

Comments on Professor Madison's State Civil Procedure Course

- I really enjoyed the practical way in which we were able to learn, and the emphasis on intelligent and efficient lawyering—lawyering that kept in mind the big picture of a case. The workload was more concentrated on *doing something* with the information we received than just reading and learning information that, as with so many courses, I was not sure how the information would be used in practice. This course was among the best courses I've experienced while in law school.

- Prof. Madison's textbook was clear, concise and included diagrams to have a linear and big picture look at the “flow” of a civil lawsuit. The section in each chapter “Tasks and Decision-Making at This Stage of the Litigation” provides keen insights of a lawyer with trial experience. The strategic and procedural issues raised in this section, and which the professor had us work through in a series of assignments, are obviously ones that Prof. Madison developed through handling of many cases. I plan to keep the book and refer to it often in practice.

- The “Master” problem or lawsuit that we followed as it progressed toward trial, from chapter to chapter, really helped to understand both the process of a lawsuit and to tie together were procedural doctrines and issues fit into a bigger scheme. Before this class, I believed that federal cases were very different from state civil cases. I know realize that the decision-making process of handling a case is basically the same in federal court and in state court. Variations in procedures are there, but I found that recognizing them was not as hard as I thought. I'm more thankful just to know how a case should be worked up, how to value a case and prepare for settlement discussions, and how to take the case to trial if I have to.

- I never realized how many “gray” area questions arise in handling a case. The Rules of Professional Responsibility tell us the minimum requirements to keep our license. I liked the exploration in every chapter's Professional Identity Questions exploring the “means” by which lawyers have discretion in which to handle cases and how we will need to be clear on our values to identify and resolve such questions.

- I really appreciated the mentorship aspect of this course and found it very helpful. It helped to have the professor help discuss with us in a “hand's on” way preparation of documents that we will most likely be drafting later on in our practice. Maybe even more importantly, it helped to have the professor pose the “professional identity” questions, let us offer our views, and then have him share how some of his decisions affected how he felt about himself as a lawyer.

- I truly believe that Professor Madison's book and course took away a lot of the fear I had about handling of a lawsuit. I feel that I have a significant advantage over lawyers who have not had the introduction to handling a lawsuit that this course provides.

- The writing assignments really help prepare you not only with pretrial documents, but also how to develop discovery plans and trial “proof” charts. I believe these help to intelligently handle a case, identify areas in a cases in which my client's case/defense are vulnerable (in time to develop evidence to



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offset that vulnerability), and actual preparation for witnesses and exhibits and other evidence to be offered at trial, preparation of jury instructions, and essentially how to be an effective civil litigator.

- The writing assignments throughout the semester were very helpful to solidify the stages of handling a case taught in class (e.g., analyzing the statute of limitations, choosing a forum, developing a plan to develop the client's case).

- I think the practical assignments were very essential to integrating the concepts we were learning into the real practice of law. Drafting the complaints, motions, discovery, etc. in class helped a lot as well. As the Prof. has pointed out, many attorneys have never drafted such documents before they start practicing law. I feel that this class has given me an advantage in that respect.

- I appreciated the apprenticeship approach taken, focusing on teaching what we need to know to practice law.

- The writing assignments were essential because I was able to take the substantive law from the classroom and apply it to an actual practice-related task. These exercises were a great learning experience.

- The various assignments throughout the course were valuable experience that helped me feel more confident about my ability to practice law as I head into law practice.

- Every element of this course was essential and helpful - from the writing assignments, group projects, professional identity journaling.



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