

ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE:	Survey Course on CA Bar Exam Preparation & Skills
COURSE NUMBER:	LAW E539-1, -2, or -3
PROFESSOR(S) NAME:	Professor Jeff Berk Professor Edwin Shiver Professor Bruce Mitteldorf
PROFESSOR CONTACT INFO:	Professor Jeff Berk – 707-565-2443, jberk@sonoma-county.org Professor Edwin Shiver – 707-539-5400, ecshiver@aol.com Professor Bruce Mitteldorf - brumit@sonic.net ; tel. 707-887-9542
SCHEDULE:	Wednesdays, 6:00 – 9:00pm, Room #103
UNITS:	3
COURSE TYPE:	Elective
PREREQUISITES:	Completion of third-year courses
COREQUISITES:	None
TEXTS AND MATERIALS: (Identification of any texts, materials and references used throughout the course.)	<u>All Required:</u> <i>Gilbert Law Summaries California Bar Performance Test Skills 5th Edition 1994:</i> Honigsberg (This must be purchased in the Empire College Bookstore) <i>Practice Exams, other past Bar Exam data (no texts)</i> “thumb drive” with copies of prior Bar Exam essay and PT questions, 2005 to 2014, for personal downloading, available for purchase at the Empire College Bookstore. <i>Strategies & Tactics for the MBE (Multistate Bar Exam)</i> , by Kimm Walton and Steve Emanuel; Revised by Schonbrun, Emanuel, Rapoport, Wonsowicz and Hirschberg; published by Aspen in their Emanuel Bar Review series. Publication Date: October 11, 2012, ISBN-13: #978-1454809920, Edition: 5
COURSE DESCRIPTION:	This survey course combines all of the significant elements of three former bar elective courses and will be offered as a one-semester course incorporating three, 4- to 5-week segments of each of the Bar preparation courses which are usually individually offered as separate electives. Taught by three professors, this course incorporates Legal Skills (Performance Test section), Analysis and Insights on the California Bar Exam (“straight” Essay Questions section), and MBE Exam Preparation (MBE section.)
COURSE OBJECTIVES / ANTICIPATED LEARNING OUTCOMES: (Description of what students will be expected to know and be able to do at the end of the course. What skills or knowledge will be gained by the end of the course.)	Assist students in developing skills required to pass the CA Bar Examination by taking past exams essay questions, receiving instruction on Bar Exam question analyses and grading procedures, and enhancing the student’s writing and analytical skills.
FORMAT OVERVIEW / METHOD OF INSTRUCTION (Description of how the course will be taught, including breakdown of lecture, practicum, etc.)	First section, Prof. Berk - Students will take four past Performance Exams (3 hours each) outside of class, and then will discuss their answers in class. Second section, Prof. Shiver - Students will take past Bar Exams essay questions and then will discuss answers in class. In-class instruction will include detailed dissection of actual past Bar Exam essay questions, including by screen projections of the questions.

	Final MBE Section, Prof. Mitteldorf - Students will take MBE practice exams in and outside of class, and then will discuss and dissect answers in class.
EXAMS:	General Policies: Exams begin promptly at 6 p.m. Take-home exams and papers must be submitted to the Law School office by 6 p.m. on the due date, unless otherwise noted. All students must take examinations as scheduled. It is recognized that in special circumstances and due to emergencies, it may be necessary to schedule delayed examinations. An emergency is defined as a serious illness or injury to the student or a member of his or her immediate family. Special Circumstances are defined as other situations that, in the opinion of the Dean, are sufficient to warrant delay in taking examinations. Any student taking delayed examinations <u>must have the prior written approval of the Dean.</u> No examination may be taken <u>prior</u> to the day of the regularly scheduled examination. If delayed examinations are approved by the Dean, <u>a fee of \$75 will be charged for each such exam taken.</u> Failure to complete an exam is not sufficient reason for a late or retake exam.
GRADING / ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:	Empire College uses the following grading system for this class. <u>Pass/Fail Classes:</u> 65 - 100 P Pass/Credit 64 and Below F Fail/No Credit
ATTENDANCE:	Under the standards of the Committee of Bar Examiners of the State Bar of California, “regular and punctual attendance” at classes is necessary to satisfy residency requirements. Students should plan to attend all classes. A minimum of 80 percent attendance is required in each course. The instructor will take role at each class session. A student must attend the entire class session in order to be counted as present for that class session. Students who arrive excessively late, as determined by the instructor, or who leave class before it is dismissed by the instructor, will not be counted as present for that class session. Make-up classes will be scheduled on evenings when classes are not usually held or on weekends. Attendance at make-up classes, while strongly encouraged, is not required. Class sessions which are delayed or canceled because of holidays or policy of Empire College School of Law, and which are re-scheduled for a different date are considered regularly scheduled class sessions, not make-up classes. A student who has exceeded the absence limits outlined will be automatically dropped from the course. A student who is dropped from a course will be required to repeat the course at its next offering in order to meet graduation requirements.
ASSIGNMENTS:	Weekly assignment
Week 1: January 8, 2014	Berk – Gilberts – Chapters I - III

Week 2: January 15, 2014	Berk – Exam A** **Exams will be taken outside of class and will be submitted by email no later than Monday at 5:00PM before the scheduled class. Exams are three hours. Gilberts – Chapter IV
Week 3: January 22, 2014	Berk – Exam B** Gilberts – Chapter V
Week 4: January 29, 2014	Berk – Exam C** Gilberts – Chapter VI
Week 5: February 5, 2014	Berk – Exam D**
Week 6: February 12, 2014	Shiver – Introduction to Bar Exam administration (lecture): Brief Bar Exam history; functions of Committee of Bar Examiners, Admissions Office staff, Graders, and Reappraisers; typical structures of “straight” (non-PT) essay questions; importance of recognizing and response to “the Call”; review the grading process; introduction to the various answering techniques. Review selected past essay questions. Discuss further answering techniques; grading models, “raw” v. “scaled” scores, “short” answer considerations; further review of past Bar Exam essay questions and their “selected” answers; time control techniques.
Week 7: February 19, 2014	Shiver – Bar Exam grade “calibration” policies and applicant reactions; students outline in-class answers to selected past Bar Exam essay questions.
Week 8: February 26, 2014	Shiver - Handling Bar Exam taking “emergencies” and methods to mitigate the adverse effects; review essay question analyses by substantive subject matter, predicting question subject coverages; student in-class answers to selected past Bar Exam essay questions.
Week 9: March 5, 2012	Shiver – Review of common applicant shortcomings in answering Bar Exam essay questions, of essay answering techniques; further practice essay question answers; “analysis” summing-up.
Week 10: March 12, 2014	Mitteldorf - <i>Prior to first MBE class:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From text, take entire “Practice MBE—A.M. Exam” under timed conditions (3 hours, uninterrupted). Do not allow yourself extra time. Do not look at or refer to answers until you have completed the entire exam. Use answer sheet provided in text, or photocopy thereof. Do not write in text. • Grade your own exam with the Answer Key provided in text; bring your numerical score to class on an otherwise blank piece of paper. • <u>Note:</u> Your score on this practice exam will not affect your course grade. Rather, we will use students’ scores (anonymously) as a baseline assessment of MBE readiness. <i>Class:</i> Introduction; goals; the peculiar cruelty of MBEs; good and bad news about MBEs; how to make MBEs work in your favor.
Week 11: March 19, 2014	Mitteldorf - <i>Homework:</i> Read text’s introductory materials, pp. vii – xxxix; read introductory sections of <i>Contracts</i> and <i>Torts</i> chapters; take at least 20 Contracts MBEs and 20 Torts MBEs from text. <i>Class:</i> Discussion and practice of Contracts and Torts MBEs.
Week 12: March 26, 2014	Mitteldorf - <i>Homework:</i> Read introductory sections of <i>Criminal Law and Procedure</i> and <i>Constitutional Law</i> chapters; take at least 25

	<p>MBEs from each of those chapters. <i>Class:</i> Discussion and practice of Criminal Law and Procedure and Constitutional Law MBEs.</p>
Week 13: April 2, 2014	<p>Mitteldorf - <i>Homework:</i> Read introductory sections of <i>Evidence</i> and <i>Real Property</i> chapters; take at least 25 MBEs from each of those chapters. Discussion and practice of Evidence and Real Property MBEs.</p>
Week 14: April 9, 2014	<p>Mitteldorf - <i>Homework:</i> From text, take entire “Practice MBE—P.M. Exam” under timed conditions (3 hours, uninterrupted). <i>Class:</i> 3-hour, 100-question MBE practice exam.</p>
Week 15: Exam TBA	<p>Date will be published by Law School Office –be sure to check Exam Schedule when published. A three-hour final exam for Prof. Shiver’s part of the course would involve the students writing answers to three prior Bar Exam essay questions in Outline format.</p>

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