COURSE NAME: Seminar in Family Violence

CATALOGUE NUMBER: 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:
Domestic Violence Law by Nancy K.D. Lemon (2nd ed 2005) & Course supplement (to be distributed in class).

METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:
Letter grades based on class participation, paper, presentation, field observations, and examination. For more information, see http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/profiles/glesnerfines/bgf-dv.htm

Students may enroll in the course for two or three credit hours. With a three-credit hour option, the student may use the course paper for their R&W requirement OR may arrange a one-credit hour internship. Permission of the instructor is required to enroll for three credit hours.

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
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/infores/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.