



**STRUCTURED STUDY GROUP LEADER COURSE
FALL 2013 SYLLABUS
PROFESSOR ALICE SILKEY**

Welcome to the Structured Study Group Leader course! I hope you will find this course helpful in preparing to effectively lead your Structured Study Group. You will be responsible for meeting with your Structured Study Group throughout the fall semester and for attending all of the Structured Study Group Leader classes. This syllabus contains the course description, information about the Structured Study Group Leader class meetings, and information about leading the Structured Study Groups. This syllabus also contains information about the following aspects of the course: Required and recommended books; additional materials; learning outcomes for the course; course expectations and the attendance policy; grading, evaluation, and course credit; TWEN sites; the technology policy; and the class schedule and assignments. I have attached a more detailed description of the Structured Study Groups to this syllabus as Appendix A for your reference. Please note that given the collaborative nature of this course, changes may be made in this syllabus as necessary in order to best accommodate the learning needs of all of the students in the course. Finally, please note that this is a draft syllabus. The final syllabus will be distributed on the first day of class.

Course Description

Structured Study Groups focus on assisting students with the mastery of skills (e.g., outlining skills, study skills, and exam-taking skills) within the context of their doctrinal classes. The Structured Study Group Leaders are responsible for leading study groups for one hour each week, and for preparing lesson plans, small group exercises, and a variety of teaching and learning tools with the goal of facilitating student learning in a collaborative setting. The Leaders are also encouraged to be available outside of the study group sessions to assist their students and to serve as mentors. In addition, the Leaders are required to attend classroom sessions focused on pedagogy that require significant reading, preparation of mock lessons, and other assignments designed to improve their teaching skills.

Information about the Structured Study Group Leader Class Meetings

The Structured Study Group Leader class will meet on Thursdays from 4:10 p.m. to 6:20 p.m. in Room 301 in the Law Library. We will have five Structured Study Group Leader class meetings during the fall semester. The class will meet on the following dates: August 22, August 29, September 12, September 19, and September 26. Please note that we will not have class on September 5. The class sessions will be collaborative in nature, and students will be expected to participate fully as part of this learning community. Students will have an opportunity to share ideas about pedagogy, to model

the teaching of different skills based on the assigned reading, and to learn about and experience a variety of small group activities.

Information about Leading the Structured Study Groups

The following information will help you to prepare to lead your Structured Study Group this fall. Please plan to lead twelve Structured Study Group sessions during the fall semester, including at least one review session at the end of the semester. (If your students have a midterm examination, I recommend that you also schedule a review session before this examination.) The first Structured Study Group session should be held during the second week of the fall semester.

Please plan to spend approximately three to four hours each week preparing to lead your Structured Study Group. Among other things, preparation will include creating lesson plans with learning outcomes (both skills outcomes and substantive outcomes); writing hypothetical fact patterns; creating structural outlines and flow charts; creating learning tools; and writing practice essay questions and sample good answers. Please submit your lesson plans to me four days before each study group session.

Please plan to meet periodically with the doctrinal professor for your course to seek ideas and guidance. I would strongly encourage you to attend the class sessions taught by the doctrinal professor if possible. Finally, please plan to visit the doctrinal class during the first week of the semester to introduce yourself; to provide a brief introduction to the Structured Study Group initiative; and to let your students know the day, time, and location of your study group.

My Contact Information

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions or if you need assistance with your Structured Study Group. You may contact me by phone at 651-523-3012 (office), 612-868-4442 (cell), or 507-645-5160 (home). You may contact me by e-mail at asilkey@hamline.edu. You may also contact me at my office, 209W. If you wish to meet at my office, I recommend scheduling an appointment in advance to be certain that I will be available when you come to my office. I am eager to help you to be as successful as possible in leading your Structured Study Group. Please do not hesitate to contact me for ideas and suggestions, as well as to discuss any difficulties you have encountered in your study group.

Required and Recommended Books

The following books are required for the course:

Ruth Ann McKinney, *Reading Like a Lawyer* (2d ed. 2012)
Carolina Academic Press
ISBN-13: 9781611631104

Michael Hunter Schwartz, *Expert Learning for Law Students* (2d ed. 2008)
Carolina Academic Press
ISBN-10: 1594605459

Michael Hunter Schwartz, *Expert Learning for Law Students Workbook* (2d ed. 2008)
Carolina Academic Press
ISBN-10: 1594605521

The following books are recommended for the course:

Gerald F. Hess & Steven Friedland, *Techniques for Teaching Law* (1999)
Carolina Academic Press
ISBN-13: 9780890897850

Michael Hunter Schwartz, Sophie Sparrow, & Gerald Hess, *Teaching Law by Design*
(2009)
Carolina Academic Press
ISBN-13: 9781594604973

If you are interested in additional books and articles about pedagogy, adult learning theory, and legal education, please let me know. I have an extensive bibliography of books and articles in these subject areas, and I would be happy to provide additional resources.

Additional Materials

You will receive a multi-volume set of Structured Study Group manuals at the first class. These manuals are subject specific, and they contain a collection of the materials created by Structured Study Group Leaders in past years. These manuals will serve as a reference and as a starting point as you prepare to lead your Structured Study Group this year. One set of manuals contains hypotheticals and answers, sample exam questions and answers, and in-class exercises. Many of the hypotheticals and exam questions are from professors' past exams. (Answers are provided for many but not all of the hypotheticals and exam questions.) These manuals are organized by topic, and they follow a chronological progression of the course throughout the academic year.

A second set of manuals contains course specific lesson plans. These manuals will help you to organize your Structured Study Group sessions and to determine how much time to allocate for each activity. The lesson plan manuals contain a number of different types of lesson plans, so you can experiment to determine whether a concise plan or a more detailed plan best fits your teaching style.

A third set of manuals contains substantive course outlines. These outlines, prepared by previous Structured Study Group Leaders, provide a thorough review of a number of

topics. (It would be advisable to consult a treatise for definitive answers to complex substantive questions since these outlines have not been checked for accuracy.) A fourth set of manuals contains PowerPoint presentations. These manuals contain a number of very good substantive reviews as well as Jeopardy games in a couple of subject areas. In addition to these course specific manuals, you will receive a manual that contains a collection of lesson plans and in-class materials that was created for a special skills-based “Strategies for Academic Success” Structured Study Group that we offered in the fall of 2011. The sample exercises in this manual cover many aspects of the first year curriculum. These exercises should be especially useful early in the semester for building basic law school skills.

You will also receive additional materials about Structured Study Groups at the first class. You will receive the Handbook for Structured Study Group Leaders from Washburn University School of Law and other written materials that will help you prepare to lead your Structured Study Group.

Learning Outcomes for the Course

Students will learn skills for effectively facilitating collaborative study groups.
Students will develop teaching and leadership skills.
Students will hone their skills in reflective listening and mentoring.
Students will gain a greater understanding of diverse learning styles and adult learning theory and practice.

Please note that the aforementioned learning outcomes apply to both semesters of the course. Our focus during the fall semester will be primarily on learning skills for effectively facilitating collaborative study groups, developing teaching and leadership skills, and honing skills in reflective listening and mentoring. We will also focus on gaining a greater understanding of diverse learning styles and adult learning theory and practice. We will continue our focus on all of these learning outcomes during the spring semester, with the greatest emphasis on gaining a greater understanding of diverse learning styles and adult learning theory.

Course Expectations and Attendance Policy for this Course

HUSL Policies on attendance, lateness and preparation

The program of instruction at the School of Law is based on an active and informed exchange between instructor and student and between student and student. Regular, prepared class attendance helps develop skills essential to the competent practice of law. A student who violates the attendance policy, including the instructor’s specification of class expectation described below, may lose his or her right to take the exam in the course, to receive course credit or may receive other penalties described below and in Academic Rule 108. Persistent or frequent lateness or unpreparedness may also be the basis for reduction of the grade awarded in a course. See Academic Rule 108 for further details.

It is very important that you come to class on time and that you are thoroughly prepared to discuss the assigned reading and to participate in all classroom exercises. All class sessions are mandatory. Attendance at all class sessions is necessary in order to ensure that you will be well prepared to lead your Structured Study Group. If you are unable to attend a class session due to serious illness or another exigency, please contact me in advance to make arrangements to make up the class. I will consider more than two hours of absence to be excessive under the law school attendance policy absent exceptional circumstances. Excessive absences may result in a no pass grade in the course.

Grading, Evaluation, and Course Credit

The course is offered on a pass/no pass basis. No examination will be given in this course. Students will be evaluated based on the quality of the teaching materials that they prepare for their Structured Study Group, their preparation and effectiveness as a Structured Study Group Leader, and their preparation and participation in the Structured Study Group Leader course. Participation in the course will include the submission of written documents as assigned and the oral presentation of mock teaching modules. Students who successfully complete the course will earn two credits for the semester.

TWEN Sites

Structured Study Group Leaders will have a TWEN site for communications with the students in their Structured Study Group. We will also have a TWEN site for all of the Leaders to communicate with each other. Information about the TWEN sites will be presented at the first class.

Technology Policy

You may use laptop computers or other electronic devices in the classroom to take notes and to access course related materials. You may not use your laptop or electronic devices for any other purposes.

Technological devices can be distracting to your classmates and to me and can undermine my efforts to create a collaborative and cooperative atmosphere conducive to learning for all students. Please refrain from using text-messaging, instant messaging, or e-mail; using cell phones, pagers, or any other communication device; and from displaying wallpaper, screen savers, or any other material on your computer screens that can reasonably be expected to offend or distract your classmates. I reserve the right to impose appropriate sanctions for violations of this policy.

Class Schedule and Assignments

Introductory Notes

I encourage you to read as far in advance as possible, as the readings will be helpful to you in leading your Structured Study Group from the beginning of the semester. Please note that the reading is heavily front-loaded for this course. Please note that we may not discuss the reading materials in the week they are assigned, and we may not have an opportunity to discuss all of the materials during our fall class sessions. I have selected these texts because they will be helpful to you in guiding your students through the basic skills required to succeed in law school, including developing effective learning strategies and becoming expert learners and expert readers. I have enumerated the topics in each chapter of the assigned reading in the syllabus to give you an overview of what is covered. As you do the reading, please envision how you would convey the information in the reading to your students. (This requires a greater attention to detail than if you were reading the information for your own learning.) Please do the required reading assignment before the class for which it is assigned, and please be prepared to discuss the reading in the week for which it is assigned.

You will have an opportunity to present “mock teaching modules” from *Expert Learning for Law Students* during class four and class five of the course. (You will have an opportunity to select the chapters for your teaching modules at the beginning of the semester.) Exercises from the *Expert Learning for Law Students Workbook* will be assigned during the semester. Please bring the *Workbook* to class each week.

In addition, you will be assigned selected eLearning modules (online lessons) from the national Academic Success website (lawschoolasp.org). You will be able to enter the site through the Student portal. (This portal is not password protected.) Please note that this website also contains information about additional resources that you may find helpful.

Please note that this syllabus is intended to serve as a general guide to the material to be discussed during each of the Structured Study Group Leader classes. Modifications of the syllabus will be announced as far in advance as possible. Additional readings, exercises for class discussion, reflective exercises, and writing assignments may be assigned during the course of the semester.

Class One August 22, 2013

Class Discussion

In this first class, I will present an orientation to the Structured Study Group Leader Course. We will discuss the fundamentals of leading a Structured Study Group, distribute materials, and review a number of logistical details. We will begin an exploration of the relevant pedagogy for conducting Structured Study Groups. We will

reflect on the fears and uncertainties of the first few weeks of law school, and we will discuss how to help our students during these challenging weeks. We will begin a discussion of how to teach concepts from *Reading Like a Lawyer* in the Structured Study Groups.

Reading Assignment

Reading Like a Lawyer Introduction and Part I Chapters 1-4

Building a Strong Foundation

Reading in Law School

Basic Briefing: Developing an Initial Strategy for Managing Cases

Advanced Thinking Leads to Advanced Reading

Expert Reading: A New Take on a Familiar Skill

Expert Learning for Law Students Part I Chapters 1-3

Basic Principles

Introduction to Expert Learning

Introduction to Law School Instruction

How Humans Learn

Writing Assignment

Please reflect on your experience during the first few weeks of law school and write a brief summary (to share and to submit) of your recollections looking back on this journey from your current vantage point.

Class Two

August 29, 2013

Class Discussion

We will discuss the Handbook for the Structured Study Group Leaders from Washburn University School of Law and the other readings. Please be prepared to share three things that you learned from the Handbook that will inform your work as a Structured Study Group Leader. We will continue the discussion of how to teach concepts from *Reading Like a Lawyer* in the Structured Study Groups.

Reading Assignment

Reading Like a Lawyer Part II Chapters 5-12

Mastering Reading in a Law School Casebook

Engage with Energy

Monitor Your Reading and Read for the Main Idea

Always (Always!) Read with a Clear Purpose

Get Oriented and “Own” Your Prior Knowledge and Experience

There’s More to the Five Ws (Who, What, When, Where, and Why) Than Meets the

Eye
Evaluate What You're Reading – Your Ideas Matter
Review, Rephrase, Record
Casebook Reading: A Summary

Expert Learning for Law Students Part I Chapters 4-8

Basic Principles

The Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Cycle

The Forethought Phase of the SRL Cycle

Know Thyself: Personality Types and Learning Styles

The Performance Phase of the SRL Cycle

Michael Hunter Schwartz, *2013 Handbook for Structured Study Group Leaders Ex-L at Washburn University School of Law* 2-17 (2013).

(This Handbook will be distributed in the first class.)

Writing Assignment

Please describe three examples of successful collaborative or cooperative learning experiences to share with the class. Please reflect on why these experiences were successful.

Class Three

September 12, 2013

Class Discussion

Professors Jim Morrow and Morgan Holcomb will conduct an in-service training on small group work during class. We will engage in a variety of kinds of small group exercises, and we will discuss the pedagogical reasons for using small group activities.

Leaders will also be asked to describe their first two (or three) Structured Study Group meetings. We will discuss any challenges that have arisen in these early study groups.

Reading Assignment

Gerald F. Hess, *Heads and Hearts: The Teaching and Learning Environment in Law School*, 52 J. Legal Educ. 75 (2002).

Gerald F. Hess, *Listening to our Students: Obstructing and Enhancing Learning in Law School*, 31 U.S.F. L. Rev. 941 (1997).

Please note that additional readings may be assigned for this training session, and a follow-up written exercise may be assigned after this session.

Class Four
September 19, 2013

Class Discussion

Students will conduct mock teaching modules based on *Expert Learning for Law Students*. We will continue our discussion of the readings.

Reading Assignment

Expert Learning for Law Students Part II Chapters 9-12
Learning Strategies for Law Students
 Strategies for Reading and Briefing Court Opinions
 Strategies for Learning in the Law School Classroom
 Strategies for Obtaining Assistance
 Organizational Strategies

Class Five
September 26, 2013

Class Discussion

Students will conduct mock teaching modules based on *Expert Learning for Law Students*. We will continue our discussion of the readings.

Reading Assignment

Expert Learning for Law Students Part II Chapters 13, 15, and 16
Learning Strategies for Law Students
 Memorization Strategies
 Strategies for Learning Legal Analysis
 Strategies for Preparing for and Taking Law School Examinations

Later in the semester you will have an opportunity to observe the Structured Study Group of one of your colleagues, to meet with your colleague to discuss your observation, and to submit a brief report about your observation. I will provide more details about the observations during our class this week.

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURED STUDY GROUPS

We provide Structured Study Groups for all sections of Contracts, Civil Procedure, Criminal Law, and Constitutional Law. The Structured Study Groups afford us a great opportunity to provide significant support to students during their first year of law school. The Structured Study Groups provide an excellent venue for teaching skills and for providing opportunities for active learning. The Structured Study Groups are led by second, third, and fourth year students who have excelled in law school.

The Structured Study Group initiative gives us an opportunity to focus on skill development during the critical first year of legal education. I believe that focusing our greatest efforts on the skill development of the first year students will have positive results for the academic success of our students in law school as well as on the bar exam.

The first year students have found the Structured Study Groups very helpful in learning study skills and exam taking skills and in providing perspective on the "big picture" of an area of the law. In some cases, the Structured Study Groups have served as a catalyst for students in forming their own study groups. The Structured Study Group Leaders have found the experience of leading the Structured Study Groups helpful both in developing their teaching skills and reviewing their substantive knowledge of Contracts, Civil Procedure, Criminal Law, and Constitutional Law in preparation for the bar exam.

The goal of the Structured Study Groups is to help all students develop the skills they need to succeed in law school, on the bar exam, and in the practice of law. The Structured Study Groups help the students to better understand the material they are studying in their classes by facilitating discussion of the material and by giving students the skills they need to learn how to master the material.

The Structured Study Groups focus on the mastery of skills within the framework of a doctrinal course. The Structured Study Groups focus on analytical skills, study skills, notetaking skills, outlining skills, and exam taking skills. The Structured Study Groups afford students an opportunity to work in small groups and to engage in active learning. The Structured Study Groups help students develop important skills in cooperative and collaborative learning. Participation in the study groups is voluntary.

The Structured Study Group Leaders use a variety of active learning techniques in conducting the study groups. The Structured Study Group Leaders serve as "coaches" and as "guides" for the students. They help students to understand an area of the law by providing context. The Structured Study Group Leaders also provide an important service as mentors for the first year students.