

SIU School of Law
LAW-609-001 & 002
Writing for the Bar Exam
Fall 2025/ 2 credit hours/ in-person
Classroom 202
Tuesday or Thursday 10:30-12:20



Instructor and Contact Information:

Instructor name: Kelly Collinsworth

E-mail address: Kelly.collinsworth@siu.edu

Office location: Room 234

Office hours: I have an open-door policy. You may also book an appointment using my booking link. [Book a meeting with me](#) or by scanning the QR code above.

Course Description: This course is designed to prepare you for the multi-state performance test (MPT) component of the bar exam by focusing on skill development, timing, and test familiarity. Additionally, the class will begin review of MEE essays and the rule development needed for success on those problems.

Course Objective:

The Course Objective is for students to master the skills to perform well on the MPT:

“The MPT is designed to test an examinee’s ability to use fundamental lawyering skills in a realistic situation and complete a task that a beginning lawyer should be able to accomplish. The MPT is not a test of substantive knowledge. Rather, it is designed to evaluate certain fundamental skills lawyers are expected to demonstrate regardless of the area of law in which the skills are applied.” <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpt>. Further, students will develop the skill of self-evaluating their own writing, to support their success during bar study and in practice.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Recognize and apply the appropriate structure of the various MPT task types.
- Use appropriate structure for each style of analysis needed for the MPT task types.
- Create clear section headings and substantive headings, as appropriate.
- Have thorough and efficient use of all sources of authority in the MPT library.
- Have thorough and efficient use of all relevant facts in the MPT file.
- Create a strong, fact-driven legal analysis that is responsive to the question(s) asked.
- Organize a subject matter outline for a bar subject that can be responsive to a number of MEE style questions.

Course Materials

✓ Class materials will either be posted on D2L or handed out in class.

Course Delivery

The course will require completion of weekly out-of-class assignments, in-class lectures, group work, individual assignments, and a substantial individual project with presentation.

Course Workload:

ABA standards incorporate out of class work in the calculation of credit hours. Under the ABA standards, **you should expect to spend at least 85 hours for work in and outside of class in this course.**

Course Evaluation/Grading

Grading for this class is on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. To achieve a satisfactory grade for this class, you must earn at least a **70%** for this class. There will be no final exam in this course. Your grade in this course will be based on all of the following:

Weekly assignments:	60%
Graded MPT 1:	10%
Graded MPT 2:	15%
MEE rule project & presentation:	15%

A note about grading: Many assignments are graded for “completion credit.” Assignments that are for completion credit are not a guarantee that *any* submission will earn full points. For example, a blank document or an unrelated file will not earn points. Similarly, a submission that does not reflect that the student used the structures and strategies from class, or a submission where the student did not follow instructions, will not earn full credit. If you have questions about how to earn the full completion credit for any of the completion assignments, please ask! I want to help make sure each student has the knowledge and tools to succeed in class.

A note about weekly assignments: During the course of the semester, you will be tasked with completion of multiple out of class MPT exams. After completing the exam on your own, you will be required to review a model answer and then self-evaluate your own work in comparison to the model answer. One of the main recommendations for students preparing for the bar exam is to complete a minimum of 7 to 8 MPTs during the course of your study. During the summer bar study, BarBri only assigns two MPTS as part of your course requirements. It is unlikely you will have time to get enough practice during bar study to become comfortable completing MPTS. That is why your weekly assignments will focus on completion and review of practice MPTs. As such, you should regard these homework assignments as you would if you were studying for a final exam.

Reading and Homework Assignments

You are expected to complete the reading and homework assignments **prior to each class**. These assignments will be posted on D2L. Your professor reserves the right to change assignments with sufficient notice.

Policy for Missed or Late Work & Class Preparation

Due dates for every assignment will be posted on D2L. Law is all about deadlines. Missing deadlines, being unprepared for class, or missing meetings can have dire consequences for your clients and for you (malpractice, loss of respect from the court, discipline from the bar association.) **Late work will not receive full credit unless prior approval is given.** That approval will only be granted in extreme circumstances that are clearly beyond your control. *Preparation* for class means reading the assigned readings, completing practice MPTS and self-evaluations, & reviewing all information required for that week.

Student courtesy policy: The classroom is a shared space where consideration and compassion for others are not negotiable.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected. You are allowed **up to two absences** for any reason, without penalty. Those exceeding the maximum number of absences will be subject to the ramifications described in the Law School's attendance policy. See School of Law Rules III.5 (f)-(g).

An excerpt from SIU Law's Attendance Policy is below:

Regular Attendance. In accordance with ABA Standard 308(a), the right to take exams, as well as the privilege of continuing as a student at the School of Law, is conditioned on regular attendance and satisfactory completion of coursework. . . *If the absences allowed under this provision have been exhausted, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may grant leave and relief from the regular attendance requirement in extraordinary circumstances.* . . The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will not grant leave from the rules requiring regular attendance unless the request shows extraordinary circumstances or an unavoidable circumstance. If leave is not granted, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will discuss with the student options for withdrawing from a course and retaking in a future semester. [amended 4/19/11; 11/18/22; 5/13/24] (emphasis added).

Law School Honor Code and University Code of Conduct. Both the Honor Code and the Code of Conduct apply and are in effect in this class. Read both documents carefully and make sure you comply with both at all times. *Submitting plagiarized work or any other form of work not your own*, regardless of a student's purpose or intent, is potentially subject to serious sanctions as are other academic, honor code, and conduct code offenses. Do not consult others on the final work product you turn in. If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code, Code of Conduct or either's application, consult me.

Additional University & Law School Policies – See D2L under the Syllabus content tab.

TENTATIVE COURSE TOPIC SCHEDULE – subject to change.
Please check D2L for assignments & topic updates.

Week	Class Topic
Week 1 August 19 or 21	Introduction to the MPT and a basic approach to attacking the problem.
Week 2 August 26 or 28	Understanding the task memo; setting up a template.
Week 3 September 2 or 4	Rule extraction
Week 4 September 9 or 11	Rule synthesis; understanding statutes; Extracting precedent facts from the library
Week 5 September 16 or 18	Extracting relevant file facts and applying
Week 6 September 23 or 25	Analogical reasoning, statutory interpretation
Week 7 September 30 or Nov. 2	MPT #1 in class or as otherwise scheduled.
Week 8 October 7 or 9	Walk-through MPT #1
Week 9 October 14 or 16	Discussion of final project research
Week 10 October 21 or 23	Other common MPT problems
Week 11 October 28 or 30	Dealing with the uncommon MPT problems.
Week 12 November 4 or 6	MPT #2 in class or as otherwise scheduled.
Week 13 Nov. 11 Campus holiday Thursday (Thursday class should attend on Tuesday or watch recording)	MPT #2 walk through/ Final project review
Week 14 November 18 or 20	Final project presentations