

PSC-285 Mock Trial: Criminal Course – Winter 2020
Arts and Letters Hall, Room 310
Monday 6pm-9:30pm

Instructor: Eric Wright
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Office Hours M 6pm-9:30pm and by appointment

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General Course Description

Mock Trial is a co-curricular activity involving intercollegiate competitive simulation of criminal court cases. The course is taught by attorneys and gives students a chance to learn first hand about the work of trial attorneys, understand the judicial system, develop critical thinking skills, enhance communication skills and participate in simulated trial experiences. Students will learn and practice elements of trial advocacy, including opening statements, direct and cross-examination of witnesses, objections, use of exhibits and demonstratives and closing arguments.

The American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) sponsors the competitive mock trial events cumulating with regional and national post season tournaments. Teams from undergraduate institutions present a mock case before judging panels drawn from the local bench and bar with students assuming the roles of attorneys and witnesses.

Readings

Readings for this case can be obtained at (<http://www.collegemocktrial.org>). Specifically, students will need to obtain a copy of:

1. AMTA 2019-2020 Case: State of Midlands v. Jordan Ryder
2. Midlands Rules of Evidence
3. AMTA Rulebook

Criteria for Grading

Student grades for the course will be based on attendance (50%) and participation (50%). Also, students must keep a written law journal to be turned in at the end of the quarter. This journal will consist of two (2) witness summaries (Ts), an opening statement, direct examination, cross examination and closing argument. Additionally, a reflective paper outlining experiences must be turned in with the law journal.

Learning Objective

As this is an experiential learning course, you must experience it to learn. You have committed to spending Monday nights from 6pm-9:30pm, Wednesday nights during the week prior to weekend scrimmages and competitions. There are also required weekend scrimmages and competitions at DePaul and away at other universities. Students will also be required to meet with their respective teams outside of classroom hours on Monday and Wednesday nights and weekend practices/competitions.

Students develop critical thinking skills and persuasive oral communication skills through the process of preparation and presentation of simulated court litigation including case analysis, preparation of oral and written direct and cross examinations, opening statements and closing arguments. Students will learn about the substantive issues involved in the AMTA provided criminal case. Students will also develop teamwork skills. Student participation in Mock Trial involves working with other students who collectively form a team for simulated trial. Each student's effort is combined into a team product. Finally, students will learn about the ethics of professionalism in the legal profession.

Academic Integrity

Work done for this course must adhere to the University Academic Integrity Policy, which you can review in the Student Handbook or by visiting Academic Integrity at DePaul University (<http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>).

Students who feel they may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs.

Syllabus

Monday, January 6th - Class

Wednesday, January 8th – Practice (location TBD)

Sunday, January 12th - Scrimmage 2 rounds (location TBD)

Monday, January 13th Class

Wednesday, January 15th Practice (location TBD)

Thursday, January 16th Leave for Pella, Iowa

Friday -Saturday January 17th-18th Pella, Iowa 4 rounds

Monday, January 20th – School Closed. (Meeting at Sharon's House 6pm)

Wednesday, January 22nd – Practice (location TBD)

Friday, January 24th- Leave for Dubuque, Iowa

Saturday-Sunday January 25th-26th- Dubuque, Iowa 4 rounds

Monday, January 27th - Class

Sunday, February 2nd – Class (location TBD)

Monday, February 3rd - Class

Wednesday, February 5th -Practice (location TBD)

Friday, February 7th -Leave for regionals in Indianapolis, IN

Saturday-Sunday 8th-9th Regional Indianapolis, IN

Monday, February 10th - Class

Monday, February 17th-Class

Monday, February 24th -Class

Sunday, March 1st – Class (location TBD)

Monday, March 2nd -Class

Wednesday, March 4th -Practice TBD should we qualify for Open Round Championships Series (ORCS)

Thursday, March 5th -Leave for ORCS in the afternoon/evening.

Friday, March 6-8th Geneva ORCS (May leave early on Friday morning instead of Thursday evening as first round is Friday evening. If we do not qualify for a bid outright from Regional, we could still get a bid through the open bid process. The open bid may send us to Cincinnati, OH or Cedar Rapids, IA that same weekend. Should we not qualify for any ORCS, we will still be observing at least one round of this competition.)

Monday, March 9th – Last class WQ. Spring Trial if we do not get a bid at Regional.

*Should we get a bid from ORCS to the National Championship Series there will be more practices between ORCS and Championships but those are outside of the WQ class.