

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA SCHOOL OF LAW**  
**FOUNDATIONS IN LAW – FALL 2019**

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Class: Fridays 1:00 – 3:00 PM  
Room HH 360

I am normally in my office during the business day Monday – Friday when I am not in class. Appointments are not required. If you want an appointment, please text me. You are welcome to contact me anytime.

Course Overview: This course is meant to provide students with the foundational skills necessary to be successful in law school and on the bar exam. The focus of the course will be on essay writing and analytical skills. The course will also introduce skills related to multiple choice questions, learning, and test-taking.

Substantive Content: This is not a substantive law course. However, skills need to be taught within the context of substantive law in order to effectively apply them. Therefore, the skills in this class will be taught within the context of discrete topics within Real Property and Civil Procedure. Specifically, the substantive content of this course will be as follows:

- (1) Real Property: adverse possession and easements
- (2) Civil Procedure: jurisdiction and venue

Students will be provided with an electronic text booklet that contains the substantive law that will be used for this course.

**GRADING**

This class is a graded course. This class is not blind-graded. The weighted components of the final grade for the course are listed below:

Graded Essays	40%
Self-Assessments	20%
Participation	20%
Final Exam	20%

The final grade for the course will be assigned at the end of the semester. During the semester, students will receive scores from Kaplan for essays. The professor will assign scores for assignments including self-assessments, and participation that will be computed into the final grade for the course. Per law school policy, this class will be graded on a curve. The curve will not be applied until the end of the semester, after completion and grading of all work. Thus, the points received for each assignment represent raw scores only. Information on current College

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of Law grading policies for assigning grade points can be found at: <https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current%20students/academic-policies> and below:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Point Equivalent</b>
A (Excellent)	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.0
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C (Satisfactory)	2.0
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D (Poor)	1.0
D-	0.67
E (Failure)	0.0

(1) **Graded Essays.** Some essays will be designated as graded essay assignments. Some essays are designated as graded essay tests and are completed and submitted during class in testing conditions. These essays will be submitted to graders at Kaplan bar review for objective feedback. Professor Maxwell will assign the grade.

(2) **Self-Assessments.** Accurate self-assessment is a very important component in skill-building. Students will be provided with self-assessment worksheets that allow them to evaluate and track their skill proficiencies. Students will be asked to complete self-assessments throughout the course.

(3) **Participation.** Skill building requires a large amount of practical application of the skills that are being taught and developed in the course. Classes are primarily activity based and provide opportunities to practice the skills necessary to succeed in law school and the bar exam. Therefore, attendance and participation are important for success in this class. Participation includes meaningfully participating in class activities, as well as good-faith and on-time completion of all assignments not encompassed by the other categories, i.e.: Graded essays, Self-Assessments, etc. Participation may include assignments not encompassed by the categories above, including assigned multiple-choice questions in the Kaplan Qbank. Irrelevant internet browsing is not participating.

(4) **Final Exam.** The final exam consist of timed essays during week twelve's class. You will apply the skills you have learned throughout the course.

**CHANGES AND CONFLICTS:**

This syllabus is subject to modification. I will notify students of any significant changes or additions. If there is a conflict between a rule provided in this syllabus and a rule provided in the Student Handbook or Student Honor Code, the rule in the Handbook or Honor Code prevails. Please alert me to any such conflicts that you identify.

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**CLASS PREPARATION WORKLOAD:**

ABA Standard 310 requires that students devote 120 minutes to out-of-class preparation for every “classroom hour” of in-class instruction. Foundations in Law has 2 “classroom hours” of instruction each week, requiring at least 4 hours of preparation outside of class.

Because the course includes a wide variety of skills-practice and other exercises, you should spend the bulk of your time outside of class on cultivating the techniques we discuss in class. When combined with your completion of the self-assessments, each activity spent outside of class should help reinforce memorization and legal rule application skills. The course is designed to help you improve your law school performance as well, so be liberal with your time investment. Always look to apply what you learn here in your other classes.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Dean Rachel Inman when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

**ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION:**

I welcome your feedback. I invite you to share your thoughts with me in person, via email, phone, or otherwise. At the very least, complete an online evaluation at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. You will receive an administrative email when evaluations are open. Summary results are available at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

	Objectives	Substantive Content	Assignments
Week One August 30 <sup>th</sup> Overview	1. Students will understand the objectives and expectations for the class 2. Students will be able to identify the skills that will be developed in the class 3. Students will be able to articulate the different levels of critical thinking	Real Property – Adverse Possession	<b>Before:</b> Review Substantive law on adverse possession in text; <b>After:</b> Watch substantive law video; Complete adverse possession essay and <i>submit for grading</i>

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	hierarchy and how they relate to skill development		
Week Two September 6 Learning and Self-Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to explain the importance of pre-testing</li> <li>2. Students will be able to identify the different stages of the learning cycle</li> <li>3. Students will be able to perform self-assessment</li> </ol>	Civil Procedure – Subject Matter Jurisdiction	<p><b>Before:</b> Review Substantive law on subject matter jurisdiction in text; watch substantive law video</p> <p><b>After:</b> complete subject matter jurisdiction essay and self-assessment worksheet; upload self-assessment worksheet to canvas</p>
Week Three September 13 Content Organization and Memorization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will understand the importance of organizing content</li> <li>2. Students will be able to identify different techniques for organizing content</li> <li>3. Students will be able to explain the importance of memorization techniques and practice</li> </ol>	Property - Adverse Possession Civil Procedure - Subject Matter Jurisdiction	<p><b>After:</b> complete and submit a study aid for adverse possession and subject matter jurisdiction</p>
Week Four September 20 MBTI, study preferences, law school success	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will understand the connection between psychological type and learning</li> <li>2. Students will be able to self-type</li> <li>3. Students will be able to design effective study methods based on their unique type</li> </ol>	None	<p><b>Before:</b> Take and submit a completed MBTI</p> <p><b>After:</b> design type-based strategies or set type-based goals for implementation this semester</p>
Week Five September 27	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to use different reading strategies</li> </ol>	Real Property - Easements	<p><b>Before:</b> Review substantive law on</p>

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<p>Reading Comprehension IRAC</p>	<p>2. Students will be able to identify discrete IRAC components 3. Students will be able to create answer outlines that demonstrate proper IRAC organization</p>		<p>easements; watch substantive law video <b>After:</b> Complete easement essay and <i>submit for grading</i></p>
<p>Week Six October 11 Rule Statements</p>	<p>1. Students will be able to understand the importance of Rule Statements in essay writing 2. Students will be able to articulate characteristics of successful rule statements 3. Students will be able to understand the importance of practice and repetition in skill development</p>	<p>Civil Procedure – Jurisdiction</p>	<p><b>After:</b> Complete Issue Spotting and Rule Statement, IRAC Outline, and Writing Exercises for 5 MCQs</p>
<p>Week Seven October 18 Timed Essays</p>	<p>1. Students will be able to understand general test-taking atmosphere 2. Students will be able to reflect on how test-taking conditions influence skills and performance 3. Students will be able to develop context for the second half of class focusing on strategic test-taking and preparation</p> <p><i>Two 60-minute Essays will be completed in class and submitted for</i></p>	<p>Real Property – Adverse Possession</p>	<p><b>After:</b> None</p>

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	<i>grading before leaving class</i>		
Week Eight October 25 Analysis and Logical Reasoning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to explain the fundamental requirements of legal analysis</li> <li>2. Students will be able to explain fundamentals of deductive logic and propositional statements</li> <li>3. Students will be able to write concise, effective legal analysis</li> </ol>	All Subjects	<b>After:</b> TBA
Week Nine November 1 Writing Principles and Study Tools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to apply strategic writing principles by making effective answer templates</li> <li>2. Students will understand the benefit of making their own study tools</li> <li>3. Students will be able to create at least one study tool for learning legal rules</li> </ol>	All Subjects	<b>After:</b> Complete essay and <i>submit for grading</i>
Week Ten – November 8 Assessing IRAC and Legal Analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to evaluate a sample answer for IRAC, Rule Statements, and Analysis</li> <li>2. Students will be able to assess rule statements and analysis</li> <li>3. Students will be able to identify ways to improve analysis</li> </ol>	All subjects	<b>After:</b> Complete Short Answer Assignment
Week Eleven – November 15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to understand</li> </ol>	All Subjects	<b>After:</b> None

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Strategic Test-Taking	<p>strategies for earning points on essay exams</p> <p>2. Students will be able to identify skills necessary to maximize success on essay exams</p> <p>3. Students will be able to apply/develop a strategy for approaching multiple choice questions</p>		
<p>Week Twelve – November 22 Final Exam</p>	<p>1. Students will be able to apply the skills they have learned through the class in simulated test conditions</p> <p><i>Essays will be submitted to Kaplan for grading</i></p>	In-class essays	<b>After:</b> None
<p>Week Thirteen – November 26 Review &amp; Exam Preparation</p>	<p>1. Students will be able to identify effective techniques for organization, accountability, and stress management</p> <p>2. Students will be able to identify various pitfalls of exam preparation</p> <p>3. Student will be able to create a study plan</p>	Review	None – end of class!