

**SYLLABUS**  
**ADVANCED LEGAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES**  
**LAW 639 (all sections)**  
**FALL 2023**

**Class times:** (all sections in Room 103)

Section 1 Monday in person, 1:30-2:20, Wednesday assignment/release time

Section 2 Tuesday in person 1:30-2:20, Thursday assignment/release time

Section 3 Tuesday in person 3:00-3:50, Thursday assignment/release time

Additionally, there will be three required individual conferences (noted on the weekly schedule).

**Recommended text:**

Wanda M. Temm, *Clearing the Last Hurdle: Mapping Success on the Bar Exam* (Wolters Kluwer, 2021). ISBN 9781543807431

Additional materials for some assignments will be distributed in class or TWEN, as well as supplemental readings, hand-outs, and review packets.

**Learning objectives:**

Cognitive: students will have a firm understanding of the major components of bar examinations, including how to successfully plan and organize answers, structure study time, and assess their independent strengths, as well as areas of challenge, to use in developing a plan for passing state bar exams;

Affective: students will appreciate the importance of minimizing personal distractions and completing the commercial preparation course materials during the eight week exam preparation period, and develop a plan of study that will result in passage on the first attempt; and

Psychomotor: students will be able to compose properly formatted and structured essays and MPT's under loosely timed conditions after practicing and reviewing essay and MPT questions and answers.

Professional: students will reflect on why they came to law school, reaffirming their purpose in practicing law and continue developing their own professional identity.

**Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory for the first class session each week, as well as three individual conferences. Each student is allowed two absences, as it will be difficult to keep pace in the course without attending the weekly scheduled class meetings. If you need to miss class for any reason, please stop by my office to go over the content you missed in class. Please note that if you miss a class, it is often impossible to duplicate the group work and other exercises that take place during class, and that will assist your ability to pass a bar examination on the first attempt.

**Assignments:**

You will be writing essays and MPTs, as well as taking multiple-choice questions, similar to the MBE exam. We will be doing some of these assignments in class, and reviewing

model answers, and you will also be completing some of these assignments outside of class, and getting input through individual conferences. For readings assigned in the *Clearing the Last Hurdle* textbook, you do not need to prepare any exercises found in that text. Written assignments are specified separately below.

**Big picture details:**

August: Planning to pass the bar exam on the first attempt, clearing the decks

September: MPTs

October: Essays and memorizing

November: Multiple-choice questions (MBE) and stress management

**Grading and minimum requirements:**

This is a pass/fail course, but you must pass every assignment in order to pass the course. Your professor will have full discretion to determine whether you have satisfactorily completed each assessed assignment or need to re-do it. If you find yourself confused or uncertain as you work on the assignments, make talking to your professor a matter of urgency.

This course is a two credit hour course. The American Bar Association standards require you to spend at least six hours of your time each week on the course. The in person classroom component is scheduled for fifty minutes each week, so you will spend approximately five hours outside of class sessions reading and preparing, doing all online individual and partner assignments and exercises with weekly submissions, and attending individual conferences.

**Working together:**

Feel free to discuss the topics raised in class with your peers, and studying in pairs or groups for this course is encouraged. There will be a process-oriented, scaffolded approach to skill building such that each skill will launch in class in groups, followed by paired work on the skill, which concludes with the individual/independent phase. The only exception to working together is the independent practice phase will only be beneficial as learning exercises if they are done independently. Any copying of written assignments from a classmate for the independent practice phase would violate the law school's honor code. If you have questions about this, please see your professor.

**Class participation:**

This is a small section, specifically designed to provide the individualized attention and focus needed to help you in your bar passage journey. It will be difficult to do your best and learn the skills you need for the bar preparation period if time during class is spent in electronic grazing. Full participation in class, including the group exercises, will be key to doing well.

**Recording:**

Class sessions will not be recorded. Students may not record the class session without the professor's permission. If you need a recording of a class session due to some exceptional circumstance, please see your professor for permission.

**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 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. 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.

**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), <https://salukicare.siu.edu/>. Assistant Dean Judi Ray is available at the School of Law to help students access university resources. Please email her at [judiray@siu.edu](mailto:judiray@siu.edu), or call 618- 453-3135.

**COVID-19:**

SIUC's policy on face masks and social distancing is consistent with the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Illinois Department of Public Health. For up-to-date information, students, faculty, and staff should visit SIUC's COVID website (<https://siu.edu/coronavirus>), which includes the Saluki Safety Plan. People can also send email to [pandemicinfor@siu.edu](mailto:pandemicinfor@siu.edu).

**Class schedule:**

**Week 1**

Aug. 21-22 in person class topic: Beginnings and Clearing the Deck

Prepare for class: Read p. 1-11; 113-117

Aug. 23-24: complete and submit Clear the Decks Inventory

**Week 2**

Aug. 28-29 in person class topic: Having a Plan

Prepare for class: Read p. 25-39

Aug. 30-31: complete and submit Bar Scavenger exercise

**Week 3**

Sept. 5-7 T-Th individual clearing the deck conferences

Sept. 6-7: Review MPT primer materials

**Week 4**

Sept. 11-12 in person class topic: MPTs: What are they Testing and General Tips

Prepare for class: Read p. 61-89

Sept. 13-14: review sample MPT files, libraries, model answers

**Week 5**

Sept. 18-19 in person class topic: Writing MPT's (in class simulation, beginning MPT #1 in pairs)

Sept. 20-21 group work exercise: MPT #1 finish in pairs and submit

**Week 6**

Sept. 22-26 in person class topic: Writing MPTs (in class simulation, beginning MPT#2 in pairs)

Sept. 27-28 group work exercise: MPT #2 finish in pairs and submit

**Week 7**

Oct. 2-3 MPT: In class simulation on MPT#3 under timed conditions and submit

Oct. 4-5: MPT #3 compare answer to model, complete reflection exercise and submit

**Week 8**

Oct. 9-12- conferences on MPT #3

**Week 9**

Oct. 16-17 in person class topic: Law School Exams v. Bar Essays

Prepare for class: Read p. 41-59

Oct. 18-19: Summary of how bar exam questions and answers differ from law school exams and submit

**Week 10**

Oct. 23-24 in person class topic: Writing Essays

Prepare for class: Reread p. 41-59

Oct. 25-26: paired essay exercise and submit Essay #1 for review

**Week 11**

Oct. 30-31 in person class topic: Memorizing: What and How

Prepare for class: Read p. 13-23

Nov. 1-2: Summary of what memorization techniques you have used in the past, how useful those strategies were, and what new techniques you will try in the bar preparation period, complete and submit essay #2 independent work

**Week 12**

Nov. 6-9 Individual conferences on essay # 2

Nov. 8-9: Review material in preparation for MBE session in next week's class

**Week 13**

Nov. 13-14 in person class topic: MBE: General tips and strategies, autopsy technique

Prepare for class: Read p. 91-100

Nov. 15-16: submit autopsy results and generate questions for alums

**Week 14**

Nov. 27-28 in person class topic: Building Confidence and Final Thoughts (Q and A with alums)

Prepare for class: Read p. 101-111

Nov. 29-30: peruse SIU Wellness resources (in particular sleep, resilience, and stress) and write a summary of what resources you found helpful