



LAW 537-3 Trial Advocacy Fall 2025

Meeting Time and Place: TTH 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. /LC 108
Course Credit Hours: 3 Credit Hours

FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION: Professor Shelly Page Cheryl.page@siu.edu
Office Hours: MW 9:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.; TTh 12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.
Office: 210 Phone: 618-453-8120
Please Call Me for Any Additional Appointments Outside of These Times

COURSE DESCRIPTION: THIS COURSE AIMS to develop the foundational skills necessary to attempt a bench trial and a jury trial in a courtroom setting. This trial advocacy course will focus exclusively on those skills. This course provides students with practical instruction and experience in the skills essential to trial practice. Through a combination of lectures, demonstrations, and simulated courtroom exercises, students will develop proficiency in case theory, jury selection, opening statements, direct and cross-examination, the use of exhibits, expert testimony, and closing arguments. Emphasis will be placed on strategic thinking, ethical considerations, and the application of rules of evidence in the courtroom.

Students will perform weekly exercises and receive individualized feedback from experienced faculty and practitioners.

This is a performance-based course with mandatory attendance and active participation.

I. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

There are three course objectives: 1) to achieve mastery of basic trial skills, including case analysis, opening statement, closing argument, direct and cross-examinations, and the admission of various types of physical and testimonial evidence; 2) to try at least two phases of a case in an actual adversarial courtroom setting; and 3) to develop confidence in public speaking, courtroom procedures, and the use of physical evidence. Additionally, students will be able to critique the adversarial system for its ability to provide equitable access to justice.

II. **REQUIRED READING- TEXTS/MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE:** TRIAL AND TECHNIQUES AND TRIALS. MAUET AND EASTON. 12TH EDITION. ASPEN.

III. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSESSMENT (LEARNING OUTCOMES), AND EVALUATION METHODS:** Specific skill goals include the following:

1. Students will master the following **case analysis** skills:
 - a. Identify the elements of a reported opinion: procedural facts, legally relevant facts, issues, holdings, reasons and policies, legal rules, and disposition.
 - b. Synthesize a line of related opinions.
2. Students will master the following legal **problem-solving** skills:
 - a. Identify legal issues in simple and complex fact situations.
 - b. Identify the relevant legal authority and policy.
 - c. Identify potential alternatives to achieve the client's goal.
3. Students will be able to make an **effective legal argument** by:
 - a. Identifying the legal issues.
 - b. Identifying the relevant facts, authority, and policy.
 - c. Distinguishing unfavorable facts, authority, and policy.
4. Students will **draft legal documents** that communicate clearly, are persuasive, and comply with applicable rules.
5. Students will master the following **critical thinking** skills:
 - a. Evaluate cases, statutes, arguments, documents, and attorneys' actions and their effects on (1) clients, (2) the legal system, and (3) the community.
 - b. Evaluate the strategy and ethics of applying different types of laws and statutes to specific facts.
 - c. Challenge assumptions made by judges, legislators, attorneys, students, professors, and themselves.
6. Students will experience basic lawyering skills, such as fact investigation and oral argument.

Attendance and Tardiness

Class will begin promptly on the designated days and times. Please review the Law School's regulations on attendance and tardiness, as outlined in the Student Handbook; these will be strictly enforced. Please Note: **You will NOT be allowed to enter the classroom if you are more than 5 minutes late.** Please arrive at class on time.

Per the SH: No student may miss more than 20% of the scheduled class meetings in any course. This requirement IS NOT subject to modification by a professor. "Scheduled class meetings" is defined as the total number of classes that are established for a particular course, pursuant to the school calendar.

Class Preparation and Participation

Class preparation and participation are **essential** to the learning process. The final grade may be reduced by one step (e.g., B- to C+) due to insufficient class participation. In this regard, students will be called on at random to engage in discussion or answer questions.

Cellular Phones

Cellular telephones, all electronic devices, electronic timers, watch alarms, etc. must be turned off during class.

GRADING:

Participation 10%, Written Assignments 40%, Practicums/Lab 40%, Self Evaluation 2%, Final Brief 8%

The SIU School of Law has adopted a credit hour policy in compliance with ABA Standard 310. Under the policy, “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.” This is a 3-credit hour class, meaning that we will spend 3 hours together each week. All told, applying the ABA standard to the number of credits offered for this class, you should plan on spending a total of 9 hours per week on course-related work (3 in class and 6 outside of class).

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: The class may consist of students collaborating and working together on projects.

INFORMATION LITERACY/TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES: D2L and TWEN may be utilized in the classroom.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

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>

COURSE STRUCTURE:

Class #	Date	Page
1	8/19	1-30 (Trial Process/Persuasion)
2	8/21	31-72 (Jury Selection)
3	*8/26	73-107 (Opening Statements)
4	*8/28	109-162 (Direct Examination)
5	*9/2	Video
6	9/4	Practicum
7	9/9	Practicum
8	9/11	162-198 (Direct)
9	9/16	Practicum
10	9/18	199-250 (Cross Examination)
11	9/23	Practicum
12	9/25	250-272 (Cross)
13	9/30	Practicum
14	10/2	272-314 (Exhibits)
15	10/7	Practicum
16	10/9	314-353 (Exhibits)
17	10/14	Practicum

18	10/16	353-379 (Exhibits)
19	10/21	Practicum
20	10/23	381-435 (Experts)
21	10/28	Practicum
22	10/30	437-483 (Closing Arguments)
23	11/4	Practicum
24	11/6	483-526 (Closing Arguments/Objections)
25	11/13	Practicum
26	11/18	527-575 Practicum (Objections/Trial Notebook/Jury Issues)
27	11/20	575-609 Practicum (Trial Strategy/Bench Trial)

My office is 210 on the second floor. My telephone number is 618-453-8120. Please drop in or call me if you have questions or need to discuss something with me. You may also email mail with questions at cheryl.page@siu.edu. Feel free to contact me at this email address or stop by my office.

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE, ALTER AND/OR AMEND THIS SYLLABUS, AS NECESSARY. STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED IN WRITING AND/OR BY EMAIL OF ANY SUCH REVISIONS, ALTERATIONS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.