sheet, as you will be counted absent.

Independent Work: For assignments that you must hand in (such as practice essays), you must work independently since that will help build your skills for the bar. However, in class we will be doing several group exercises, and I would encourage you to work collaboratively in class.

Class Participation; Warning About Electronic Devices: This is a small section, specifically designed to provide the individualized attention and focus needed to help you on the bar. You must fully engage in each class in order to learn the skills you need for the bar, and therefore you are not allowed to surf the web or disengage from the class in any other respect. I reserve the right to ban all electronic devices (computers, smartphones, etc.) if I believe anyone is misusing them during class.

Recording Policy: As noted above, I strongly encourage you to attend all class sessions, but if you need to miss a class you may email me to ask for a recording of that session. You are prohibited from recording the class yourself in any manner, and doing so is a violation of the Honor Code.

Days of No Class: Occasionally we may not meet, and we will make up for any missed sessions with out-of-class exercises that will comply with ABA Standard 310, which specifies the amount of time students must spend on coursework both inside and outside the classroom to earn the two credit hours available in this course.

Workload Expectations: ABA Standard 310 expects that, for each credit hour, you will spend approximately three hours each week, including (a) our class time and (b) your work before and after class. This is a two credit course, meaning that each week you will be spending approximately six hours on this course altogether. Please keep that workload expectation in mind as we proceed through the semester.

Meeting With Me Outside Class: Feel free to drop by my office (Room 228) during my office hours or at other times of the day. No appointment is necessary, but if you want to make sure I am available, it is best to send me an email ahead of time (mccubbin@siu.edu).

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.

Disability Support: Disability Support Services (DSS) 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. See: <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://salukicare.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.