COURSE NAME:  Complex Litigation: Class Actions

COURSE NUMBER:  Law 8706

PROFESSOR:  Steve Wolfe

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES:  Civil Procedure I


Supplemental materials will also be assigned and distributed via TWEN.

METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:

Early in the semester, students will be provided with a fact pattern and will prepare a legal memo supporting certification of a class. Research for this project will be limited to materials found in the textbook and supplied by the instructor; no external research will be permitted. The memo will be 85% of the grade and will be due before Thanksgiving break.

In a separate oral presentation made to the instructor, students will be required to explain and defend the arguments contained in their memo. Each presentation will be fifteen minutes long and will constitute 15% of the grade.

NOTE: The oral presentations are tentatively scheduled to take place on November 22 and November 23 – the first two days of Thanksgiving break. These dates are negotiable.

In addition, class participation (including participation in class projects) will be considered.

Anyone with questions may call me at 512-5652. Do not send e-mails because I rarely monitor my UMKC e-mail account.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:  An examination of class actions in federal courts.
COURSE CONTENT: This course focuses on class action litigation in federal court. To that end, most of the class is spent understanding how to apply – and how to defend against the application of – Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The Class Action Fairness Act will also be discussed. Cases examined include tobacco, securities fraud, employment discrimination, and consumer cases. Examples will be drawn from actual litigation conducted in the Western District of Missouri. In addition, depending on the pace of the litigation and any possible conflict issues, exercises will be derived from a case currently pending in that court.

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES: In the words of my predecessor, “This is a critical course for anyone considering a career in high-stakes civil litigation.”

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR BAR EXAM: I have been told this course will be helpful for the Federal Civil Procedure component of the Missouri Bar Exam. I can neither confirm nor dispute this assessment.