

# MASTERING LEGAL EDUCATION, 2020-2021, Section 1

INSTRUCTOR:	Stan Cox
E-MAIL:	stan.cox@siu.edu
OFFICE:	Room 222 (but individual meetings this Fall will be by Zoom)
OFFICE HOURS:	Make appointments directly with me
REQUIRED TEXT:	None required for fall semester but TBD for spring
MEETING TIMES:	<b>Mondays 1:15-2:15 IN ROOM 120 (Auditorium)</b> (We plan to meet during the fall semester in person or via Zoom as a class for at least seven (7) sessions, and we will meet for required individual conferences at least twice.)

**Welcome!** As part of the Academic Success Program (ASP), this year long course focuses on developing skills that are critical to your success in law school. This fall, we will work in particular on **(1) class preparation, including case reading and briefing; (2) synthesizing, summarizing, and creating a framework for course content (aka outlining); (3) building legal analysis skills and demonstrating rule application via written essays and multiple choice questions; (4) improving your time management skills; and 5) helping you become a more skillful self-regulated learner.** A draft schedule for the fall semester (subject to change) is included at the end of this syllabus.

The main goals of the ASP are to help you succeed in your law school classes and develop skills and knowledge that will enable you to confidently pass the bar and become an effective lawyer.

The ASP is comprised of three faculty members: myself, Director; Professor Ramos, Bar Preparation Coordinator; and Professor Warren, Assistant Director. While I will be primarily responsible for guiding the course for Section 1, other members of the Program will be available to assist you and may participate in class activities from time to time.

Please seek any of our help at any time. We love to serve as sounding board and to coach to success. I also work as a doctrinal professor in addition to directing ASP efforts. While I thoroughly enjoy both roles, one difference in the ASP role is that it is much more a coaching role and primarily provides opportunity to help you achieve performance graded by others rather than by me.

The Mastering Legal Education class (Mastery class) has requirements to achieve the “S” credit, but it offers you much more the opportunity to improve your skills to as high a level as you would like to take them. Put in the effort and let us coach you to as high a level as you wish to achieve. You may be surprised at what you can accomplish!

**The Mastery class is graded on an S/U basis** and shares its transcript credit with the Professionalism course. If you do not satisfy the requirements for both the Professionalism course and the Mastery course you will receive a U for the combined course and not receive the transcript credit. For the Mastery part of the credit you must demonstrate that you are putting forth a good-faith effort to build and master the foundational skills listed herein to earn a Satisfactory grade. I will work with you as needed throughout the year on each skill to help you develop mastery. **YOU MUST TIMELY SUBMIT ALL REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS AND RE-WRITES, ATTEND CLASS, AND PARTICIPATE IN ALL REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS COURSE.**

**Course TWEN page.** Be sure to add our course TWEN page entitled “Mastering Legal Education – Section 1,” and pay attention to announcements there and in class regarding materials posted and assignments required to be submitted.

**COVID flexibility and requirements.** Given the continuing pandemic, we will need to be potentially flexible as to how class might be conducted. For health reasons (mine, yours, the state's, the community's) it might become advisable to move completely to Zoom instead of having live classes. Individual required conferences are currently planned to be via Zoom rather than in person, as are optional meetings, which are always encouraged. Some of you will be choosing to take your 1L classes, including this one by Zoom. I may also schedule some of our classes to be solely by Zoom, but will announce that beforehand. Our initial plan is to offer most classes live, with Zoom as an option for those who are not planning to participate in the fall semester live.

For such live classes we (you, me, all of us) are required to wear masks regardless of any ability to socially distance. We will see how this affects our classroom experience as we try out this new learning experience. It may cause us to choose to do some sessions by Zoom or it may become no big deal as we get used to teaching and learning while masked.

**Laptops discouraged.** No studies support the use of laptops in class, and many studies document their harmful effect on student learning when used in class. Given the current COVID crisis, we may need to use laptops for class more than is good for us. IF we do so, be sure to ONLY have the course windows open – nothing else, please. If I can operate w/o laptops for the class live, I will do so. All other e-devices are required to be off or in airplane mode at all times during class.

**Regular attendance is part of successful completion of the Mastery class. You are allowed only one (1) class absence and you are not permitted to miss an individual conference.** You will miss important information and/or exercises if you miss class and are therefore strongly discouraged from missing any class sessions. Tardiness also may count as an absence. It is possible to attend class by Zoom even if the whole class is not being conducted via Zoom, but you should let me know in advance if you will be attending class by Zoom when we are having a live class. If you miss more than one class session by not being present either in person or via Zoom, you will be in jeopardy of failing the class. Additionally, this class is not recorded on a regular basis.

**How will we help you work on development of the above-referenced foundational skills?**

1) Class Preparation/Reading/Briefing: During the first weeks of classes I will identify cases from your doctrinal courses from which you can choose to submit briefs. You are required to submit two briefs for two different courses by required submission dates TBD. These briefs must be submitted *prior* to the eligible case content being discussed in the doctrinal class. Your goal is to create a brief that would allow you to teach the case as if you were conducting the class, or at least so you could use that case and what is explored in connection with it for exam purposes. That is the standard against which I will be giving you feedback on your pre-class brief. It is a high standard, and it is designed to capture more than just that you read the case and were familiar with its posture, facts, rule, and holding. The skill you are working to develop is full class preparation, with you working to teach yourself as much as possible *before* class what is to be covered in class, so that you increasingly can use class time primarily to self-assess how well you have already learned material rather than wait for class to be your first meaningful learning of the material.

In the doctrinal class where the case you briefed is discussed, you should take notes as usual and use what occurred in class plus the feedback I will give you on your pre-class brief to improve it. You will need to submit both the pre-class and the corrected/rewritten brief to get credit for the briefing assignment. While you are welcome to submit more briefs than the required two, and do more rewriting to get what you have briefed to a level of true mastery, timely submitting the two briefs (initial and rewritten) is required.

2) Synthesizing/Outlining: After we have worked through and discussed outlining/synthesizing exercises, you will submit portions of two in-process outlines (or mind-maps, charts, flowcharts, etc.), from eligible units assigned, for review. Coordinating with your doctrinal professor, I will evaluate and make suggestions for improvement. I may ask you to revise and resubmit or to submit a portion of an outline for a different course or part of a course as we work together to build this synthesizing skill. You are required to submit acceptable portions of outlines for two different courses, including any suggested rewrites or re-dos.

3) Rule application and legal analysis: You cannot score well on law school exams or bar questions unless you are able to apply rules to facts and analyze legal problems. We will have several required Mastery class exercises to provide a foundation for this skill, and then you will practice writing IRAC or CiRAC-style essays and answering multiple choice questions to develop competence and mastery. You will submit at least two practice essays for review and feedback, and it is likely you will need to rewrite the two essays after receiving feedback to receive credit for this requirement.

4) Time management. You will be required to submit, very early in each semester, a micro and macro study plan that includes short-term and long-term goals. I will ask you to review and revise your plans as needed during the fall semester. Through this process, you will develop the ability to accurately gauge and predict what you need to do and when you need to do it. With this skill, you will be able to look ahead and meet deadlines with less stress, even when there are multiple projects with deadlines that overlap. That is BTW the life of most lawyers, so this skill is not just important for your success as a law student but is vital to your future success as a lawyer. We will discuss time management also during individual conferences.

5) In addition to the above skills, or related to them, you will be required to complete several short self-reflection exercises and a mid-term review exercise. Your goal is to become an ever more skillful self-regulated learner who is constantly using feedback to accurately self-assess how well you know material, how well you can demonstrate that knowledge in exams or graded exercises for your courses (and later for the bar exam), and what you need to do to short term and long-term to improve your knowledge and your skills.

**Workload Expectations:** All assignments in the Mastery course are tailored to complement your doctrinal courses. Everything you do for the Mastery class is rooted in doctrinal material and developing the skills necessary for law school success (and eventually to pass the bar exam). Every assignment represents a task you should be doing for your doctrinal courses regardless of whether this was explicitly assigned in your doctrinal course. Thus, there are few if any requirements for the Mastery class that take you beyond the workload expectations for achieving success in your doctrinal courses.

**Individual Conferences:** Two Individual meetings are required. You will sign up for a time using the TWEN sign-up sheet. You are ALWAYS welcome to schedule additional conferences, which is highly desirable.

**In conclusion: You would not have been admitted to SIU Law if you were not fully capable of succeeding in law school and later passing the bar. I look forward to helping you achieve law school success to your fullest potential and getting to know each of you through my coaching work associated with this course. See you soon!**

#### **Additional school policies and procedures:**

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** *We ask that you become familiar with **Emergency Preparedness @ SIU**. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, on the Emergency Preparedness @ SIU website, and through text and email alerts. To register for alerts, visit: <http://emergency.siu.edu/>.*

**DISABILITY POLICY.** *SIU Carbondale is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible experience for all students with disabilities. Disability Support Services coordinates the implementation of accommodations. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but have not yet obtained approval please contact DSS immediately at 618-453-5738 or [disabilityservices.siu.edu](http://disabilityservices.siu.edu). You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to insure accommodations are in place when needed. Accommodations and services are determined through an interactive process with students and may involve consideration of specific course design and learning objectives in consultation with faculty. Upon completion of a Disability Accommodation Agreement with DSS, students should bring the agreements for each course to the School of Law Registrar's Office to ensure the School of Law provides the proper classroom and examination accommodations. Accommodation [request](#) and [renewal](#) forms can be found here: <https://law.siu.edu/academics/>.*

**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) 453-2461, or [siucares@siu.edu](mailto: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](mailto:judiray@siu.edu), and her phone number is 618-453-3135.

**COVID-19.** As a condition of on-campus enrollment, all SIUC students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19, including the requirement that all students wear a mask in campus buildings, including classrooms, laboratories, and studios when others are present, regardless of social distancing. Students are expected to follow physical or social distancing guidelines by keeping at least 6 feet from others, and practicing good hand hygiene. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the current class session. If the student refuses to leave the classroom after being dismissed, the student may be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. SIUC will follow federal, state and county public health recommendations and mandates in all decisions relating to university operation. Students should regularly review the link for the [SIUC COVID-19 response](#).

**Tentative Mastery Class Schedule:**

<b>WEEK/DAY</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE (prior to class, in TWEN)</b>
Week 1 – Aug. 17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reading &amp; Briefing Cases</li> <li>2. Note-taking</li> <li>3. Time Management Reminders</li> <li>4. Attitudes for success</li> </ol>	First eligible briefs and due dates announced (brief to be uploaded before doctrinal class for which the reading was assigned)
Week 2 – Aug. 24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rule Synthesis &amp; Outlining</li> <li>2. Study Strategies for Long-term Retention</li> </ol>	Bring up-to-date notes for named course(s); Second assigned brief due dates announced
Week 3 – Aug. 31	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outlining Exercise</li> <li>2. Issue Spotting + Rule Statement (hypo)</li> </ol>	Bring up-to-date notes for named course(s); Upload outline for named course(s)
Week 4 – Sept. 7	NO CLASS THIS WEEK (Labor Day) Individual Conferences	<b>Schedule individual conference via TWEN sign-up sheet and...</b>
Week 5 – Sept. 14	NO CLASS THIS WEEK Individual Conferences	<b>Upload your reflection exercise to TWEN the day PRIOR to the meeting - Bring to conference your revised weekly plan</b>
Week 6 – Sept. 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IRAC-style Analysis</li> <li>2. Application of Rule to Facts</li> <li>3. Self-assessing</li> </ol>	Upload written answer for hypo posted
Week 7 – Sept. 28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparing for Exams</li> <li>2. Practice Essay Problem</li> <li>3. Multiple choice strategies</li> </ol>	Essay question(s) to be answered and uploaded to TWEN <b>before</b> start of class – bring also hard copy to class

Week 8 – Oct. 5	NO CLASS THIS WEEK	Mid-Term Exams (??)
Week 9 – Oct. 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exam Review</li> <li>2. Revising study plans</li> </ol>	Reflection exercise due before class; bring current study plan
Week 10 – Oct. 19	<p>NO CLASS</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Individual Conferences – Round 1</p> <p>Priority given and early conference required for those who score lowest on mid-terms</p>	Schedule Individual Conference via TWEN sign up sheet
Week 11 – Oct. 26	TBD IF WE WILL MEET AS A CLASS – POSSIBLY OPTIONAL SIMULATED EXAM EXPERIENCE	Exam review exercise due. Practice questions Individual conferences
Week 12 – Nov. 2	<p>Practice Essays</p> <p>Multiple Choice Questions</p>	<p>MC questions exercise</p> <p>Practice essay questions</p> <p>Individual conferences</p>
Week 13 – Nov. 9	<p>VETERAN’S DAY WEEK (NO CLASS)</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Individual Conferences concluded this week</p>	<b>Schedule Individual Conference via TWEN sign up sheet</b>
Week 14 – Nov. 16	TBD IF WE WILL MEET AS A CLASS – POSSIBLY OPTIONAL SIMULATED EXAM EXPERIENCE	Practice questions
Week 15	THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASSES)	
Weeks 16-17	FINAL EXAMS DEC. 1 – DEC. 11	