

ADVANCED LEGAL METHODS

INSTRUCTOR: Anna M. Vick
E-MAIL: anna.vick@siu.edu
OFFICE: Lesar Law Building, Room 226
OFFICE HOURS:

REQUIRED TEXT: There is an online course site for this class. You can access the course site at <https://barbri.matrixlms.com/>.

MEETING TIME: **Monday 1:30 p.m. to 2:20 p.m.**
Lesar Law Building, Room 251

Welcome! The primary goal of Advanced Legal Methods is to strengthen your legal problem-solving abilities. The course focuses on fundamental lawyering skills such as reading comprehension, rule mastery, issue spotting, outlining, the mechanics of legal analysis and strong writing. Throughout the course, you will have multiple opportunities for hands-on practice with focused drills, group exercises and workbook activities to sharpen these skills. The course enhances learning by providing you with particularized feedback to learn how to evaluate your work and see a clear pathway for consistent improvement. The course connects the learning activities to law practice and, more immediately, to law school and bar exam success.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance to class meetings is expected and required of all students in accordance with the SIU School of Law rules. You are allowed a maximum of four (4) absences in this course. **Missing all or part of a class (showing up late/leaving early) or required individual meeting with the professor counts as missing all of the class minutes for that class.** Attendance will be taken in class and attendance records will be kept for one year. Violation of this attendance rule shall subject the student to the penalties found in Article III Sections 5(f)-(g).

Evaluation

This class is Pass/Fail. A passing grade (65% or higher) in this course will be based on all of the following:

1. Satisfactory and timely completion of **all** in-class assignments, exercises, and homework assignments;
2. Good faith completion of the Diagnostic;
3. The Midterm Exam;
4. The Final Exam;
5. Class Participation; and
6. Compliance with Attendance Policy

Class Participation (items 1., 2., 5., and 6.) will make up 40% of the final grade, the Midterm Exam will make up 20% of the final grade, and the Final Exam will make up 40% of the final grade.

Homework Assignments

Throughout the course, New Hires will complete and submit homework assignments and rewrites. Homework assignments will be submitted through the online course page and will be due **by the Sunday following the Monday class at 11:59 p.m. (For example, the “After Class” assignments for Monday, August 18, 2025 will be due Sunday, August 24, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.**

Workload Expectations

The American Bar Association (“ABA”) law-school-accreditation standards contain a formula for calculating the amount of work that constitutes one credit hour. According to ABA Standard 310, “a ‘credit hour’ is an amount of work that reasonably approximates 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.” This is a 2-credit hour class, meaning that we will spend two 50-minute blocks of time together each week. The amount of assigned reading and out-of-class preparation should take you a minimum of 4 hours for each week.

Plagiarism and Collaboration

You are to work on all exercises independently, but you may discuss course work; share and discuss ideas, authorities, and concepts; and, read and critique another student’s course work.

Any acts of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the Simmons Law School Honor Code and Simmons Law Rules.

Electronic Devices: Please use responsibly. Don’t be a distraction to your fellow classmates.

Course Schedule

(Please note that some of these assignments will occur outside of the classroom in lieu of an in-class meeting. Stay tuned in to D2L for announcements regarding the schedule.)

Class	Objectives and Exercises	Assignments
<p>Week One: Introduction to the Law Firm Model</p> <p>Monday August 18, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday August 20, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will be exposed to the following fundamental lawyering skills that are required for the performance of many lawyering tasks as identified in the “Statement of Fundamental Lawyering Skills” from <i>Legal Education and Professional Development: An Educational Continuum, Report of the Task Force on Law Schools and the Profession: Narrowing the Gap</i>, known as the MacCrate Report (ABA 1992): • Sort detailed factual materials and separate relevant from irrelevant facts; • Analyze statutory, case, and administrative materials for applicable principles of law; • Apply the relevant law to the relevant facts in a manner likely to resolve a client’s problem; • Identify and resolve ethical dilemmas, when present; 	<p>After the conclusion of the first class, New Associates will complete the following assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete Diagnostic Test. Submit via D2L by Sunday, August 24, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. 2. Read <i>PNC Bank Corp. v. Workers’ Compensation Appeal Board</i> 3. Read <i>Dacunzo v. Edgye</i> 4. Complete Week One Homework. Submit via D2L by Sunday, August 24, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively in writing; and • Complete a lawyering task within time constraints. <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class 1 Exercise—Problem Solve Like a Law Firm 	
<p>Week Two: Reading and Case Briefing</p> <p>Monday August 25, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday August 27, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will identify the relevant facts and the legal issues as they arise in a variety of contexts. ☑ New Associates will read legal authorities critically and synthesize the applicable rules, standards, and policies from those authorities. <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class 2—Initial Reading Speed and Comprehension Exercise 2. <i>PNC Bank Corp. v. Workers’ Compensation Appeal Board</i> 3. <i>PNC Bank Corp. v. Workers’ Compensation Appeal Board</i> (Sample Case Brief) 4. <i>Dacunzo v. Edgye</i> 5. <i>Dacunzo v. Edgye</i> (Sample Case Brief) 	<p>After the conclusion of the second class, New Associates will complete the following assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete Post-Reading Strategies Exercise for <i>Blue v. Blue</i>. Submit via D2L by August 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. 2. Read <i>Gardner v. Gardner</i> 3. Complete case brief for <i>Gardner v. Gardner</i>. Submit via D2L by August 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. 4. Read <i>Hagerty v. Hagerty</i> 5. Complete case brief for <i>Hagerty v. Hagerty</i>. Submit via D2L by August 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Law Firm Memo on Best Practices for Reading 7. <i>Blue v. Blue</i> 8. <i>Blue v. Blue</i> (Sample Case Brief) 9. Law Firm Memo on Best Practices for Case Briefing 	
<p>Week Three: Note Taking Monday September 1, 2025 LABOR DAY—NO CLASS</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday September 3, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will prepare case briefs, including the components of facts, issue statement, legal rules, holding, and court’s reasoning. ☑ New Associates will develop effective techniques for taking notes. ☑ New Associates will generate research questions based on limited information to help them resolve legal issues with a predictive mindset. <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Gardner v. Gardner</i> 2. <i>Gardner v. Gardner</i> (Sample Case Brief) 3. <i>Hagerty v. Hagerty</i> 4. <i>Hagerty v. Hagerty</i> (Sample Case Brief) 5. Video clip of CLE presentation (https://youtu.be/dtKBtgqs9Rk) 	<p>After the conclusion of the third class, New Associates will complete the following assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-Client Interview Questions (New Associates should complete this exercise before reading the assigned readings). Submit via D2L by Sunday, September 7, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. 2. Read Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act § 307. 3. Read and brief <i>Ketterle v. Ketterle</i>. Submit via D2L by Sunday, August 7, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.

	<p>6. Law Firm Memo on Best Practices for Note Taking</p> <p>7. Law Firm Memo on Note Taking Self-Assessment</p>	
<p>Week Four: Live Client Interview Monday September 8, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday September 10, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will generate additional research questions to help them resolve legal issues. ☑ New Associates will practice effective communication skills and improve their cross cultural competency by participating in a live client interview simulation. ☑ New Associates will begin learning best practices of drafting a legal memorandum. <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Client Interviewing Background Information for Instructors 2. <i>Arneault v. Arneault</i> 3. <i>Arneault v. Arneault</i> (Sample Case Brief) 4. W. Va. Code 48-7-103 5. Legal Memorandum Exercise (Week 4 Homework) 	<p>After the conclusion of the fourth class, the New Associates will complete the following assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legal Memorandum Exercise. Submit via D2L by Sunday, September 14, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.
<p>Week Five: Best Practices for Legal Memorandum</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p>	<p>After the conclusion of the fifth class, the New Associates will</p>

<p>Monday September 15, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday September 17, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will learn (or re-familiarize themselves with) best practices for drafting a legal memorandum. ☑ New Associates will practice matching relevant facts to specific requirements in a multi-factor statute. ☑ New Associate will practice effective written communication skills by reviewing the Week 4 Homework exercise and completing the in-class written exercise <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legal Memorandum Exercise (Week 4 Homework) 2. Class 5 Legal Memorandum and Week 4 Homework Review Handout—Student Edition 3. Class 5 Legal Memorandum and Week 4 Homework Review Handout —Teacher Edition 4. Class 5 PowerPoint Deck 5. Law Firm Memo on Best Practices for Drafting Legal Memorandum 	<p>complete the following assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finish the Class 5 Legal Memorandum and Week 4 Homework Review Handout (if not finished during the Training Meeting). Submit via D2L by Sunday, September 21, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. 2. Review for practice midterm examination
<p>Week Six: Midterm Preview</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p>	<p>None</p>

<p>Monday September 22, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday September 24, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will complete a midterm-like exercise under timed, test-like conditions in advance of next week's midterm examination. ☑ New Associates will practice the skills learned in the previous training meetings (reading effectively; briefing cases; taking notes; developing key questions to resolve legal issues; drafting legal memorandum) to respond to a midterm-like exercise. <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-class Practice MPT Exercise (<i>Bohmer v. Bohmer</i>) 2. In-class Practice MPT Exercise (<i>Bohmer v. Bohmer</i>)—Sample Response 3. Class 6 PowerPoint Deck (with additional teaching notes) 	
<p>Week Seven: Midterm</p> <p>Monday September 29, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday October 1, 2025</p>	<p>Midterm</p>	
<p>Week Eight: Midterm Review</p> <p>Monday October 6, 2025</p> <p>and</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ New Associates will continue to practice the skills learned in the previous training meetings (reading effectively; briefing 	<p>In preparation for the following Associate Meeting, which will examine multiple-choice test-taking strategies, the New Associates will review a short outline on intentional torts (seven</p>

**Wednesday
October 8, 2025**

**1L FORMATIVE
ASSESSMENTS**

cases; taking notes; developing key questions to resolve legal issues; drafting legal memorandum) to respond to a legal problem.

- ☑ New Associates will continue to practice (i) strengthening their ability to identify legally significant facts in the File and (ii) connecting those facts to the specific rules to which they pertain.

Meeting Materials:

1. Midterm Review Workbook

pages total). A solid understanding of the information contained in the Torts outline will be necessary to tackle effectively the questions in the next meeting.

**Week Nine: Multiple Choice
Strategies
Monday
October 13, 2025
Out of Class Assignment**

**Wednesday
October 15, 2025**

Learning Objectives:

- ☑ Learn a systematic problem-solving approach to more effectively answer multiple-choice questions.
- ☑ Practice identifying legally significant facts that touch or concern a relevant rule.
- ☑ Understand the concept of priming and the ways in which priming is likely to impact how individuals problem solve.

Meeting Materials:

1. In-class Exercise Handout—Student Edition
2. Homework Exercise

The New Associates will complete multiple-choice questions by working through the systematic problem-solving approach. The homework assignment will work the New Associates through the major steps of answering multiple-choice questions systematically, similar to the in-class exercise that they complete during this training session. Submit via D2L by Sunday, October 19, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.

**Week Ten: PCV Law Firm
Exercise**

**Monday
October 20, 2025**

and

**Wednesday
October 22, 2025**

New Associates will practice the following skills in the context of a challenging real-life client problem:

- ☑ How to research and digest rules from unfamiliar areas of law;
- ☑ How to issue spot by using the call of the question to direct your search for issues, with special emphasis on uncovering issues by examining facts through asking questions;
- ☑ How to separate relevant from irrelevant facts by using questions to scrutinize facts;
- ☑ How to use relevant facts to uncover and frame issues and to set forth effective arguments for and against a given outcome;
- ☑ How to organize research to produce effective fact-driven analysis that is fully responsive to the call of the question;
- ☑ How to issue spot, including how to effectively use questions to separate relevant from irrelevant facts and find and frame issues; and

The New Associates will draft and submit a memorandum of law that addresses the client's legal question making the strongest arguments on the client's behalf (persuasive). The New Associates should draft the memorandum based on who they were representing during the in-class exercise. In other words, half of the New Associates will represent the defendant corporation, and half of the New Associates will represent the plaintiff.

The New Associates should upload their responses on D2L by Sunday, October 26, 2025 by 11:59 p.m. and bring a hard copy of the memo to the next training meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☑ How to effectively and efficiently communicate your analysis. <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In-class Exercise Handout—Student Edition	
<p>Week Eleven: Counterarguments and Oral Arguments</p> <p>Monday October 27, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday October 29, 2025</p>	<p>New Associates will practice the following skills in the context of the piercing the corporate veil client problem that the New Associates worked on during the prior week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">☑ Prime New Associates for further essay writing instruction☑ Engage New Associates in the practice of legal reasoning☑ Introduce basic argument structure, including a brief focus on how to organize and explain ideas, how strong legal reasoning tends to incorporate counter-analysis, etc.☑ Demonstrate how to communicate a position effectively and appropriately☑ Facilitate New Associates collaboration and interaction as an integral part of problem-solving	<p>In class, New Associates should draft an objective analysis to this exercise that incorporates arguments both for and against the plaintiff so they can advise the client properly. However, if the New Associates need more time, they should finish drafting their response for homework.</p> <p>In addition, the New Associates should draft a letter addressed to the client (either the plaintiff or the defendant corporation) that sufficiently but concisely explains the client's options using an appropriate tone and language (no more than 4 pages). Submit via D2L by Sunday, November 2, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.</p>

	<p>Meeting Materials:</p> <p>There are no new materials for this training meeting. However, the New Associates should bring hard copies of their memorandum submitted as homework to swap with their partners. Since this week's exercise is based on the piercing the corporate exercise from the prior week, the Senior Partner and the New Associates should have a copy of that exercise for reference.</p>	
<p>Week Twelve: MPT</p> <p>Monday November 3, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday November 5, 2025</p>	<p>This training meeting begins the final series of classes that gear the New Associates for the end-of-the-semester final examination, which will consist of one MPT question and a series multiple-choice questions that focus on multiple-choice test-taking skills and strategies.</p> <p>Meeting Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MPT—<i>In Re Field Hogs, Inc.</i>—Test Packet 	<p>For homework, the New Associates will rewrite their response to <i>In re Field Hogs</i> without the pressures of time or test-like conditions. Submit via D2L by Sunday, November 9, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
<p>Week Thirteen: MPT Review and Final Exam Prep</p> <p>Monday November 10, 2025</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday November 12, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Briefly remind New Associates of some of the important MPT steps/strategies ☑ Simulate and guide New Associates through some new MPT challenges ☑ Briefly review each challenge 	<p>No homework is assigned so that New Associates can prepare for the upcoming individual meeting with the Senior Partner (in lieu of a Week 14 associate training) and the subsequent final examination.</p> <p>A released MPT along with a sample response will be posted on D2L so that New Associates will have another opportunity to</p>

		practice and familiarize themselves with the MPT.
Week Fourteen: Final Exam Monday November 17, 2025 And Wednesday November 19, 2025		

SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT
SIU SIMMONS LAW SCHOOL – Fall 2025

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. The Office of Access and Accommodations, formerly 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 OAA immediately at 618-453-5738 or disabilityservices.siu.edu. You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to ensure 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. Please send approved accommodations to your faculty through the DSS online portal.

SALUKI CARES and COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS). 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, <https://salukicare.siu.edu/>. Associate Dean Shelia Simon ssimon@siu.edu or (618) 536-8321 is available at the Simmons Law School to help students access university resources. Additionally, counseling services are available through CAPS ([Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\) | Student Health Services | SIU](#)). A counselor is at the law school every Wednesday from noon until 4:30pm in Room 268 for drop-in appointments.

SAFETY AWARENESS FACTS AND EDUCATION Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or

someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

<http://safe.siu.edu>

