COURSE NAME: Estates & Trusts
COURSE NUMBER: Law 611
PROFESSOR: Belian

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: Property I and II

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE BOOKS:


METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:
Your grade will be determined by the following formula:
10% = PREPAREDNESS for each class.
Preparedness will be measured two ways:
• By the quality of your PARTICIPATION in class discussion, both voluntary and when called upon;
• By your performance on single-question “quizzes” to be administered during each class.
20% = Four (4) PROJECTS to be completed as assigned throughout the semester.
70% = FINAL EXAM, which includes both multiple-choice and essay components.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:
Much of “Property Law” consists of the rules governing transfers of property, including those transfers that occur at death. Estates & Trusts introduces students to the fundamental concepts and rules regarding such transfers as well as to their history and future. Not everyone will ever be arrested, some will never pay much attention to the standardized contracts that bind them, a few will never need to worry about family law or juvenile law, but everyone will die, making Estates & Trusts, a very odd and specialized field with many technical components, one of the most universally recognized, respected, and required areas of legal expertise.
COURSE CONTENT:
This course will introduce students to the three principal methods for transferring property at death – Inheritance, Wills, and Nonprobate Transfers (including Trusts). Students will learn the fundamental rules governing these transactions as well as significant variations in use today in the United States. In addition, students will learn the basic concepts governing probate administration and will be introduced briefly to general concepts of estate planning.

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:
• Essential for any student interested in a career in estate planning.
• Extremely advisable for students interested in careers in general law, family law, and elder law.
• Very helpful for students interested in advising small business owners, individual tax payers, immigrants and émigrés, exempt organizations, employee benefit plans, health care providers, and government program administrators.
• Inevitably useful for anyone negotiating contracts involving individuals, especially in personal injury claims.

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR MO/MULTI-STATE BAR EXAMINATION:
• E&T is not tested on the MBE.
• Subjects covered in this course are among those most frequently tested on the MEE. Although not every MEE question written by the National Conference of Bar Examiners is used every year, the NCBE drafters always include 1 and usually include 2 questions (out of 7 offered) from material taught in this course. The material is difficult even when learned in a structured class setting, and learning it for the bar exam without taking E&T would increase that difficulty.
• The NCBE drafters offer three MPT questions each exam (6 per year). Missouri uses one of those in each exam (2 per year). It appears that one (1) question using E&T material is offered by the NCBE drafters, on average, at least every other year.