COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers students an opportunity to learn directly from both scholars and practitioners about the art and science of legal practice. Students will participate in lectures, discussions, simulations, and other activities, using books, articles, supplemental readings, and video clips to explore specific aspects of law and legal practice. Through this process, students will be introduced to basic legal concepts and terms, as well as pertinent research from both the natural and social sciences, and will develop basic skills in writing and analysis. Students will be required to be active participants in class discussions, simulations, and activities and will complete several writing assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to be on time for all class sessions, which begin promptly at 2:00 p.m. On-campus class days consist of two sessions (of varying lengths) with a break between, while off-campus class days follow a more flexible schedule. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated; excused absences will require an additional, makeup assignment.

Students must be active and engaged participants in all class sessions. Students will be expected to interact with the legal practitioners that take part in the course and to participate in class discussions, simulations, and activities.

Students must complete assigned readings and homework assignments before each designated class session. Homework assignments will be posted online in Moodle and due on the dates notes below. Homework assignments will be completed in assigned groups of three or four students, posted online in Moodle. Grades will be based on comprehension, coherence, analytic rigor, usage and style, and conclusion.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following are required texts for this course and are available for purchase at the bookstore.


Other supplemental readings are available online via a Calvin College internet connection or as handouts.

SCHEDULE

For on-campus class days we will convene in DeVos Center 160, while for off-campus class days we will convene at the locations noted below.

Part I: Civil Procedure

January 6 – The Litigation Process [RV]


Session A
Course Overview/
Lecture: Litigation, Dispute Resolution, and Social Order
Randall Vogelzang, Esq. (’74)

Session B
Lecture: Litigation: A Brief Introduction
Craig Lubben, Esq. (’78) – Miller, Johnson, Snell & Cummiskey, P.L.C.
January 7 – Advocacy and Persuasion [EJ]


Session A
Class Exercise/
Lecture: The Social Psychology of Persuasion
Eric Jones, Ph.D.

Session B
Lecture: Effective Persuasion in Litigation
Ross Leisman, Esq. (’84) - Mika Meyers, PLC

January 8 – Digital Forensic Science and Electronic Discovery [RV]


Session A
Lecture: The Changing Face of Electronic Discovery
Mark van der Laan, Esq. (’79) - Dykema Gossett PLLC

Session B
Groups: Continue working on HOMEWORK #1

Part II: Criminal Procedure

January 11 – The Criminal Process [RV] [HOMEWORK #1 DUE]


Session A
Lecture: Criminal Procedure and the Role of the Judge
Hon. Kathy L. Hoogstra (’82) - Circuit Judge, Michigan 14th Judicial Circuit

Session B
Groups: Prepare for Jury Selection simulation

January 12 – Jury Selection [EJ]


Session A
Simulation/
Lecture: The Social Psychology of Jury Selection
Eric Jones, Ph.D.

Session B
Lecture: Jury Selection in Legal Practice
Mark Verwys, Esq. (’70) – Plunkett & Cooney, P.C.

January 13 – Jury Deliberation [EJ]


Session A
Simulation/
Lecture: The Social Psychology of Jury Deliberation
Eric Jones, Ph.D.

Session B
Class Discussion
Part III: Constitutional Law [JW]

January 14 (class meets downtown at the federal courthouse, 399 federal bldg., 110 michigan st. n.w. (#6 bus: lyon & ottawa)]


Session A
Presentation: Hon. Robert Jonker ('82) - U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan

Session B
Class Discussion

Part IV: Criminal Law

January 15 – Criminal Prosecution, Criminal Defense [JW]


Session A
Panel: The Practice of Criminal Law
   Danielle Walton, Esq. ('91) – Appellate Division, Oakland County Prosecutor’s Office
   Curtis Witte, Esq. ('79) – Damon, Ver Merris, Boyko & Witte, P.L.C.
   Tom Gezon, Esq. ('71) – Smietanka, Buckleitner, Steffes & Gezon

Session B
Groups: Continue working on HOMEWORK #2

January 18 – Eyewitness Testimony and Police Lineups [EJ] [HOMEWORK #2 DUE]


Session A
Simulation/
Lecture: Eyewitness Testimony and Police Lineups
   Eric Jones, Ph.D.

Session B
Class Discussion

January 19 – Credibility and Cross-Examination [EJ]


Session A
Simulation/
Lecture: Credibility and Lie Detection
   Eric Jones, Ph.D.

Session B
Panel: Credibility and Cross-Examination in Legal Practice
   Stanley Stek, Esq. ('74) – Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C.
   Perrin Rynders, Esq. ('82) – Varnum, Riddering, Schmidt & Howlett, L.L.P.

Part V: Contracts [JW]

January 20


Session A
Lecture: Contracts in Legal Practice
   Charles Ash, Esq. ('95) – Warner, Norcross & Judd LLP
**Part VI: Property** [JW]

*January 20 (cont’d)*


**Session B**

Panel: The Law and Practice of Real Property

Dale Rietberg, Esq. (’78) – Varnum, Riddering, Schmidt & Howlett, L.L.P.

Kenneth W. Vermeulen, Esq. (’86) – Barnes and Thornburg, L.L.P.

**Part VII: Torts** [RV]

*January 21 – Personal Injuries and Tort Law* [RV]


**Session A**

Panel: Tort Law in Legal Practice

Mark Verwys, Esq. (’70) – Plunkett & Cooney, P.C.

Robert Kamp, Esq. (’88) – Auto-Owners Insurance Company

**Session B**

Groups: Continue working on **HOMEWORK #3**

*January 22 – Bargaining and Tort Law* [JW]


**Session A**

Lecture: Negotiation in Litigation and Settlement

Nathaniel Knapper, Esq. (’08) – Michigan Attorney General’s Office

**Session B**

Simulation: Litigate or Settle?

Joel H. Westra, Ph. D.

*January 25 – Natural Science and Tort Law* [RV] [**HOMEWORK #3 DUE**]


**Session A**

Lecture: Expert Testimony in Legal Practice

Douglas P. VandenBerge, Esq. (’82) – Rhodes, McKee P.C.

**Part VIII: Conclusion**

*January 25 (cont’d) – Litigation and the Art of Legal Practice*

**Session B**

Lecture: Legal Practice: Fitting It All Together

Perrin Rynders, Esq. (’82) – Varnum, Riddering, Schmidt & Howlett, L.L.P.
January 26 – Alternatives to Litigation [RV]


Session A
Lecture: Alternative Dispute Resolution
Randall Vogelzang, Esq. (’74) – Calvin College
Jonathan Kok, Esq. (’97) – Warner, Norcross and Judd L.L.P.

Session B
Class Discussion/
Course Evaluations