COURSE NAME: The Quest for a Satisfying Career in Law
COURSE NUMBER: 8885H
PROFESSOR: Douglas Linder/ Nancy Levit

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: None

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE BOOKS:
Photocopied course materials (to be made available at a later date).

METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:
Students will write a short paper about an interview they will conduct with someone who
received his or her law degree at least ten years ago. The paper, which will be
summarized in class, will discuss some aspect of the interviewee’s career that has been
the source of either happiness or unhappiness.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:
In this course we examine what research suggests about the likelihood that a career in law
will prove satisfying. We will explore what specific types of firms and work
environments are most likely to produce happy lawyers. We also will consider studies
from the fields of neuroscience and psychology and what they suggest about steps that
lawyers, law firms, and law schools can take to improve prospects for career satisfaction.
We will also discuss how high happiness should rank among life’s goals.

COURSE CONTENT:
Defining happiness
The science of happiness
Survey data on levels of satisfaction in law and other careers
A “happiness toolbox” for lawyers
Creating a happier law firm
How can law schools better equip students to find satisfying careers?
Ranking the importance of happiness among life goals
Stories (students will be required to interview a lawyer who graduated at least 10 years
ago about career satisfaction and write a short paper based on that interview)

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:
What could be more relevant than this, assuming you’d like to be happy in your career?