
 **Multistate Performance Test Preparation Course** 
Weekend
SYLLABUS
Spring 2009

Professor Kelly B. Mickelson
Class Time: 1:15pm – 3:00pm
Classroom – Law 04 (basement)

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TWEN site course name: MPT Spring 2009

Introduction and Course Objective

Welcome to the Multistate Performance Test Preparation course.

Most bar exams include the Multistate Performance Test (MPT), which presents 90-minute skills questions covering legal and fact analysis, problem solving, the resolution of ethical dilemmas, communication, and the organization and management of a lawyering task. This class will focus on preparation for the MPT by providing an overview of the required skills and helpful tips regarding success strategies. Even more importantly, you will actually take several practice MPT exams, receiving meaningful feedback regarding strengths and weaknesses.

This is a one credit course, graded on a pass/no pass basis. Also, the class will only be held for the first 7 Saturdays of the Spring 2009 semester.

I encourage your feedback throughout the semester. Please do not hesitate to call or email if you should need any assistance whatsoever. I am always available to you.

More about Me

I am currently a Manager of Academic Product Development at Thomson Reuters. I have been employed with Thomson Reuters for the past six years in varying capacities. I am primarily responsible for the creation and maintenance of new features on lawschool.westlaw.com.

I have previously taught at the University of Minnesota Law School in the Legal Research and Writing program. Also, I served as an Academic Success Program tutor & mentor to first year law school students here at HUSL.

I also have previous teaching experience as a Technical Writing Instructor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN.

I have worked for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Brooklyn, the FBI in Tampa, the Legal Aid Society (Capital Defenders Unit) in Manhattan, and for a juvenile court judge in Florida.

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Textbooks

There are no required textbooks for this class. Throughout the semester, we will be using materials that have been distributed in class or uploaded to our TWEN course site.

Use of our TWEN site

We will use our TWEN site almost exclusively for the distribution of class materials and other classroom activities. I also frequently use the Discussion and Live Discussion tools on the site. You are charged with the responsibility of reading the contents of every posting on TWEN.

Use of Laptops

Use of a laptop and a wireless connection will be required in every class as we will use technology throughout the duration of the course. However, I will not tolerate the use of the laptop to surf the web or do any other activities not related to our class discussion. If I come to know that you are using the laptop inappropriately, I reserve the right to give you a “no pass” grade for the course.

Attendance

You are required to attend all classes and to participate in class discussions and exercises. Penalties for missed classes are as follows:

1st missed class:	No consequences
2nd missed class:	One assignment will be lowered by one “pass level”
3 or more missed classes:	See note below

Because of the “front-loaded” aspect of this class, if you miss more than two classes, I will be forced to submit your name to the Dean’s office, with a recommendation that you be withdrawn from the course.

For the purposes of this rule, each class missed is considered one class, regardless of the length of the class. There are no excused absences.

The provisions of the Student Code of Conduct apply to all facets of this semester. In the event that the Student Code of Conduct conflicts with this document, this document shall apply.

Class Participation

It is imperative that our class be collaborative and welcoming of meaningful group discourse. Therefore, I encourage you to participate in all activities and class discussions. I reserve the right to ask that laptops and other accessories be put away during the class. However, each week, you are required to bring a laptop and have a live connection to participate in group discussions and activities.

Turning In Assignments

Though the bulk of our work will be done in class, we may from time to time have exercises that require a final work product to be submitted. Any completed assignments must be uploaded to the TWEN site on due date. No hard copy of your assignment will need to be submitted to the Registrar’s Office. Failure to submit an assignment on time will subject the assignment to be graded on a “no pass” basis. Late assignments may not be critiqued, depending on my schedule and availability.

Grading and Calculation of Final Grades

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1) | Week 2 Baseline (Out of Class) Exercise | graded on a High Pass/Pass/No Pass basis |
| 2) | Weeks 3, 4, 5 In-Class Exercises | graded on a High Pass/Pass/No Pass basis |
| 3) | Two In-Class MPT Simulated Exams | graded on a High Pass/Pass/No Pass basis |
| 4) | One (Out of Class) Answer Critique | graded on a High Pass/Pass/No Pass basis |
| 3) | Class Participation and Preparedness | graded on a High Pass/Pass/No Pass basis |

You must receive a Pass (or higher) on 75% of the assignments in order to receive a “Pass” grade. There are a total of 8 “assignments”; therefore, you must score a “Pass” or higher on at least 6 of these to pass the course. Assignments turned in with a reasonable, good faith effort are likely to receive a passing score. Despite individual assignments potentially being awarded a “High Pass” grade, the overall course grades will either be “Pass” or “No Pass”.

Weekly Assignments & Discussions

Weekly assignments are subject to change, although I will always give you plenty of notice to make/change your plans accordingly.

Week One: January 17, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Welcome and Introduction

Administrative Matters

Survey Results

Introduction to the Bar Exam Overall

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

http://www.ncbex.org/uploads/user_docrepos/MPT_IB2008_01.pdf

http://www.ncbex.org/uploads/user_docrepos/680299_testing.pdf

ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK

N/A

Week Two: January 24, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Review of MPT Statistics

Review of several previous exams

Components of the MPT in more detail

In-Class Exercise: TBD

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

Review sample task memos

Chapter 7 of “The Bar Exam in a Nutshell” (pdf posted to TWEN site)

ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK

N/A

Week Three: January 31, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Review “Blueprint for Success” Checklist

In-Class Exercise: “Quick Looks” – 5 exams – 10 minutes per exam

Other Discussions TBD

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

N/A

ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK

N/A

Week Four: February 7, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Persuasive Point Headings Discussion

In-Class Exercise: Preparing Effective Point Headings

Other Discussions TBD

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

N/A

ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK

N/A

Week Five: February 14, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Outlining and preparing your answer
Writing Case Illustrations
Employing Case Analysis
In-Class Exercise: Outlining an Answer
Other Discussions TBD

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

N/A

ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK

N/A

Week Six: February 21, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Simulated MPT Exam

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

N/A

ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK

N/A

Week Seven: February 28, 2009

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and DISCUSSIONS

Course Evaluations
Simulated MPT Exam

READING ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DONE FOR THIS WEEK

N/A

ASSIGNMENT DUE

Critique of your answer written in Week 7 – uploaded to TWEN by March 7, 2009 at 1:15pm