

# SUMMER 2022 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## **ADVANCED LEGAL WRITING**

In this two-credit-hour course, students will further develop their legal analysis skills and practice communicating that analysis in writing. Students will receive considerable feedback in both areas. The class will analyze case law and statutory language. The writing will take several different forms, which could include a legal memo, client letter, trial brief and/or other MPT-favored formats.

## **ADVANCED TRIAL PRACTICE**

This course will deepen students' understanding of litigation techniques, permitting students to hone skills learned in the basic Trial Simulation course and learn new ones. Topics to be covered in the course include pre-trial preparation techniques and pre-trial motions; witness interviewing and witness preparation skills; advanced voir dire techniques; use of litigation technology; identifying and making objections; examining expert witnesses; and ethical issues facing trial attorneys.

## **BUSINESS PLANNING**

This course is designed to expose students to the advising of small business enterprises. Understanding the various planning and counseling techniques is the primary objective of the course. As a first step, the course will outline the various types of business enterprises and present the student with general considerations for choosing between a corporation and a partnership. These considerations include business, financial, tax, and other factors. Further, the tax factors are given in-depth treatment. Second, the course will consider the issues of enterprise valuation, allocation of managerial control, design of the capital structure, and the tax incidents of a proposed corporation within the context of a business problem. Third, the course will focus on the business planning associated with the continuing enterprise. The issues in this area include issuing new securities, stock dividend distributions, revaluation of assets, reduction of capital to create surplus, and the attendant tax aspects of the continuing enterprise. Finally, the course will consider the corporate and tax aspects incidental to the dissolution of a corporation. This problem will explore the various methods by which a corporation may be dissolved, the rights of creditors, the recognition and non-recognition of income, and the tax incidents to the shareholders of the liquidated corporation.

## **CIVIL EXTERNSHIP**

This course is specifically designed for students who have secured civil externships with various law firms and agencies that primarily focus on civil practice and civil litigation. Civil litigation is the process for resolving civil matters in a court of law. This course aims to familiarize students with the three phases of litigation: pre-trial, trial, and post-trial. In the course, students will explore the complexities of civil litigation through trial advocacy and practice. After taking the course, students will be conversant with the techniques for effective civil advocacy. The course instructor will support students during the externship. Students enrolled in Civil Externship (Law 908) must also enroll in the classroom component of the course (Law 932).

## **CRIMINAL EXTERNSHIP**

Students enrolled in the Criminal Law Externship program will earn 4 hours of experiential education course credits upon successful completion of their placement with the United States Attorney's Office; a State, County or Federal prosecutor's office; a State, County or Federal public defender's office; or a private criminal defense law firm. Students participate in criminal prosecution and criminal law litigation, conduct client interviews, participate in fact investigation inquiries, prepare pre-trial motions, and engage in trial preparation and litigation. Students enrolled in this externship may have the opportunity to apply for student-attorney bar cards from the State Bar of Texas. Students enrolled in the Criminal Externship (law 707) must also enroll in the classroom component of the course (Law 902).

## **EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION**

The course is an introductory employment discrimination law course. The course will cover at-will employment and Title VII discrimination (national origin, race, color, religion, sex). It will also cover topics such as pregnancy discrimination, sexual orientation discrimination, age discrimination, and disability discrimination.

## **FIREARMS AND THE SECOND AMENDMENT**

This seminar investigates constitutional rights to keep and bear arms in the United States. The seminar focuses on the Second Amendment — its history, its contested meaning over time, its role in politics, and, ultimately, its enforcement by federal courts to protect rights of some dimension. The seminar will touch on the existing regulatory regime and state constitutional law regarding weaponry, incorporating perspectives on race, gender, class, and regional culture.

## **INDEPENDENT RESEARCH I & II**

This course provides an opportunity for students to engage in supervised research leading to a substantial independent research paper. In addition to performing legal research, an important

goal of this course is to improve students' writing skills and written argumentation. The course will involve the development of a research topic and plan of research, development of a working outline of the project, submission of an initial draft, and submission of a final draft. The focus of the course is for students to engage in the careful, extensive treatment of a particular topic and to engage in original research and writing performed independently by the student. Successful completion of this course satisfies the writing requirement.

## **THE LAW AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Artificial intelligence is improving the way we live, learn, work, and play, revolutionizing society through intelligent systems. Its influence can be subtle, like customer service interactions with chatbots, or profound, like autonomous vehicles replacing truck drivers. This course will explore the impact of artificial intelligence on key aspects of the legal landscape, including criminal justice, torts, commerce, and national security. We will also focus briefly on how AI is transforming the practice of law.

## **MOCK TRIAL**

The Mock Trial course is an introductory look into the intricacies of competitive mock trial. The course combines principles from Evidence and Trial Simulation courses, with advocacy nuances commonly associated with scholastic competitions.

## **SEMINAR IN TAXATION: TAX CONTROVERSIES**

By the conclusion of this course, students should understand and be able to recognize the progression of a tax controversy matter from the filing (or non-filing) of a tax return to the final appeal to the Supreme Court. Students should be able to effectively navigate post-trial procedures and collection actions. Students should be able to distinguish between administrative processes and legal procedures controlled by the court systems. Students should be able to identify proper responses to IRS and/or third-party requests and be familiar with any time constraints associated with those communications. Students will be equipped with the information to properly navigate a tax controversy and understand each entity involved and its role in the process.