COURSE NAME: Lawyering Skills Competition – Client Counseling Team  
Spring 2015

COURSE NUMBER:  8704C

PROFESSOR: Barbara Glesner Fines and Mary Kay Kisthardt

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: Students represent the school in the ABA Client Counseling Competition. The competition simulates a law office consultation in which law students, acting as attorneys, are presented with a client matter. They conduct an interview with a person playing the role of the client and then explain how they would proceed further in the hypothetical situation. Students are selected by application. The 2014-15 team has been selected. Students desiring to act as alternates for this year’s competition, which gives the students priority for team in 2015-16, should enroll in the January client counseling mini-term course.

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: The topic of the 2014-15 competition is Family law

COURSE BOOKS: Course materials are provided

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will achieve entry-level competence in conducting an initial client interview, including the ability to:

- Establish a working atmosphere
- Use active listening and appropriate questioning skills to learn the client’s story, goals and expectations
- Analyze a client’s problem with creativity and from both legal and non-legal perspectives
- Recognize, clarify, and respond professionally to any moral or ethical issues that arise in the interview
- Formulate alternative courses of action to address the client’s problem
- Assist the client in his or her understanding of problems and solutions and in making an informed choice
- Work effectively in a professional collaboration
- Reflect on own performance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:
Students will meet from November through March to familiarize themselves with the area of law for the year's competition and the legal and non-legal resources available to solve problems in that field. During the January miniterm course (Client Counseling) students will be trained in client interviewing and counseling skills and have multiple practices with feedback from faculty and practitioners.

METHOD OF GRADING:

A student’s grade for the course will be based on:

- Participation and commitment to the program
- Skills in interviewing and counseling demonstrated in final pre-competition practice rounds and competition rounds
- Preparation of outlines of law and resources for problems in the field of practice
- Preparation of client communication documents helpful in counseling clients (engagement letters, checklists, brochures, etc.)

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:
All attorneys must have superior client relationship skills.