

Course Syllabus

**ADVANCED TRIAL ADVOCACY  
GMU School of Law  
Spring Semester – 2009**

**Professor Michael L. Davis**

**Thursday, January 8-**            6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 1    **INTRODUCTION - OVERVIEW OF COURSE**

1.     Handout of course materials
2.     Assignment of class projects

**Thursday, January 15**        -        6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 2    **TRIAL PHILOSOPHY**

1.     Civil vs. Criminal
2.     Big Client vs. Small Client
3.     Effective Voir Dire and Opening Statements
4.     Taking control of the Courtroom
5.     Judge or Jury

**Thursday, January 22**        -        6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.\*

Class No. 3    **EFFECTIVE VOIR DIRE**

1.     Participation by class in *voir dire*.
2.     All designated class members must bring at least one “non-legal” juror.

**Thursday, January 29**        -        6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 4

**Trial No. 1** (Non-jury)

1. Fact Pattern to be supplied.

**Thursday, February 5**

6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 5

- **DEPOSITIONS**

1. Purpose
2. Effect
3. Mock deposition

**Thursday, February 12**

6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 6

- **EXPERT WITNESSES**  
**“Live or Die by Them”**

1. Do you really need an expert?
2. How to select an expert.
3. Will the court allow the expert to testify?
4. Real life experts in the field of medicine, toxicology, engineering and accident reconstruction
  - a. Class participation in direct and cross examination of expert, followed by direct and cross examination by experienced trial attorneys, followed by critique.

**Thursday, February 19**

- 6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 7

- **DIFFICULT EVIDENTIARY ISSUES**

1. How to get it in
2. How to keep it out
3. Exhibits

**Thursday, February 26**

- 6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

Class No.8 - **MAKING AND PRESERVING THE RECORD**

1. Continuous objections
2. Stipulations
3. Proffers
4. Motions *in limine*
5. Requests for Admission

**Thursday, March 5** - 6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

Class No. 9 - **CLOSING ARGUMENT**

1. Theme consistent?
2. Can you deliver what you promised?
3. Passion and belief.
4. Are you still in control of the courtroom?

**Friday, March 20** 6:00p.m. – 10:00 p.m.\*

Classes No. 10 & 11 - **TRIAL No. 2** (JURY)

1. Participation by class from *voir dire* to verdict.
2. All designated class members must bring one “non-legal juror”.

**Saturday, March 21** - 9:00a.m. – 1:00 p.m.\*

Classes No. 12 & 13 - **TRIAL NO. 3** (JURY)

1. Participation by class from *voir dire* to verdict.
2. All designated class members must bring one “non-legal” juror.

**Friday, March 27** - 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.\*

Classes No. 14 & 15 - **TRIAL NO. 4** (JURY)

1. Participation by class from *voir dire* to verdict.
2. All designated class members must bring one “non-legal” juror.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE**

Thursday, January 8	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Thursday, January 15	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Thursday, January 22	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.*
Thursday, January 29	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m. - <b>Trial #1 (non jury)</b>
Thursday, February 5	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Thursday, February 12	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Thursday, February 19	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Thursday, February 26	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Thursday, March 5	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Friday, March 20	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. - <b>Trial # 2 (jury)*</b>
Saturday, March 21	-	Class 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - <b>Trial # 3 (jury)*</b>
Friday, March 27	-	Class 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. - <b>Trial # 4 (jury)*</b>

**\* All designated class members must bring at least one “non legal” juror to these classes.**