**COURSE NAME:** Seminar in Family Violence

**COURSE NUMBER:** Law 8751S

**PROFESSORS:** Barbara Glesner Fines & Mary Weir

**ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES:**

Demonstrated interest in subject matter and willingness to work hard.

**DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES:**

Courses in family law, professional responsibility, evidence and civil procedure are highly desirable prerequisites. Students who wish to undertake direct client representation during their field work should be Rule 13 certified by the start of classes.

**COURSE BOOKS:**

Required: Domestic Violence Law by Nancy K.D. Lemon (3rd ed 2009) & Course supplement (to be distributed in class).

**METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:**

Grades will be assigned on a point basis:

50 points = Competency Exam – 2 hours (Mid-term)

Combination very short or multiple choice/true false questions and short essays

50 points = Class preparation and assignments (teaching, reaction papers, in-class quizzes)

50 points = Final Trial

Additional One-Credit Hour Options

You may enroll in this course for three credit hours if you would like to either use the course to fulfill your R&W requirement or pursue an internship opportunity in connection with the course. YOU MUST OBTAIN PRIOR PERMISSION OF PROFESSOR GLESNER FINES TO ENROLL IN THE THREE-CREDIT HOUR VERSION OF THE COURSE.

Using the Course to Fulfill Your R&W Requirement

If you wish to write an R&W on a topic covered in this course, you may do so by:

- Enrolling in the course for three rather than two credit hours
- Writing a trial brief or memorandum in support of a motion in connection with your trial

Internship Opportunities in Connection with the Course

Individual internships for one-credit hour may be available. Students should contact Professor Glesner Fines before the semester begins to negotiate these internship opportunities.
SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

An in-depth examination of family violence from a legal perspective. Course topics will include interdisciplinary study of the dynamics and psychology of family violence, of historical and social policies, specialized problems of family violence (including intimated partner violence, child abuse and neglect, gay and lesbian battering, and elder abuse) and legal responses. Students will receive practical training in safety planning, intake, review of community resources, case logistics, and advocacy for temporary orders.

COURSE CONTENT:

History and overview of legal and political responses to family violence
Psychological Dynamics of Abusive Relationships
Doing the Work – Interviewing and Counseling Victims
Doing the Work – Interviewing and Counseling Batterers
Children of Battered Women & Battered Women as Mothers
Dynamics of Child Abuse
Legal Responses to Child Abuse – the Child Protection System
Mediation & The Role of the Guardian Ad Litem
Legal Responses: Violence and Divorce/Custody determinations
Legal Responses: Civil Protective Orders
Training – Obtaining a Protective Order
Criminal Law Protections
Law Enforcement & Prosecutorial Response
Victims of violence as Defendants: Self Defense & Beyond
Student reports on special topics

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Ability to explain how the following laws apply in a common situation of domestic violence
   · divorce, custody, visitation and relocation
   · termination of parental rights and criminal child abuse and neglect
   · adult and child orders of protection
   · criminal prosecution of general crimes and specialized offenses against the family
   · the defenses available to battered women as criminal defendants
   · Immigration law and international kidnapping
2. Ability to explain basic dynamics of domestic violence such as
   · The difference between common couple violence and domestic terrorism
   · The causes and aggravating condition of domestic violence
   · The underlying values in tension in domestic violence legislation
3. Ability to conduct a screening interview and provide safety planning for victims
4. Ability to counsel victims on the available resources in the community and the advantages and disadvantages of various courses of action
5. Ability to assist a victim in obtaining a full order of protection
6. Ability to counsel a victim on the implications of raising issues of domestic violence in a divorce or custody proceeding
7. Ability to prepare evidence for criminal or civil trial involving issues of domestic violence

**RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:**

“Domestic violence has a tremendous impact on the legal profession. Whether or not lawyers realize it, domestic violence permeates the practice of law in almost every field. Corporate lawyers, bankruptcy lawyers, tort lawyers, real property lawyers, criminal defense lawyers, and family lawyers, regularly represent victims or perpetrators of domestic violence. Criminal and civil judges preside over a range of cases involving domestic violence as an underlying or a hotly contested issue. Failure to fully understand domestic violence legal issues threatens the competency of individual lawyers and judges, as well as the legal profession as a whole.” (From American Bar Association Commission On Domestic Violence, Educating To End Domestic Violence: A Law School Report (Jan. 16, 2000) http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/infosres/etedv/intro.htm

Thus, the course is critical to any student who anticipates a career in family or juvenile law. Important for students considering criminal law work. Useful and relevant to any student who is interested in a career using interdisciplinary approaches to solving social problems or advocating on behalf of specific client groups.

**RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR MO/MULTI-STATE BAR EXAMINATION PREPARATION:**

This is not a bar review course; this course prepares students for the practice of law after they have passed the bar examination