

TORTS

WHAT DO THEY MEAN BY “CIVIL WRONGS”?



Course Introduction

One of the building block courses in law school, Torts will set the stage for much of what you will learn throughout your law school careers.

Torts is one of the original six bar-tested subjects, so we will focus on concepts, elements of torts, and civil liability in general. I will use many different **EDTECH** tools in addition to the reading to ensure comprehension and student engagement.

Required Reading

Torts, Cases and Materials, 6th Ed.
Twerski, Henderson, & Wendel
Print Bundle ISBN: 9798894108674
More details on last page of this syllabus.

Student Learning Outcomes

My goal is ensuring that each student acquires a thoroughgoing knowledge of **Tort** law to enable everyone to attain the goal of passing the bar exam (on the 1st try) .

Things to Know About this Course

Students should expect a 5-10 question multiple choice test each week on Friday to ensure appropriate levels of student engagement and to assess student learning.

Fine Print

Music Trivia for the first point of the semester: What rock and roll band's album sold more units than any *Beatles'* album? Negative cheater points for online searching.



Course Syllabi

Each segment of the book/portion of the course will have its own unique syllabus; however, students will find that the course elements will be fairly consistent throughout



So, a book that's almost 1,000 pages might be daunting, but be of good cheer! We'll focus on what's highly tested to prevent burnout and prepare you for what's to come.



Your Instructor:
Professor Kurt Olson
Phone Extension - 131
Email: olson@msslw.edu

Office Hours
ZOOMing or in person on
Mondays
5-00-7:00 p.m.

HOW TO TAKE THIS COURSE	OUTLINE	THINKING	ANALYSIS
<p>It's not what you get in this course; it's how deep you go. Law students take a Torts course because it's required, it's a foundational course for many others you'll take, and you'll need to have a complete grasp of these concepts to pass the bar exam on your first attempt. Think about what this means for you personally. It's entirely possible to do well in this class without being transformed by your newfound knowledge of civil wrongs, but it would be a terrible shame. I like to think that this (and indeed, any) law school course operates on three levels. Imagine we are standing on the seashore; Torts is the ocean. Go as deep as you dare, the level you choose doesn't correlate to your success.</p>	<p>you need the basic outlines of Tort law, the main concepts and elements of torts, the surface-level knowledge</p> <p>There's nothing wrong with staying in the shallows; this approach may work for you if this is likely to be your only Torts course, or if you've never taken one before and it's all new</p> <p>"Outliners" will tend to assume that casebook, documents, videos, audio tracks and other materials are mutually reinforcing, telling basically the same story. Outliners are mainly concerned with what happened in the past.</p>	<p>you have a grasp of the basics and are ready to think conceptually and explore what's below the surface</p> <p>Perhaps you've taken Torts before, or are looking forward to a personal injury practice. You already know that Torts is a conversation among differing or contradictory perspectives</p> <p>"Thinkers" notice historical inconsistencies and they respectfully challenge assumptions through lively debate. Thinkers are interested in HOW & WHY things happened as they did.</p>	<p>you want to go deeper into the past, using the cognitive equipment & tools of legal analysis as a focused critical thinker</p> <p>Experienced? You are well aware of controversies between those in favor of tort reform and those supporting recompense for injuries. You actively seek alternative sources, interpretations and voices.</p> <p>"Analyzers" fill in the course gaps, and they are concerned with the arguments on both sides of the "Why Torts"? debate.</p>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course involves reading, quiz-taking, and breakout room discussion. It is fast-paced; you will need to absorb casebook material on your own outside class; we will use the entire **Torts** casebook. You will take one quiz per week on Fridays to help me assess your learning. You will need to put in consistent effort throughout the whole semester. You'll need to have (or learn) basic library and online research skills. You will need to speak up in class and demonstrate active learning, not passive absorption.

Learning is not a spectator sport.

Attendance and Participation (can decrease your overall grade)

I take attendance in each class. You should be on time and ready to participate each day. I expect class discussion will be lively, respectful, substantive, and that you will have done that day's assigned reading before class. Workshop days (**Fridays**) are especially important because the work we do depends on being present in class. If you must miss class, I do appreciate knowing when & why you are absent, but it doesn't **"excuse"** the absence.

Exams and Quizzes:

We will have a mid-term and a final exam, taken as written exams in class. The final will take place during the final exam period, I will only give makeup exams that have been approved by a dean.

In addition, I will give weekly quizzes on Fridays throughout the term, based on the casebook. These are online quizzes taken through **Socrative**, and each will be available until the following Monday. All the quizzes count, and there are **no makeups on the quizzes**.

Written Projects: This includes two short videos (Screencastify) based on your intro material, and material from the casebook and material presented by the professor through various **EdTech** tools

("You're the Torts Professor").

The first is 2.5 minutes long, and the other is 10 minutes long.

The second should give you practice with the analysis of the

"raw material" that makes up **Torts** case law.



Melvin Mouron Belli

(July 29, 1907 – July 9, 1996)

Known as "**The King of Torts**"

for his propensity for taking personal injury cases and for his celebrity clientele that included Zsa Zsa Gabor, Lana Turner and Tony Curtis. Belli won record damages and set legal precedents in numerous cases.

GRADING (200 POINTS)

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION. Lack of participation can reduce grade

Silent attendance will not earn full credit & class participation matters. Sleeping or texting in class will definitely lower your grade. Your A&P evaluation also includes workshop day group activities.

MID-TERM 30 POINTS

QUIZZES (REQUIRED) 50 POINTS

Self-paced Torts quizzes are online on Socrative. All twelve are required; deadlines are noon on the Monday following the Friday quiz.

VIDEOS (5 POSSIBLE) 50 POINTS

Short 2.5-min. and 10-min. videos (*Screencastify*). The first is "Hello, I am" and describes who you are, why you're in law school, and any other interesting tidbits. The second is "You're the Law Professor" and is self-explanatory.

FINAL EXAM 70 POINTS

Firm Questions on TWEN 10 POINTS

Firm questions will be posted on TWEN prior to the Friday asynchronous class.

Semester Overview

Each of the course segments involves multiple sources and ways to learn, such as textbook reading and discussion, lecture, multimedia sources, and in-class workshops often involving group work. Each unit contains several learning sessions in lecture-discussion format and one or more Workshop Days. During the second half of the course, you will apply your skills to the development of **TORTS** in a longer piece of writing, based on the sources in your document reader. And at the end of the course, you demonstrate your **TORTS** learning by creating your "You're the Torts Professor" video.

Online materials and modules enhance your in-class experience and enable you to do some of the course learning at your own pace. Do pay attention to the deadlines within the syllabus because some assignments/quizzes must be completed within a particular time-frame.

Make-ups for any assignments, tests, or quizzes must be approved


by Dean Coyne or Sullivan - NO EXCEPTIONS!!!

SYLLABUS AT A GLANCE

UNITS & READINGS	IMPORTANT DATES
1. Intentional Torts: Interference with Persons and Property Reading: Chapter 1, pp. 1-69 Week of January 19 th	Workshop: Friday, Jan. 23 rd Complete online quiz #1 by Monday, Jan. 26 th
2. Privileges/Defenses Reading: Chapter 2, pp. 71-136 Week of January 26 th	Workshop: Friday, January 30 th : Complete online quiz #2 by Monday, Feb. 2 nd
3. Negligence (part 1) Reading: Chapter 3, pp. 137-185 Week of February 2 nd	Workshop: Friday, February 6 th Complete online quiz #3 by Monday, Feb. 9 th
4. Negligence (part 2) Reading: Chapter 3, pp. 185-228 Week of February 9 th	Workshop: Friday, February 13 th Complete online quiz #4 by Monday, Feb. 16 th

GRADING		Total = 210	
A	188 or above	C	148-153
A-	180-187	C-	140-147
B+	174-179	D+	134-139
B	168-173	D	128-133
B-	160-167	D-	120-127
C+	154-159	F	119 or below

SYLLABUS AT A GLANCE

UNITS & READINGS	IMPORTANT DATES	UNITS & READINGS	IMPORTANT DATES
5. Actual Causation Reading: Chapter 4 pp. 229-289 Week of February 16 th	Workshop: Friday, Feb. 20 th Complete online quiz #5 by Wednesday, Feb. 25 th	12. Trespass to Land and Nuisance Reading: Chapter 12, pp. 695-736 Week of April 13 th (No class on Monday, 4/20 - Patriot's Day)	Workshop: Friday, April 17 th Complete online quiz #10 by Monday, April 20 th
6. Proximate Causation Reading: Chapter 5, pp. 291-371 Week of February 23 rd	Workshop: Friday, Feb. 27 th Complete online quiz #6 by Monday, March 2 nd	13. Damages Reading: Chapter 13, pp. 737-809 Week of April 20 th	Workshop: Friday, April 24 th Complete online quiz #11 by Monday, April 27 th
7. Non-liability for Foreseeable Consequences (Limited Duty Rules) Reading: Chapter 6, pp. 373-452 Week of March 2 nd	Workshop: Friday, March 6 th . Complete online quiz #6 by Monday, March 9 th	14. Defamation Reading: Chapter 14, pp. 811-876 And Privacy Reading: Chapter 15, pp. 877-912 Week of April 27 th	No Workshop No online quiz #12 (EC Only)
8. Owners and Occupiers of Land Reading: Chapter 7, pp. 453-486 Week of March 9 th	Workshop/Breakout Rooms: Friday, March 13 th <u>Mid-Term: Wednesday, March 11th before Spring Break</u>	Syllabus is subject to change <i>sua sponte</i> by the professor.	This means that Prof. Olson can make changes to the syllabus, assignments, and other adjustments throughout the semester. You will be notified of these changes as soon as they are implemented.
9. Affirmative Defenses Reading: Chapter 8, pp. 487-555 Week of March 23 rd	Workshop: Friday, March 27 th Complete online quiz #8 by Monday, March 30 th		
10. Joint Tortfeasors Reading, Chapter 9, pp. 557-590 & Strict Liability Reading: Chapter 10, pp. 591-619 Week of March 30 th	Workshop: Friday, April 3 rd Complete online quiz #9 by Monday, April 6 th	You should carefully read this syllabus. It is the result of painstaking work by both Prof. Olson and Media Director Kathy Villare, and becoming aware of its contents will help you to succeed in TORTS.	
11. Products Liability Reading: Chapter 11, pp. 621-693 Week of April 6 th	Workshop: Friday, April 10 th Complete online quiz #10 by Monday, April 13 th		Ask questions whether they concern the syllabus, the subject matter of the course, or personal issues that might be interfering with your progress. Prof. Olson will do whatever he can to help you succeed.

Q&A

POLICIES, RESOURCES,
AND ADVICE

<i>What are the course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)? In other words, what should I know or be able to do by the end of this course</i>	Apply key basic concepts and skills of TORTS to selected topics in the period. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources and apply appropriate analytical questions to each to demonstrate understanding of their scholarly uses in TORTS. Learn the importance of meticulous sourcing in the discipline of TORTS and correctly use Bluebook citation method in any papers. Self-assess and extend your own foundational skills in thinking about “civil wrongs” and analysis.
<i>What is the course policy on technology use in class?</i>	We will be busy in every class session, and we don’t need any electronic distractions. Silence your cell phones before you enter the classroom and refrain from texting in class. You may bring a laptop, and on some days laptops are actually required, but please confine your laptop work to taking notes or accessing relevant course material during discussion. Do not use your electronic device in class to surf the internet, check your email, update your Facebook status, etc. These activities will definitely jeopardize your class participation grade, and they distract others from the work at hand.
<i>What if I need a disability accommodation?</i>	If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise), and you need a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please consult with Assistant Dean Kaldis at the outset of the course so she can help design a solution that will help you be successful in the class.
<i>What is the course policy regarding plagiarism and academic honesty?</i>	On papers, exams, and quizzes, doing your own work is absolutely essential. You must demonstrate academic integrity in taking the online module quizzes. Each student should take all online quizzes individually; they should not be taken in groups. In ALL your papers, you must cite the sources of any information, quotations or ideas which are not your own, using standard Bluebook citation method. Let me be very clear. You cannot clip and paste text from the internet or Wikipedia or the textbook into your papers and pass it off as your own writing. You cannot turn in a paper that someone else has written or that you have bought or downloaded online. Plagiarized work or exam/quiz cheating is an automatic zero on the assignment and may cause you to fail the class at my discretion. I take such violations very seriously. Please familiarize yourself with and follow the MSLAW policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.
<i>What should I do if I am feeling lost or overwhelmed in this class?</i>	First, speak up in class. You may not be the only person with the same concern, and we all benefit from working questions out together. Second, make an appointment with me. You are welcome to email or sign up for an appointment (ZOOM or in-person Office Hours - Mondays, 5:00-7:00 p.m.) to meet during my office hours, or: just drop in. You can also request different hours for ZOOMing Office Hours - I am flexible. Many questions and issues can be easily resolved this way. Third, spend extra time in the resource materials in TWEN, all of which are designed to help you get up to speed on core concepts in TORTS and perform better in this class.
<i>What other campus resources might help me succeed in this class?</i>	Get to know the Reference Desk in our library ~ Check out the Writing Center for free help at any stage of the writing process ~ If you need tutoring, visit the Academic Support Center (Asst. Dean Kaldis/Prof. Colby) which offers free tutoring and help with study, note-taking and time management strategies - Or meet with the tutor assigned through the Student Bar Association.

THE FINE PRINT



LEAP Value Rubrics

We will incorporate several of the "Value Rubrics" developed by the Liberal Education for America's Promise project as the benchmark standards for your capstone work in this course, especially: Inquiry and Analysis, Critical Thinking, Written Communication, and Information Literacy.

You can find them online at <http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/>

IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES

• TECHNOLOGY ETIQUETTE:

My in-class technology policy: we will be busy in every class session, and we don't need any technological distractions. Silence your cell phones before you enter the classroom. BUT . . . it's fine to ALWAYS bring laptop or other connected device to class as long as you refrain from surfing and social media use and stay on task.

• ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

I will review with you the proper citation method for papers in this course (i.e. Bluebook). Also, please familiarize yourself with the school's policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook; any plagiarized writing will result in automatically failing the course. I take such violations very seriously.

• DISABILITY NEEDS:

If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise), and you need a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please consult with Assistant Dean Kaldis immediately at the outset of the course so she can design a solution that will help you be successful in the class and in law school.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

LASC Capstone Outcome	How We Fulfill it in This Course
Communicate effectively orally & in writing	Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication through a primary source project, and the final project. Students will use effective oral communication because we will have workshops/Breakout Rooms nearly every week which are rely heavily on class discussion, presentation, and peer review.
Apply skills in critical thinking	Part of the course is organized around a semester-long original research project. Students will apply critical thinking skills in the selection, location, evaluation, and presentation of both primary and secondary sources; in writing a persuasive, evidence-based thesis, and in crafting a high-quality paper that demonstrates strong understanding of civil wrongs.
Understand how scholars in various disciplines approach problems and construct knowledge	Students will identify, distinguish among, and use different schools of thought on Torts. Students will model how lawyers, judges and legal scholars create knowledge and will develop that model on the scale of a semester-long research project. Students will also correctly use the writing, citation, and other disciplinary conventions of scholarly writing in the field of Torts. Since academics specializing in Torts work primarily through the analysis of sources and the creation of survey texts, these elements of the course will provide students opportunities to practice the "habits of mind" of successful practitioners and academics in Torts.
Make connections across courses and disciplines	Students will synthesize knowledge and skills from across their coursework. Students are invited to develop meaningful connections from courses taken in their major and throughout their previous years at college; in addition, we recognize and even encourage that a capstone research project may be connected to scholarly interests and intellectual problems that predate this course.

Connected Quizzing

Connected Quizzing is a required component of this course. With *Connected Quizzing*, you'll take assigned quizzes on Casebook Connect that will help you learn the course material and get detailed feedback to help you improve in class.

Step 1: PURCHASING ACCESS

You have three ways to purchase Connected Quizzing:

1. Connected eBook + CQ Bundle Option:

Purchase a digital-only Connected eBook plus Connected Quizzing at a discounted price by going to www.AspenPublishing.com and searching for the Digital Bundle ISBN **9798894108674**. This bundle purchase will give you access to both the eBook and *Connected Quizzing* in your Casebook Connect account. Follow the instructions provided after completing your purchase to access the products.

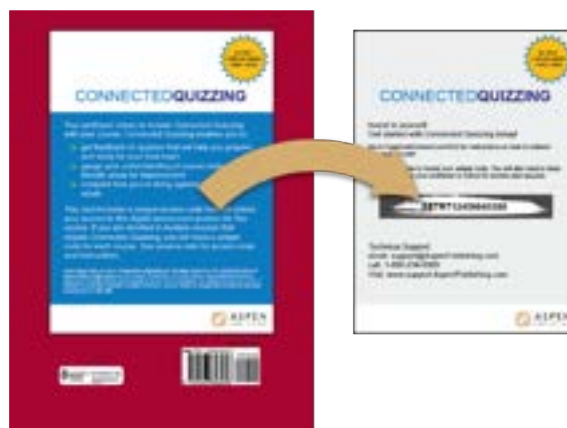
2. Print Book + CQ Bundle Option:

Purchase a bundle with a new print textbook for a discounted price. If you prefer the bundle option, please purchase this special ISBN available in the bookstore **Pending**. Your book will come bundled with a scratch-off sticker inside the front cover (shown below) or as an access card shrink-wrapped to the back cover of your textbook (do not throw this code away). Redeem this access code at www.CasebookConnect.com. If your book does NOT come with a *Connected Quizzing* access code, you did not purchase the appropriate bundled product, and you will be required to purchase *Connected Quizzing* separately.

a. Cover and scratch-off inside front cover:



b. Access card:



Connected Quizzing continues

3. CQ Only Direct Purchase:

If you already purchased your textbook elsewhere, you can also purchase Connected Quizzing separately at www.AspenPublishing.com/CQ. Follow the instructions provided after completing your purchase to access Connected Quizzing on Casebook Connect.

Step 2: CLASS CODE

Once you have successfully purchased access or redeemed your access code, you will see *Connected Quizzing* on your dashboard when you log into your Casebook Connect account. You will then be prompted to enter a class code to connect with my class and see your assignments.

Enter Class Code: **Pending**

Helpful Information

[Watch a Tutorial Video](#)

[Download Quick Start Guide PDF](#)

[Request Technical Support](#)

For more information, visit www.CasebookConnect.com/CQ.

Academic Calendar Spring, 2026

Official Semester Start Date	January 12, 2026
First Day of Class for Comparison Students	January 12, 2026
Orientation	January 12, 14, 15 & 24, 2026
Martin Luther King Day - No Classes	January 19, 2026
First Day of Classes	January 20, 2026
Spring Break	March 15 - 22, 2026
Patriots' Day - No Classes	April 20, 2026
Law Day Celebration	May 2, 2026
Last Day of Class, 2nd Semester	May 4, 2026
Study Period	May 5 – May 10, 2026
Exams	May 11 – 21, 2026
Level 1, Level 2 & Level 3 Assessment Tests	May 21, 2026
Memorial Day – No Classes	May 25, 2026
Graduation	June 5, 2026