



Courts I and II

Mr. Shane Armstrong J.D.
jarmstrong@ems-isd.net

Conference Period: 1st period

Tutoring Opportunities: 1st and 4th Period Lunch (By appointment only)

Class Materials:

- Spiral notebook
- Pen/Pencil and Highlighter
- Laptop Device with access to the internet (Online textbooks may be provided)
- Canvas will be used as a digital tool for submitting assignments and exams

Access to Canvas and Office365 tools is available to students through our [Single Sign-on Portal \(SSO\)](#). Students receive their SSO login during enrollment.

Course Description:

Courts I and II is an overview of the United States judicial system process which includes the following courses: Courts systems and practices and legal research/writing. These courses identify the roles of judicial officers and the trial stage processes from the pretrial, trial, and sentencing phases. The students will learn how to research relevant precedent case law and apply case law to form legal issues and arguments. Emphasis will be placed on constitutional laws for criminal procedures and students will discuss and define technical legal concepts and interpret the associated legal jargon to form a legal opinion and conclusion. Students will identify legal issues and scenarios in classroom discussions, activities, and/or participation in our mock trials. In this class, students will demonstrate a working knowledge of case law, methods, and research/writing techniques in preparation for Post-Secondary Education and Law School.

Course Goals:

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

Successfully demonstrate professional standards and employability skills as required by their career path. The student will demonstrate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills in creating, expressing, and interpreting information relevant to law. The student will be able to conduct legal research and writing techniques and apply the concepts learned to critically think and solve legal issues. These goals will prepare them for analyzing and interpreting court cases and lawsuits in order to prepare them for a legal career.

Student Evaluation:

The grading system for this course is as follows:

- Grade averaged 60% Major 40% Minor (Advanced courses 70% Major 30% Minor)

- Major grades – tests (including District Common Assessments, six weeks assessments, projects, final essays, research papers, presentations); minimum three per six weeks
- Minor grades – quizzes, daily assignments, journals; minimum four per six weeks
- Each six weeks will count as 1/3 of the semester grade.
- A letter system (S, N, U) is used to report a student’s conduct based on proper/responsive conduct and citizenship
- Per Board Policy EIA (LOCAL), “The District shall permit a student who meets the criteria detailed in the grading guidelines a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which the student received a **failing** grade. This policy applies only to initial identified major grades and does not apply to daily assignments, quizzes, six-week test, and semester final examinations. Upon reteach and retest, the new test, project, etc. recorded will be a high score of 70%.
- Official grades will be in Skyward only and can be accessed by students and parents through Family Access.

Assignments, exams, expectations outside of the classroom:

Most assignments, exams and classwork should be completed by the end of class. However, your student may have some assignments outside of the classroom that includes projects and homework if assigned. Your student is expected to properly study and research outside of the classroom in order to properly prepare for a Major grade exam or project.

Attendance/Tardy Policy/Make-Up Work:

Please refer to the Student/Parent Handbook for school policy regarding attendance, tardiness, and makeup work. For any class missed, it is the student’s responsibility to obtain the makeup assignment from the instructor.

Tardy Policy: Students are expected to be on time for class daily. Students will be marked as tardy if they are not in their assigned seats when the bell rings. Students more than 10 minutes late to class will be marked absent per EMSISD policy.

Make-Up Work: I will strictly follow the EMSISD grading policy for make-up work when a student is absent (excused). Students will have time equal to days absent from class plus one day to complete all missed assignments.

Late Policy: I will strictly follow the EMSISD grading policy for late work. If work is turned in 1 school day late, the maximum score for this assignment is 85%. If work is turned in 2 school days late, the maximum score for this assignment is 70%. If work is turned in 3 school days late, the maximum score for this assignment is 60%. No late work will be accepted after 3 school business days, and a zero will be recorded in my grade book.

Classroom Expectations:

The 5 Ps: Be prompt, prepared, productive, polite and positive. Consequences of not following expectations vary by situation, but I will generally discuss with the student, then contact parents via email or phone call. If the issue is not resolved, then additional actions may be taken such as in-school suspension, referrals, and principal involvement.

Phone policy: No phone usage is allowed unless authorized. We will be using phones for legal research and in-class activities, but I expect no social media or video/audio recording in my class. If your student uses their phone inappropriately during class, I will ask them to put their phone in the “phone jail” for the remaining

duration of the class. If your student refuses or has an attitude, I will confiscate their phone for the remainder of the day or send their phone and/or student to the office.

Preliminary Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments:

Legal Research and Writing

U.S. Legal System and Case Law

Roles and Responsibilities of the Courtroom

Pre-Trial, Trial, Adjudication, and Appellate Stages

The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Mock Trial

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity values the work of individuals regardless if it is another student's work, a researcher, or an author. The pursuit of learning requires each student to be responsible for his or her academic work. Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in our schools. Academic dishonesty, includes cheating, copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee and considers written materials, observation, or information from students. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to disciplinary and/or academic penalties. The teacher and campus administrator shall jointly determine such action.