Spring, 2011 **Family Law**

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Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to introduce students to state and federal regulation of family life and family relationships. The course will consider nonmarital relationships as well as marital relationships including the nature of marriage, dissolution, custody, child support, adoption, and the rights of children. The course will use Minnesota cases and statutes to demonstrate how a state develops its family law system.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students should be able to…
Demonstrate competence in Family Law, a foundational area of U.S. law, as tested on most bar examinations.
Identify strategies to discover and achieve client objectives in a Family Law setting
Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of one area of Family Law in written work

Required Text
Wadlington and O'Brien, Domestic Relations, 6th, Foundation Press, 2007

Office Hours and Communication
Office hours will be posted. However, I will be in the office at other times. Feel free to stop by whenever the door is open. In addition, you can contact me by phone or e-mail.

Grading and Attendance
The grade will be based primarily on a final examination (2/3) and a 10 page paper (1/3). However, I reserve the right to increase or lower a grade based on class participation and attendance. You are expected to attend class and be prepared to discuss the assigned material. Five hours of class absences will be deemed to be excessive.

Assignments
The course will be broken down into seven sections. Section assignments are listed on TWEN under Course Materials and will show the reading assignment for each class hour. Each class hour is designated by a Roman numeral. In addition, there are several questions for each class hour that are posed for you to consider before class.

Thus, week-end students should prepare for 3 class hours for each Sunday session and day students should prepare 3 class hours for the two weekly sessions. The assignment will be from the casebook as well as from supporting material. All of the handouts will be available on TWEN with links to the cases and statutes. We will start with Section A, The Nature of Marriage. The assignment for the first class hour will be pages 1-11; 60-62; and 20-53.

Discussion
You will be required to post at least one response to a discussion question each week. Your post must be submitted by the end of an assigned day each week. Feel free to respond to the posting of other students.

CALI Family Law Lessons
You will be encouraged to complete several CALI Family Law lessons this semester. There is a link to the lessons and a link to registration instructions on the course TWEN page. I may use some of these lessons in place of class hours as a distance-learning component of the course.

Use of Computers in Class

Family Law requires active participation in class by all students. You can use your computers for taking notes or for following the material on TWEN. But, you must be actively engaged in discussion.