

**WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
CLASS INFORMATION AND SCHEDULE**

FACULTY MEMBER:

TERM:

COURSE TITLE: Testifying in Court

COURSE NUMBER: SOC 471

COURSE TEXTBOOK: Testifying in Court, 2nd Edition. Stanley Brodsky
SBN: 978-1433812125

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course introduces students to the fundamental concepts of preparing for and testifying in the court system. Students will develop skills to prepare for their courtroom experience such as reviewing case notes and summaries, organizing and collecting data, preparing and distributing records, responding appropriately to legal questions, and courtroom etiquette.

II. COURSE RATIONALE: Social workers, case managers, case workers, probation officers, mental health professionals, parent aids, substance abuse counselors, and other child and social welfare personnel all need to be prepared to testify in court at some point during their career. This course will help these professionals not only prepare for court but also gain experience in testifying in court.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

A. GOAL A: Students will be able to explain the Judicial process and identify the responsibility of each court

Learning Objectives: The student will:

- A-1. Identify the courts within the Court System
- A-2. Explain the functions of each of the specific courts
- A-3. Determine which types of cases are heard by the different courts
- A-4. Understand the role of a service provider during a court hearing
- A-5. Realize why testimony from a service provider is beneficial in a court hearing

B. GOAL A: Students will be able to explain the importance of documentation and implement proper note taking processes.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

- B-1: Explain the importance of documentation for official and practical purpose.
- B-2: Easily identify dates and information when prompted
- B-3: Document clearly and concisely their efforts to assist clients

B-4: Identify different purposes of appropriate note taking and documentation in future work with clients.

C. GOAL C: Students will be able to gather documentation and proper notes for clients to appear in court and answer questions during the court process.

Learning Outcomes: the student will

C-1: Compile all notes and documentation in proper form and make necessary copies for litigating professionals

C-2: Provide valid and comprehensive answers to posed questions

C-3: Develop techniques to combat nervousness and fear while testifying in court

C-4: Develop skills to respond appropriately to direct and cross examination

D. GOAL D: Students will understand the necessity in testifying as an expert.

Learning Outcomes: the student will

D-1: Differentiate between an expert and a non-expert for testifying purposes

D-2: Understand the qualifications of an expert

D-3: Provide expert testimony according to documented records and notes

D-4: Use educational background to justify expert testimony

E. GOAL E: Students will understand proper court etiquette

Learning Outcomes: the student will

E-1: Understand proper attire for court

E-2: Exemplify proper vocabulary and personal appearance

E-3: Differentiate between proper and improper etiquette

E-4: Understand how to answer questions posed by counsel and judge

F. GOAL F: Students will understand what actions to take following a court hearing

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

F-1. Identify what happens after a court hearing

F-2. Discuss how a relationship with a client might change after a court hearing

F-3. Ways to improve testimony for the next court hearing

F-4. Other actions that might be necessary in providing services to a client

G. GOAL G: Students will prepare to use course skills in a mock trial.

Learning Outcomes: the student will

G-1: Appropriately role play specific professionals in the courtroom

G-2: Work together to prepare for the mock trial

G-3: Prepare proper documentation to present in the mock trial

G-4: Understand the court process as it relates to testifying

H. GOAL H: Students will use appropriate written and oral communication skills.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

H-1: Write clearly, concisely, and appropriately using correct English grammar, punctuation, usage, mechanics, sentence structure, and vocabulary.

H-2:

V. CLASS POLICIES:

- **Plagiarism & Cheating:** Plagiarism refers to passing off someone else's writing as one's own. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional, and no matter what kind of plagiarism it is, plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity. Students who plagiarize commit theft-- the stealing of someone else's words and ideas. A student's goal should be to maintain academic integrity, which means developing an honest and trustworthy persona by always researching legitimate sources for their papers and properly citing the sources used. Plagiarism is serious, and students have been expelled from school because of it. Students caught plagiarizing will be reported to the program Chair. Second offenses may result in Academic Probation. Avoiding plagiarism is easy— students should always cite the sources of their information using APA style formatting.
 - For more information, view the Wilmu academic integrity page online: <http://www.wilmu.edu/academics/acadintegrity.aspx>
 - And the Wilmu Code of Conduct page online: <http://www.wilmu.edu/studentlife/acadintegrity.aspx>
- **Participation and Classroom Attendance:** You are expected to be an active participant in our class, even though we are meeting online. You will receive 100 points per week and these points are received through the weekly discussion boards.
- **Late Assignments:** For every assignment that is turned in late, I will deduct 10 points from the final grade. *I will not accept any assignment turned in 5 days after the due date.* If you are experiencing dire circumstances, please let me know. If there is a valid reason why work cannot be turned in on time, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work something out. Otherwise, I will assume that you chose not to complete the work and I will deduct the proper amount of points for each day it is late.
 - **Remember:** *All Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Assignments are due by midnight on Sunday.*
- **APA Style:** We will be using APA style to write all papers, including the list of references, research question, and problem statement paper. We will review APA format throughout this course so that you're fully prepared to produce quality assignments each week. If you are confused about APA format, please ask!
 - **Remember:** Use Times New Roman 12" font, double spaced with 1" margins.
- **Communication:** I expect everyone to be computer literate and familiar with using Canvas. If you encounter an issue, email me immediately so that I can assist. I also expect you check your WU email regularly. This will be our primary mode of communication. If you need me, email me. I will respond within 24 hours, but since I'm a proud owner of an iPhone, it is my goal to respond sooner than that.
- Please do not ask me to re-grade after I have already reviewed and graded your assignment. Reading your papers and making detailed comments takes a lot of time and is labor intensive. These comments are provided to you as feedback, and you are expected to learn from these mistakes and improve your next writing assignment.

