

LEGAL FUNDAMENTALS
Prof. Amanda E. Compton
(she / her)
Spring 2023

Class Schedule: Thurs, 1:50pm – 4:45pm
Office: Leadership Center, Room 167
Office Hours: Tues., 1:00pm – 5:00pm; or by appointment (<https://calendly.com/acompto>)
Telephone: (703) 993- 9862; Email: acompto@gmu.edu
Zoom Personal Meeting Room: <https://gmu.zoom.us/j/8294139115>

Required Materials*:

Compass

MBE Subjects: Outline Materials

Physical materials will be provided in-person on the first day of class; these materials cannot be purchased through the campus bookstore.

Required Digital Platforms:

Compass Platform[†]

Tech Support: 800-523-0777; fsupport@kaplan.com

Blackboard / Echo360

Tech Support: First Contact GMU IT; then Echo360 at 877-324-6360 ext. 2; support@echo360.com

TWEN

Tech Support: John Scherr, jscherr@gmu.edu; ext. 38111

Recommended Materials:

MBE Supplemental Materials:

Adaptibar

Emanuel Strategies & Tactics for the MBE

Emanuel Strategies & Tactics for the MBE2

Study Aid Supplemental Materials:

Kaplan Flash Cards (MEE and/or MBE)

CriticalPass Flash Cards (MEE and/or MBE)

*An email from Kaplan's Institutional Solutions will be sent to you with instructions on how to access your online resources, which include assignments as well as a bank of questions (the QBank) for additional practice. Be sure, at the outset, that you are aware of each of the resources that will be used throughout the course, both hard copy and electronic. If you are unable to the course materials, do not hesitate to contact me.

† If you are experiencing difficulties with submitting your payment online, you must contact Kaplan's Customer Support Center.

Syllabus and Course Schedule

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to provide early preparation for the bar exam: both the Multistate Bar Exam (MBE), which are multiple choice question that are developed by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE), as well as the Essay and Performance Test components. This course focuses on the development of skills, test performance techniques, and a strategic mindset, without which no examinee can optimize their exam preparation or their exam-day performance. However, while this course will have a “skills first” approach, we will also substantively engage with select topics of law.

This course is NOT intended to replace the need for a full bar review course. All students must take a commercial bar review course prior to the bar exam to prepare adequately for bar passage.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Learning Outcomes:

The goals listed below are the benchmarks against which you will be evaluated throughout this course. The following learning objectives describe what should you have achieved by the end of the semester:

1. Understanding Rules of Law—Mastery of specific rules of law.
 - a. Identification of the elements of several causes of action tested on the bar.
 - b. Ability to effectively use these rules on multiple choice questions and essays.
2. Rule Analysis—Ability to read and understand fact patterns and apply the rules of law to the facts presented.
3. Legal Problem Solving—Successful application of case precedent, the law and statutes to a fact patterns.
 - a. Identification of legal issues in simple and complex fact situations.
 - b. Identification of the relevant legal authority and policy.
4. Legal Argument and Drafting—Structuring of an objective argument, using the relevant facts and applicable law.
 - a. Identification of the relevant legal issues.
 - b. Identification of the relevant facts, authority, and policy.
 - c. Support of your position with facts, authority, and policy.
 - d. Ability to distinguish unfavorable facts, authority, and policy.
5. Critical Thinking—Incorporation of policy rationales and critiques into your everyday legal work.
 - a. Evaluation of cases, rules, statutes, arguments, documents
 - b. Lawyering Skills—Learn the strategies needed for effective legal arguments and analysis in both multiple-choice questions and essays.
6. Communication – Improved written communication.
 - a. Organization (both macro and micro) of elements of your argument.
 - b. Development of a clear and succinct writing style.
 - c. Ability to tailor tone of writing based on purpose and audience.

Class Communication

The best way to connect with me is via email. You can expect a response within 24 hours depending on schedules. There may be times when an answer to your question should be shared with the class. In such instances, I either will post a response on TWEN, or will answer the question directly in class. I am also available during my office hours.

TWEN

It is mandatory that you register for the class TWEN page. All class handouts and announcements will be distributed or posted through TWEN. Additionally, you will need to upload some class assignments on TWEN (as indicated in the syllabus).

Attendance

Regular attendance is required and attendance will be taken. You must attend the class for the section in which you are registered. If made available, participation in class through a remote link (i.e. Zoom), will not count as attendance for the class unless prior approval has been received from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and I have been notified of the same. Absence(s) may also be reflected in the final course grade as class participation is a critical part of successfully completing the course. Students should be prepared for each class, having completed the required tasks.

Academic Regulation 4 governs attendance. It provides, in part:

AR 4-1 Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance and class preparation are required to earn academic credit.

AR 4-1.1 Absences

If a student is absent for any reason for more than 20 percent of the sessions of a course, the student is not eligible for credit in that course. A student who is not present for at least 75 percent of a session of the course is absent from that session.

Additionally, it is the school's policy that instructors may enforce a stricter attendance policy. This class meets once a week. Therefore, ***a student may not miss three (3) classes during the semester. As well, a student may be marked absent if more than 30 minutes of a class is missed.*** Per the regulation, "any reason" has been defined by the school as including classes missed due to enrollment during the add/drop period. In other words, should you decide to add this course after the semester has begun, any classes missed will still be counted as an absence for purposes of meeting the mandatory number of classes.

Since this is a bar preparation course, and being on time and prepared is essential to passing the bar exam, I also reserve the right to mark a student absent if s/he is unprepared. Lack of preparation and consistent tardiness will also be factored into the student's class participation grade.

Finally, it is your responsibility to keep track of your absences / partial attendance. This means that you may not receive an advanced warning of your violation of this policy. If you believe you may be in jeopardy of violating this policy, you should feel free to contact me to confirm the same.

Classroom Decorum

This is a course for committed students, and I expect you to maintain proper level of professionalism and decorum in the classroom. Students should always strive to act in a manner respectful of their fellow students and the instructor, that does not disrupt the class or disturb their classmates, and that facilitate learning, both for themselves and their fellow students. Immature behaviors will simply not be tolerated; if I am forced to address a behavior issue more than once, you will be asked to leave and not return to class. Please note that if you are asked to leave the classroom and this will result in you missing more than 30 minutes of the class, this will be treated as an absence under the school's policy. See the above section on Attendance.

Use of Electronic Devices During Class

Laptops may be used in class, but only for taking notes; responding to online questions related to the class; and other class related material and discussions. With the exception of certain course-related activities, cell phones may not be used during class. Students may not send or receive email or text messages or browse the Internet during class time. Violation of this policy will result in a deduction of your Class Participation score, and may cause you to be marked absent for the class.

Recording Class Lectures / Slides

Given the fact that we will be using materials owned by a third party and protected under U.S. intellectual property laws, recording of the class is not permitted. I will make every effort to record each class and post it online for a limited period of time. Again, the content of these recordings will contain intellectual property not owned by the professor or the school. Therefore, these recordings may not be distributed to anyone outside of the class.

Course slides will also be available online. These slides will also contain intellectual property that is owned by a third party. These slides may not be copied or shared with anyone not currently enrolled in the course.

Disability Accommodations

Any student who has a disability requiring accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474, or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS, and will not be applied retroactively. I have zero authority to grant in-class or exam accommodations.

Academic Integrity

All members of the law school community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is defined here as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

Sharing of course materials, particularly materials relevant to assignments or exams, to public online "study" sites is considered a violation of Mason's Honor Code.

Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. For more information, see the Honor Code: <http://sls.gmu.edu/honor/>.

Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, complicity and retaliation to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Preferred Pronouns

At Scalia Law everyone has the right to be addressed by the name and personal pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, including non-binary pronouns, for example: they/them/theirs, ze/zir/zirs, etc. Students can [update their pronouns](#). If you have not yet updated your pronouns, you can do so at the beginning of the term so that I can make sure to refer to you using the correct pronouns. If your pronoun set is not available, please let me know. I recognize that preferred names and pronouns may change during the semester. If at any point during the semester you would like to be addressed differently, please let me know.

As part of our commitment to inclusion in this course, it is important that all students in this class respect the preferred names and pronouns of their peers. Mistakes in addressing one another may happen. If you make a mistake or are corrected, please briefly apologize and correct yourself. To learn more about personal pronouns and why they are important please view GMU's [Chosen Name and Pronouns Policy](#) and visit mypronouns.org.

Privacy

Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of this course. Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.

Course Evaluation

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting me directly, or Dean Annamaria Niels, Associate Dean for Administration & Student Affairs, aniels@gmu.edu or by calling 703-993-8174.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to participate in class discussion, complete assignments on time, and finish assigned materials by the stated deadlines. Please submit assignments electronically via the Compass platform or TWEN, depending on applicability. Below is a list of the measures that will be used to determine your grade for this course.

Grading

This is a non-graded course (CR/NC). To receive class credit, all students will need demonstrate minimum competency in the course. Pursuant to AR 4-5.3 and school policy, “CR” has been defined as earning a grade of “C” or better. Unlike traditional law school courses, and very much like the bar exam, assignments are not graded on a curve. Your success in the course is dependent on the effort you put in and not based how you measure with your peers.

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments must be completed on an individual basis. I will considered it a breach of the Honor Code if students collaborate or work on these assignments together.

Final course grades are determined as follows:

Mandatory Assessments

Although all assignments need to be submitted in order to ensure your successful completion of the course, the tasks listed below must be completed. The failure to submit any one assignment will result in receiving an NC for the course.

Diagnostic Test: The Diagnostic Test is styled after the bar exam, and may include multiple choice questions and / or a written portion. More information on the length and format of the test will be provided at the start of the semester. This is a particularly important and useful assignment as it will provide you with a baseline for determining your strengths and growth points. Approximately 5 weeks after the completion of the test, each student will receive an Individual Report, and this will be the prime focus of our Individual Counseling Session held later in the course. Although it is not graded, it is a key component in helping you establish a plan for success on the bar exam. The test will only be provided for a limited amount of time, and once it closes it cannot be reopened. Failure to complete this test will result in an automatic NC for the course.

Individual Counseling Session: There will be one, mandatory counseling session during the semester. The purpose of this counseling session will be to review the results of the Diagnostic Test, review your performance in the course, and to determine a plan for addressing any areas for growth. A self-assessment worksheet may be distributed prior to our meeting and you will be expected to submit your response at least 24 hours prior to our scheduled meeting.

A sign-up sheet for these appointments can be found on the Blackboard, under the TWEN link. On the TWEN course page go to "Sign-Up Sheets" in the Navigation Bar. Since these are mandatory meetings, I strongly encourage you to sign up for a time slot as soon as possible in order to secure a time that is most convenient for your schedule. As we get closer to the meeting times, I reserve the right to remove any unfilled slots.

Failure to participate in the mandatory counseling session will result in a student being ineligible to receive credit for the course. Additionally, if assigned, failure to complete the self-assessment worksheet will be deemed a missed assignment.

Assessment Tests: Two, closed-book, cumulative assessments will be administered during the course (i.e. a Midterm and Final). Similar to the Diagnostic Test, these assessments provide the best opportunity to learn time management (a key skill for the bar exam) and test your ability to retain and recall rules in a time-sensitive environment. Specific details on format and grading are included below.

Timely submission of assignments

All assignments must be submitted on time. If any of the deadlines pose a problem, you must request an extension, in writing, prior to the deadline. Extensions will only be granted in writing, and for unavoidable conflicts or emergencies. You will be given an additional 24 hours to meet the deadline, unless otherwise noted in the syllabus or provided to you in writing. No more than three extensions will be allowed, including any extension requests made for already extended deadlines.

Being able to timely and accurately complete assignments is a necessity for bar exam and the practice of law. Therefore, late assignments (i.e., those turned in past the deadline when no prior extension has been granted in writing) will result in a score of zero on the assignment.

Students who miss more than three assignment deadlines over the course of the semester will not be eligible to receive course credit and will receive a reported final grade of "NC" for the course.

All extension requests and deadlines are per assignment. Please note that it is typical to have more than one assignment due on a single day. Therefore, when submitting your extension request you should note the assignment. For example, you if are assigned (1) 10 practice questions and (2) a quiz to complete on the same day, you may request an extension for both

assignments or for only one assignment. The former request would count as two extension requests; while the latter would only count as one extension request.

It is your responsibility to track the number of missed assignments you have in the course. However, a “Course Scores” document will be posted on the TWEN / Course Materials page. This “Course Scores” document will be updated on an almost weekly basis. The primary purpose of this document is to track your scores; but, it can also be used to track missed assignments. At any point in the semester if you are unsure of the number of missed assignments you have, you should feel free to contact me to confirm the same.

Classroom Participation

Class participation will account for 10% of the grade. Each class builds on concepts from earlier classes, so it is important to prepare for, and attend, each class. Effective class participation requires: participating in all predetermined in-class quizzes, practice essays, or group projects; exhibiting the requisite level of preparedness if called upon; viewing the pre-recorded, asynchronous videos (e.g. on Compass and Blackboard); participating in at least 50% of the in-class polling exercises (i.e. answering multiple choice questions and / or short answers reviewed in class); and engaging in respectful debate and avoiding behavior in class that is not abnormally disruptive to your classmates. Additionally, in accordance with the Attendance Policy, I reserve the right to mark a student absent if unprepared.

Quizzes

A number of out-of-class quizzes will be assigned throughout the course. These quizzes are not timed, and you may (and are even encouraged to use) your outline and notes when answering these questions. The quizzes, however, may not be done as a group exercise, as the goal is to increase your individual learning and understanding of these types of questions. Quiz answers must be submitted online through the Compass platform by the assignment due date AND marked in your Compass textbook. You must bring your Compass textbook to every class meeting. Failure to bring your Compass textbook to class will result in you being marked unprepared for that session.

Your final average quiz score will count for 35% of your final course score. The quiz score will also include the MBE portion of the Midterm and Final Assessments. Your average quiz score (along with the MBE portions of the Assessments) for the semester must be 70% or higher to receive credit for the course.

Extension Requests for Quizzes: You may elect to use your allotted extension requests for the quizzes. However, please know that this may affect your ability to retake the quiz. For example, the deadline for the quiz will be extended to the retake deadline listed in the attached Assignments and Deadlines schedule (i.e. 48 hours). However, if you want to see your score and have an opportunity to retake it, then you will need to complete the quiz within 24 hours.

Scoring and Retaking a Quiz: All students may elect to retake a quiz by the retake deadline. However, students that do not achieve a score of 70% or higher on any given quiz, are

strongly encouraged to retake the quiz in order to pass this section of the grading component. There is a deadline for retaking a quiz as indicated in the Course Calendar below. If you elect to retake the quiz, the higher score between the original and the retake will be recorded as your quiz grade.

In no event can a deadline for a quiz retake be extended past the class meeting time because the syllabus anticipates reviewing the quiz and correct answers in class during the week the quiz is assigned.

** To view your quiz score, go to the TWEN course page, select Course Materials, and then select the Course Scores spreadsheet. Scores will be listed by your midterm exam number, which can be located via your ExamSoft account. You can also find a step-by-step guide on locating your number on the TWEN course page under Course Materials. Please note, **for the first quiz**, since I most likely will not have received your midterm numbers from the Records Office, your quiz score will be emailed to you the day after the deadline.

Method and Deadline for Submitting Request to Retake Quiz: If you wish to retake a quiz, you must contact me by the method and deadline provided. This method and deadline will be announced in class and will be provided on the Course Scores document provided to the class. Shortly after the request deadline, your quiz will be reset. (Please note that I have to contact Kaplan in order to get the quiz reset. Therefore, it may take up to 24 hours after the request deadline to have the quiz reset). Should you elect to retake the quiz, but ultimately fail to do so, this will not be counted as a missed deadline.

If you miss the original deadline for taking the quiz, you do not need to request a “retake.” You may proceed with “retaking” the quiz by the retake deadline. Missing the original deadline will be treated as a “missed assignment.” However, you will have the opportunity to increase your average score by completing the quiz by the retake deadline. If you miss the original deadline and fail to take the quiz by the retake deadline, this will be treated as one missed assignment. In other words, you will not be penalized twice for missing both deadlines.

Posting of Quiz Answers and Explanations: After the quiz has been reviewed in class, an answer key and explanation will be posted. You are strongly encouraged to review this answer key, as it will greatly help you on future quizzes and assessments (and the bar exam).

Essays

Each subject matter has three (3) Compass essays. Essay 1 will be done in class and will not be scored. Essays 2 and 3 will be submitted for grading through the Compass platform. **It will take 7-10 business days to receive your score and comments.** These essays are not timed, and you may (and are even encouraged to) use your outline and notes when answering these questions. The essays, however, may not be done as a group exercise, as the goal is to increase your individual learning and understanding of these types of questions.

Essay 1: Essay 1 is only located in the Compass book. It is non-graded essay. The score reflected on TWEN will represent that you completed the assignment on time, and does not represent a raw score for the quality of the essay itself. Additionally, since this is a non-graded essay, it is not factored into your overall essay score. Instead, it is treated as a Soft Skills assignment.

Once completed, **your response must be uploaded to TWEN.** (See TWEN / Assignments / [Essay Name]). If you miss class on the day this assignment is due, you must complete it by the following class (the deadline for this date is reflected on the TWEN Assignment link). I will make every attempt to provide comments to Essay 1. To locate these comments, go to TWEN / Assignments and click on the “View Comment” link.

Please note that the essay provided in the book also includes prompts that can be used a guide to help you prepare your response. You do not (and should not) upload your answers to these prompt. Simply prepare the essay response in the same manner you would for the bar exam. A clean version of this essay, without the prompts, can also be found on TWEN under the corresponding assignment link.

Essay 2: Essay 2 is located in the Compass book. This is a graded assignment and **your response must be uploaded on the Compass platform** by the due date. Since this essay may be discussed in class, you must also bring a hardcopy of your response to class, or otherwise be able to access an electronic version. It is recommended that you prepare your response in Word document, save it to your hard drive, and then copy and paste the response in the textbox provided on the Compass platform. Students who do not bring a hard copy of their essay answer to class, or otherwise do not have access to an electronic version will be considered unprepared for that class session.

Essay 3: Essay 3 is only located online on the Compass platform; this essay is not in the Compass book. This is a graded assignment and **your response must be uploaded on the Compass platform** by the due date. Because this essay may be discussed in class, you must also bring a hardcopy of your response to class, or otherwise be able to access an electronic version. It is recommended that you prepare your response in Word document, save it to your hard drive, and then copy and paste the response in the textbox provided on the Compass platform. Students who do not bring a hard copy of their essay answer to class, or otherwise do not have access to an electronic version will be considered unprepared for that class session.

When uploading your essay to Compass, you may select one of three options: (1) Save; (2) Pause; or (3) Submit. You must “submit” the essay by the deadline. Essays that are “saved” or “pause” cannot be seen on my end and will be treated as a missed assignment.

Your final average essay score will count for 35% of your final course grade. The essay score will also include your score on the written portion of the Midterm and Final Assessments, and any scored-Track writing assignments. Your average essay score (along with the written portions of the Assessments and the Track assignments) for the semester must be 60% or higher to receive credit for the course. When calculating your average essay score for the semester, your lowest essay score may be dropped. However, this does not include any Assessment scores.

QBank Questions

Additional practice questions are available on the Compass platform. You are only responsible for completing the Qbank for the assigned subject matter.

Scoring of QBank Questions and Assignment Deadlines: Your overall score on the QBank questions will count for 10% of your final course grade. (For example, if you answer 60% of all QBank questions correctly, your overall score of 60% will count for 10% of your final score).

A total of 150 questions, with a minimum of 50 questions per subject matter assigned in the class, must be completed. A select number of Qbank questions will be pre-assigned throughout the semester, and must be completed by the stated deadline. The remaining Qbank questions can be completed at your own pace, but no later than the last scheduled class of the semester (i.e. before the scheduled date of the Final Assessment). Failure to complete all pre-assigned questions by the stated deadline will be treated as a missed deadline.

To access the Qbank questions, log onto the Compass platform and click on “Practice” in the top navigation bar. There you will have the option to create a “quiz.” You can create the “quiz content” by selecting the topic, sub-topic, and number of questions you would like to answer at that time. Select “Tutor Mode” and then hit “Start Quiz.” You may create as many quizzes as you like, so long as the required number of questions are completed and submitted by the appropriate deadline.

It is your responsibility to make sure all Qbank questions have been completed. You can check your progress by clicking on the “**Detailed Analysis**” link on the Qbank home page.

Questions coded as “Number Omitted” or “Number Not Reached” cannot be seen on my end. You may not have more than a total 10 questions, collectively, in these categories. Additionally, these questions will be converted to “Incorrect” for purposes of calculating your final score. At the end of the semester, if you have more than 10 questions (including “omitted” or “not reached” questions), this will be deemed a missed assignment. For more information, you should consult the “Welcome to Legal Fundamentals” video and slides, and other course content that reviews this matter.

Soft-Skills Assignments

Soft-skill assignments will be assigned throughout the semester. These assignments will focus on the frequently overlooked, yet equally important skills that are necessary to pass the bar exam. Where appropriate, these assignments may be completed as a group; but each individual is responsible for turning in a copy of the assignment. These assignments must be uploaded to TWEN (under Assignments) and will not be accepted via email or in person.

When submitting assignments via TWEN, please make sure your name appears at the top of each page with reference to Legal Fundamentals and the title of the assignment.

Scoring of Soft-Skills Assignments: All soft-skills assignments will be scored on a 100-point scale (a perfect score being 100%). Points are only deducted if the assignment is late (and you did not previously request an extension), is incomplete, or is done incorrectly. With respect to essay submissions, essays submitted on TWEN are not factored into your overall essay score. These are treated as Soft Skills assignments. Your final average soft-skill score will count for 10% of your final course grade, and your average soft-skill score must be 75% or higher to receive credit for the course

Midterm and Final Assessment Tests

Two closed-book, simulated exams will be administer during the semester. It is expected that you will perform to a minimum level of competency on these assessment tests. The minimum target score for the MBE portion is 70%; and the written portion is 60%.

Scoring of Assessments: Your success or failure in meeting the minimum target scores is not determinative of whether or not you will receive credit for the course. However, your scores on the midterm and final assessments will be calculated into your average final quiz score (for the MBE portions of the assessments) and average final essay score (for the written portions of the assessments) respectively. Therefore, these scores can significantly help you in receiving credit for the class.

Midterm Assessment

** Please note that mid-semester you will have the opportunity to select one of two tracks- the MPT Track or the Virginia Track. For those students who are taking a bar exam that includes the Multistate Performance Test (e.g. UBE jurisdictions, California, Hawaii, etc.) you are strongly encouraged to take this track. For those who plan to take the Virginia bar exam, you should take the Virginia Track. If you are not taking the Virginia bar exam, an exam that administers the MPT, or you are not planning on taking the bar, you must still select a Track and submit the assigned work. During the first week of this two-week track, you will learn information that is specific to that exam. During the second week you will take a Mid-Semester Assessment for your track, which will consist of:

- MPT Track Format: 1 MPT; and 25 MBE questions covering Real Property; or
- VA Track Format: 2 VA Essays covering Virginia Specific Real Property law; 10 VA-specific multiple choice questions; and 25 MBE questions covering Real Property.

With respect to the multiple-choice questions, a significant portion of the questions will be devoted to the sub-topics covered in class (e.g. about 65-75%). Please note, however, that all rules covered in the Real Property outline are testable on the assessment. Just like the bar exam, there are “highly tested topics,” and then other topics that will be tested.

Those of you taking the Virginia Track should also note that (1) answers to the VA-specific MCQ will be factored into your MBE “Quiz” score; and (2) the essays may cover these other, testable topics. A list of Virginia Real Property distinctions are posted on TWEN. You will also find additional practice essays there as well. You are strongly encouraged to review these rules and essays early and often in order to get ready for the assessment.

Although subject to change, in the past the assessment has been administered during a regularly schedule class, and will last 2.5 hours. The assessment will be administered through Examsoft / Exemplify.

Final Assessment

Like the bar exam, the Final Assessment will be a comprehensive exam, covering each of the subject matters assigned for the course. The Final, however, will not include any Virginia specific law or an MPT.

Format and Coverage: 3 Essays, one per subject matter assigned in the course; and 35 MBE questions divided as equally as possible among the subject matter assigned for the course.

Similar to the mid-semester assessment, all rules are testable on the Final. The “highly tested topics” will be those sub-topics that were the focus of the course materials, and a significant portion of the questions will be devoted to the sub-topics covered in class (e.g. about 65-75%). Still, be prepared to be tested on any of the rules included in the outlines.

Although subject to change, in the past the assessment has been administered during a regularly schedule class, and will last 2 hours and 45 minutes. The assessment will be administered through Examsoft / Exemplify.

Accommodations: If you require accommodations or need to delay sitting for either assessment, you must follow the school’s academic regulations regarding the same. See AR 4-4.1(a). I have no authority to allow you to reschedule or extend the time granted for these assessments.

Overall Course Score:

To recap, in order to receive credit for this course, the following items need to be completed:

- Complete all Mandatory Assignments (Diagnostic Test, Individual Counseling Appointment, and the two Assessments);
- Miss no more than two (2) classes;
- Have no more than three (3) missed assignment deadlines; and
- Achieve a minimum overall score on the following assignments: Quizzes = 70%, Essays = 60%, Soft Skills = 75%.

Your overall score will also include your Qbank and Class Participation scores. As explained above in each relevant section, each of these categories carries a weighted score, which will be used to calculate your final overall score for the class. Therefore, your final overall course scores will also be factored into whether or not you credit for the course. Therefore, it is possible to fall slightly below one minimum score marker (e.g. quiz, essay, or soft skill assignment), and have a high enough score in another marker to meet the final, minimum overall course score. Falling significantly below one marker, or below two or more markers, will result in a NC for the course. Still, the minimum scores in each category reflect a fair minimum score that should be achieved by anyone graduating from law school.

COURSE CALENDAR:

Similar to the bar exam, success in this course requires the ability to stay organized and devote several days per week for the completion of assignments and rule memorization. Pursuant to the ABA rules, this means each week you should spend 6 hours outside of class preparing for this course. Like the bar exam, breaking these hours up over multiple days will allow for a less stressful experience, and will provide you the time needed to review and absorb the information properly. The assignments have been selected with the idea that you will spend 2-4 hours per week completing assignments, and using the remaining time to work on study aids, practice questions on your own, and engage in rule memorization.

Specific assignments and deadlines are listed below. However, you may find this general guide useful as you become acclimated with the pace of the course:

Mondays: If applicable, Pre-assigned Qbank Questions and Quizzes are due

Wednesday: If applicable, quiz retake is due

Thursday [Class]: Most soft-skills exercises and essays are due

[Tues / Fri / Sat / Sun]: Review assignment(s) for the upcoming week; plan and organize; use one or more of these days to watch videos, work on study aids, memorize rules and / or do additional practice questions

Again, this is a general guide for the majority of the assignments due throughout the course. For example, the VA / MPT Track assignments, individual counseling appointment and self-assessment, or other assignments may not follow this schedule. Those deadlines are communicated below and / or you will be sent an email if new deadlines are set. I will also make every effort to announce these deadlines in class. Nevertheless, it is your responsibility to submit all assignments on time. If you are not clear about a deadline, please ask. ***As a guiding principle- you don't need to submit the assignment early, but you do need to look at the assignment early to confirm the deadline and understand how much work is necessary in order to complete it by the deadline!***

We will use three platforms in this class. Generally, here is a guide for where to find resources and materials, and where to submit assignments:

<u>Compass (Kaplan)</u>	<u>TWEN</u>	<u>Echo360 (Blackboard)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compass Quizzes • Compass Essays 2 and 3, only • Compass videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft-Skill Exercises • Compass Essay 1, only • Prof-generated Essays / MPTs (i.e. non-Compass materials) • Other Prof-generated course materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class video recordings • Course slides • To answer <u>in-class</u> MCQ questions

I reserve the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

All assignments must be submitted on time. If any of the deadlines pose a problem, you must request an extension, in writing, prior to the deadline. Extensions will only be granted for unavoidable conflicts or emergencies. You will be given an additional 24 hours to meet the deadline, unless otherwise noted in the Syllabus or provided to you in writing. No more than three extensions will be allowed, including any extension requests made for already extended deadlines. No more than three deadlines may be missed. Failure to abide by this rule will result in receiving an NC for the class.

Assignments and Deadlines

Class			
1/19	Subject:	Bar Exam Admissions	Introduction to the admissions process and bar exam format for different jurisdictions; introduction to recall and memorization strategies
	Deadline:	1/19 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Individual Bar Profile (TWEN / Assignments) <input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “Welcome to Legal Fundamentals” video (Blackboard; See TWEN / Course Materials / IT Folder for Instructions on how to access Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “Study Strategies” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Soft Skill Exercise</i> : Prepare a 1-Week Study Plan for Class (TWEN / Assignments)
1/26	Subjects:	Bar Exam Skills; Property	Introduction to bar prep and bar exam strategies and skills; Substantive review of select topics in Property
	Deadline:	1/26 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “Diagnostic Test” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Diagnostic Test (Compass) (appx. 2.5 hours) (<i>This is a mandatory assignment.</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Watch Property video (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Review Property Outline and prepare Property study aid (<i>not to be turned in</i>)
		<i>In-class assignment</i> [‡]	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete “Practice Essay: Property” (TWEN) (<i>Note: This is a non-Compass essay that can only be found on TWEN</i>)

[‡] All in-class assignments must be completed even if you do not attend class on this day, or you add the course after this date. If you miss class, all in-class assignments are due by our next scheduled class. If you are not present in class, you can find the assignment on TWEN, under the Assignment link.

Class			
2/2	Subject:	Property	Multiple choice strategy and approach; Essay writing and strategy and approach
	Deadline:	1/30 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “MBE Strategies” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete at least 20 Property Qbank questions (<u>Tip</u> : Focus on “Ownership” questions) (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete “MBE Strategy Template” using Property Quiz 1, Questions 2, 4, 6, 13, 20. (TWEN) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete and submit all answers to Property Quiz 1 [§] (Compass)
		2/1 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Property Quiz 1 (Compass)
		2/2 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Study the Property Outline and memorize as many rules as possible** <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Property Essay 1 (Compass Book <i>only</i>); <u>submit on TWEN</u>
2/9	Subject:	Property	Further review of select Property topics, effective multiple choice and essay strategy and practice
	Deadline:	2/6 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “Bar Exam Budget” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Soft Skill Exercise</i> : Prepare bar exam budget (TWEN) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Property Quiz 2 (Compass)
		2/8 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Property Quiz 2
		2/9 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “Essay Strategies” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Property Essay 2 (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Study Property Outline and memorize rules

[§] Reminder: All Quiz answers must be answered in the Compass book and online. Hard copies of all essays should be brought to class, but only Essays 2 and 3 will need to be uploaded on Compass.

** Note: study sessions for this course should run 3-4 hours, depending on your level of comfortability with the material. If you need a shorter study period, then you should use this time to do more practice work. You can find more practice questions on the “Practice” section of the Qbank, resources in the library, and the Bar Support CAS Intranet website (“Practice Questions” link). The TWEN page includes links to these agencies.

Class			
2/16	Subject:	Property	Building on substantive knowledge of select Property sub-topics; continuing review of bar prep strategies, including managing stress
	Deadline:	2/13 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the Mortgages 1 and 2 videos (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete at least 10 Property Qbank questions (<u>Tip</u> : Do at least 5 questions under “Mortgages/Security Devices” and 5 questions under “Titles”) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Mortgages Quiz (Compass)
		2/15 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Mortgages Quiz (Compass)
		2/16 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the “Managing Stress” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Soft Skill Exercise</i> : Complete the Managing Stress Tests (TWEN) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Property Essay 3 (Compass Online <i>only</i> ; not in Book)

Class			
2/23	Subject:	Jurisdiction-Specific Problems	Track selection will provide more details and practice in jurisdiction-specific content.
Online; no in-person class; pick one track	MPT Track Deadlines	2/20 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch “Intro to MPT” (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the NCBE webpage to read about the MPT. (Link on TWEN) <input type="checkbox"/> Review MPT strategy and approach, and sample MPT answer. (Compass Book) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete “In re Whirley” MPT (TWEN / Course Materials) and submit on TWEN.
		“In-class” assignment 2/23 (5:00 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch “MPT Review” video (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete “In re Braun” MPT 2 (Compass)
	VA Track Deadlines	2/20 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch “Virginia Bar Admission” (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the VBBE webpage to read about the scoring of essays (FAQ:Scoring); review sample essays and answers. (Link on TWEN) <input type="checkbox"/> Review Virginia Property Rule Distinctions (TWEN / Course Materials) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Virginia Essays (1) 2017 Feb. Q9; and (2) 2017 July Q3 (TWEN / Course Materials) and submit on TWEN.
		“In-class” assignment 2/23 (5:00 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch “Virginia Essay Review” (Blackboard) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Virginia Essay 1 (“Eagle Rock”) (Compass)

Class			
3/2	Subject:	Mid-Semester Assessment Test	Administered as a part of class. <i>This is a mandatory assignment.</i>
	Deadlines:	2/27 (11:59 pm)	<p><i>MPT Track only:</i> Complete “In re Lucy and Ozzy Brooks” MPT 3 (Compass)</p> <p><i>Virginia Track only:</i> Complete Virginia Essay 2 (Compass)</p>
		3/1 (11:59 pm)	<p>Both Tracks:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Midterm will be administered via ExamSoft/ Examplify. In advance of class, download and complete the Mock Exam provided by the Records Office. If you encounter any issues, contact the Records Office. Technical issues can be directed to IT.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Review substantive content, rule statements, and previous practice assessments.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Suggested:</i> Complete 20 MBE or Qbank questions; Complete 1-2 essays or MPT, whichever is applicable (<u>Tip:</u> Additional questions can be found on TWEN)</p>
		3/2	<p><i>In-class</i></p> <p><i>This is a mandatory assignment.</i></p>

Class			
Week of: 3/9	Counseling Appointments		<i>This is a mandatory appointment, and is required as a part of receiving credit for the course.</i>
(No in-class meeting on 3/9)	Deadline:	24 HOURS PRIOR TO MEETING <i>(Note: The deadline on TWEN is set based on the last meeting appointment. Your deadline may be earlier based on your meeting time).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule appointment through TWEN. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Soft Skill Exercise:</i> Prepare and submit Self-Assessment on perceived strengths and weaknesses in Property Law specifically, and in bar prep generally. (TWEN) <i>Sessions may be held online, in my Zoom Personal Meeting Room or in-person.</i>
	3/16 <i>SPRING BREAK: Use this time to get a jumpstart on the next subject!</i>		
3/23	Subject:	Civil Procedure	Substantive Review of Civil Procedure: Recall, Memorization, Issue spotting, Legal Analysis; MBE Strategy and Approach
	Deadline:	3/20 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch Civil Procedure video (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Review outline and begin prep of study aid (<i>not turned in</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete at least 20 Civil Procedure Qbank questions (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Civil Procedure Quiz 1 (Compass)
		3/22 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Civil Procedure Quiz 1
		3/23 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Civil Procedure Essay 1 (Compass Book <i>only</i>); <i>submit on TWEN</i>

Class			
3/30	Subject:	Civil Procedure	Effective Multiple Choice Test Taking Strategy and Practice; Essay Approach: IRAC, Essay Review and Practice
	Deadline:	3/27 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Civil Procedure Quiz 2 (Compass)
		3/29 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Civil Procedure Quiz 2
		3/30 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Civil Procedure Essay 2 (Compass) <i>Suggested:</i> Review and memorize <u>Property</u> rules; complete one property essay and 10 property Qbank questions
4/6	Subject:	Criminal Procedure	Substantive Review of Criminal Procedure: Recall, Memorization, Issue spotting, and Legal Analysis
	Deadline:	4/3 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch Criminal Procedure video (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Review outline and begin preparation of study aid (<i>not to be turned in</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete at least 20 Criminal Procedure Qbank questions (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Criminal Procedure Law Quiz 1 (Compass)
		4/5 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Criminal Procedure Law Quiz 1 (Compass)
		4/6 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Criminal Procedure Essay 1 (Compass <i>only</i>); <i>submit on TWEN</i>

Class			
4/13	Subject:	Criminal Procedure	Essay Approach: IRAC, Essay Review and Practice
	Deadline:	4/10 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Criminal Procedure Quiz 2 (Compass)
		4/12 (11:59 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, retake Criminal Procedure Quiz 2 (Compass)
		4/13 (1:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Criminal Procedure Essay 2 (Compass) <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a new response to the in-class essay received in Week 2 (See “Week 2 Practice Essay: Property,” posted on TWEN / Assignments), and submit via TWEN <input type="checkbox"/> Compare your new response with the old response and prepare a Self-Assessment on your essay writing skills. (See “Self-Assessment Guide” on TWEN /Assignment), and submit via TWEN
4/20	End-of-Semester Assessment Test		Administered as a part of class. <i>This is a mandatory assignment.</i>
	Deadline:	4/20 (1:30pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> All outstanding assignments are due.** <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Civil Procedure Essay 3 (Compass Online <i>only</i> ; not in Book) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Criminal Procedure Essay 3 (Compass Online <i>only</i> ; not in Book) <input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, complete remaining Qbank questions for all assigned subjects (50 questions/subject) <input type="checkbox"/> Devote a significant amount of time to studying for this test. Your performance on this test should reflect the same!

** This is in no way to suggest that previous deadlines may be missed without prior written approval. For those who have been granted an extension, a new deadline will be provided to you in writing, and that new deadline must be met as well. However, no extensions will be granted beyond this date.

NOTES: