

**SYLLABUS**  
**ADVANCED LEGAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES**  
**LAW 639 (all sections)**  
**SPRING 2024**

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

Section 1 Monday in person, 11:00-11:50, Wednesday assignment/release time

Section 4 Monday in person 1:30-2:20, Wednesday assignment/release time

Section 2 Tuesday in person 1:30-2:20, 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:**

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

February: MPTs

March: MEE essays and memorizing

April: 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.

**Class schedule:**

**Week 1**

Jan. 16 in person class topic: Beginnings and Clearing the Deck (students in Monday sections can attend either the Tuesday 1:30 session, or the additional make up session I will hold on Tuesday at 3:00)

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

Jan. 17-18: complete and submit Clear the Decks Inventory

**Week 2**

Jan. 22-23 in person class topic: Having a Plan

Prepare for class: Read p. 25-39

Jan. 24-25: complete and submit Bar Scavenger exercise

**Week 3**

Jan. 29-30 individual clearing the deck conferences

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: Review MPT primer materials

**Week 4**

Feb. 5-6 in person class topic: MPTs: What are they Testing and General Tips

Prepare for class: Read p. 61-89

Feb. 7-8: review sample MPT files, libraries, model answers

**Week 5**

Feb. 12-13 in person class topic: Writing MPT's (in class simulation, beginning MPT #1 in pairs)

Feb. 14-15 group work exercise: MPT #1 finish in pairs and submit

**Week 6**

Feb. 19-20 in person class topic: Writing MPTs (in class simulation, beginning MPT#2 in pairs)

Feb. 21-22 group work exercise: MPT #2 finish in pairs and submit

**Week 7**

Feb. 26-27: In class simulation on MPT#3 under timed conditions and submit

Feb. 28-29: MPT #3 compare answer to model, complete reflection exercise and submit

**Week 8**

March 4-7- conferences on MPT #3

**Week 9- Spring Break****Week 10**

March 18-19 in person class topic: Law School Exams v. Bar Essays

Prepare for class: Read p. 41-59

March 20-21: Summary of how bar exam questions and answers differ from law school exams and submit

**Week 11**

March 25-26 in person class topic: Writing Essays

Prepare for class: Reread p. 41-59

March 27-28: paired essay exercise and submit Essay #1 for review

**Week 12**

April 1-2 in person class topic: Memorizing: What and How

Prepare for class: Read p. 13-23

April 3-4: 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 13**

April 9-10 Individual conferences on essay # 2

April 10-11: Review material in preparation for MBE session in next week's class

**Week 14**

April 15-16 in person class topic: MBE: General tips and strategies, autopsy technique

Prepare for class: Read p. 91-100

April 17-18: submit autopsy results and generate questions for alums

**Week 15**

April 22-23 in person class topic: Building Confidence and Final Thoughts (Q and A with alums)

Prepare for class: Read p. 101-111

April 24-25: peruse SIU Wellness resources (in particular sleep, resilience, and stress) and write a summary of what resources you found helpful



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