

B. Team-based Learning

This course uses the strategy of team-based learning, which has been used for over 30 years and is implemented in 23 countries across a wide range of disciplines, including medicine, business, science, technology, and many others.

Teams mimic the professional environment and develop essential lawyering skills. In practice, you will work with others frequently to serve your clients effectively. You will work with lawyers, clients, consultants, court and agency staff, and assistants. Studies have shown that, across all disciplines, the ability to work well with others is as important to success as substantive expertise. Team-based learning develops the skills and values necessary to practice law, while also allowing you to apply class materials and get immediate feedback on your analysis.

In this course, you will be working in teams of five students; these teams will last the entire semester. Teams will be assigned during the first week of the semester. I expect each team to work together effectively and efficiently; each team member is responsible for achieving these goals.

Team-based learning has two major components: individual out-of-class preparation and in-class teamwork focusing on applying the materials prepared out-of-class on exercises. You will form heterogeneous teams at the beginning of the course. Teams will develop and refine team contribution guidelines, and assess how well each member of the team contributes at various points in the semester. Below are answers to common student questions about team-based learning.

What if I have a problem with my team?

Try to work it out. The biggest reason that teams do not function effectively is that team members avoid conflict. To promote conflict resolution, you will establish team contribution guidelines first, and then check in with the team every few weeks to see if all of you are following the guidelines. Be aware that most teams take about 4-6 weeks to become truly effective. Be patient, keep the lines of communication open, and come talk to me if you have questions or concerns.

You may have addressed conflicts between teammates effectively in your previous work, service, academic, and extracurricular experiences. Address the issue with your team as you would in a professional office. Consider how you would want to hear the message if your behavior was a challenge for your teammates. If the problem is not resolved using the team contribution guidelines, talk to me, and I can suggest ways for you and your teammates to work through the problem. In the rare case of alleged student misconduct, I will likely intervene.

Finally, team participation represents 15% of your grade. Though each teammate will assign points to his or her team members, I consistently monitor teams to observe professionalism (see *infra* p. 6-7). If there is evidence that a team member is using team points to lower a classmate's final grade without justification, I reserve the right to nullify

the team points and award the professionalism grade. Awarding professionalism points is not a preferred option, as it indicates that the team was unable to work professionally.