Mini-Research Project Instructions
Introduction to Law and Lawyering Processes II
Section V – Family Law
DUE: MARCH 7, 2010

This project is intended to be a measurement of your research skills. In prior years, a research quiz was given in the spring semester to accomplish this goal. This project is our attempt to try a different measurement. Treat this project as a take-home examination.

1. Pick one of the problems on the attached page. Pick only one. Doing more than one will not result in a better grade. One and only one will be graded.

2. Research your problem using a variety of the sources we have discussed this year, making sure to research in both print and electronic sources, as appropriate.

3. Detail the research steps you took to answer your question in a research log. Make sure your log is in narrative form, not just a list of sources. Make sure that you include sufficient information so that a person reading your log will be able to follow your research path and will be guided through a fair amount of sources. Include commentary about the sources including what worked and what did not. Include commentary about when you used print sources and when you used electronic sources. Include commentary about the time you spent with each source. When doing your log, use proper citation format for all sources. The log portion should be no more than three pages with double-spaced text and size 13 or 14 New Times Roman font.

4. Write no more than a two paragraph short answer to the question (i.e., similar to the introductory paragraph(s) of a memo). You must use proper citation format. Use good paragraph structure. Page-long paragraphs are never acceptable.
5. The Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy apply to both parts of this project. Unlike prior assignments in Intro, you may NOT discuss any part of this project with anyone. The work you submit must be the product of your own efforts. No one may review your written work, in any form, at any stage before it is submitted. You may not discuss, exchange, give, or receive from anyone else research materials, citations or other resources.

You should use the internet, Lexis and/or Westlaw in addition to print sources. Do not take any action that might impede the research efforts of others, including any action that limits the accessibility of library books or other resources. Any failure to comply with these restrictions will be reported as a violation of the Honor Code.

6. Your project must be submitted to the TWEN website for your course by 11:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 7, 2010, using only your anonymous legal writing number to identify your project. Your project must follow the Format Requirements of the UMKC Legal Writing Program and include the required cover sheet.

Late projects will NOT be accepted. A late project will result in an F on this project to be computed into your final course grade. Only exceptional circumstances will be considered for any waiver of the timeliness requirement. Computer problems are not exceptional circumstances.

7. **Grading**: The goal of the Legal Writing Program is for this project to accurately measure a student’s research skills. As a result, this project will be graded on the following straight scale, without any curve, in all sections:

- A – 90% and above
- B – 80% and above
- C – 70% and above
- D – 60% and above
- F – 59% and below.

Note that no plus or minus grades will be given. In addition, no mandatory mean will be imposed.
8. This project will be evaluated according to these criteria:

a) Research Log (65%)
   (1) Evidences a logical and efficient sequence of sources.
   (2) Reflects a research plan that is comprehensive and thorough including appropriate resources for the issue.
   (3) Describes a research plan that would allow another researcher to follow its progression easily.
   (4) Shows an appropriate choice of print and electronic sources.
   (5) Includes proper citation to all sources.

b) Answer to Question (35%)
   (1) Correctly describes the current status of the law.
   (2) Includes any proposed changes in the law, if applicable.
   (3) Written concisely and grammatically correct.
   (4) Organized appropriately to inform the reader.
   (5) Includes proper citation to all sources.

**Sample Log Passage**

Neither the first or last paragraph of a log:

I found the two publishers of Ohio Revised Code, Baldwin and Page, and researched my issue in both. I started by using the general index for both publications. I looked up property and found no mention of lost property in either book. I then attempted to specifically look up lost property and still found no information that would help me. I referred back to *Ohio Jurisprudence 3d* to scan the footnotes that it provides. These footnotes tell the reader . . . .
Problem A

Juan Alien was born in Venezuela and is neither a U.S. citizen nor a permanent resident. Juan has lived in the U.S. since January 1, 2005, based on his non-immigrant H-1B status as a temporary worker.

Juan planned to return to Venezuela after spending six years in the U.S., which is generally the maximum period of time aliens may stay in the U.S. based on H-1B status. That changed in 2007 when Juan fell in love with Mark Citizen, a U.S. citizen. The couple is not married, although they want to raise a family in Kansas City. Juan’s H-1B status ends December 31, 2010, which means that Juan must leave the U.S. by January 1, 2011.

You have agreed to meet with Juan and Mark to advise them on whether Juan can become a U.S. permanent resident based solely on his relationship with Mark. To prepare for your meeting you need to examine current and proposed immigration law regarding whether a U.S. citizen can sponsor his or her same-sex alien domestic partner for permanent residency.
Problem B

Your client, Paul Parent, and his wife, Polly Parent, have decided to divorce. This is a mutual decision and little animosity exists between the parties. The Parents have two children. Johnny is ten years old and Sarah is seven years old. The Parents have decided on a parenting plan where the children will stay in the family home in Blue Springs, Missouri, and each parent will live there and care for the children in alternating weeks. Thus, each parent will have the same amount of time with the children. Each will also have to maintain a separate residence for the week they do not have the children.

The Parents are both attorneys and make comparable incomes. You decide to research Missouri law regarding the determination of child support when the parents have equal time with the children, including any changes on the horizon before advising Paul.