

## **F a m i l y   L a w**

**Spring 2020**

**716-412 Monday/Wednesday 6:15 - 7:30 p.m. Room 202**

Professor Jane C. Murphy  
Angelos Law Room 430  
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Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 4:00-6:00 pm and by appointment

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### **I.    COURSE MATERIALS**

Jane C. Murphy, *Family Law Materials* (Spring 2020)(Posted on Family Law TWEN website)

### **II.   GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course will present students with an overview of family law, including an examination of the legal definition of family, legal responsibilities of family members, and consequences of family break-up and reorganization. The course materials draw on policy, cases and statutes from a variety of jurisdictions with special emphasis on Maryland law.

At the end of the semester:

A. Students will be able to explain the key concepts of family law, including marriage, divorce grounds, jurisdiction, antenuptial and post-nuptial agreements, parentage, and property distribution, annulment, alimony, domestic violence, child access, and child support.

B. Students will be able to analyze and synthesize key concepts from case law, statutes and theory;

C. Students will be able to apply these concepts to a variety of factual situations;

D. Students will observe, practice and evaluate the role of the attorney in a family law case.

### III. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

#### A. Class assignments

Students are expected to complete the reading and problem assignments from the TWEN site, to attend each class on time, and participate in class discussions of readings and problems. **Bring assigned materials from TWEN site to every class. Consistently active class participation demonstrating you have read and thought about the issues raised in the assignment is expected. Failure to participate when called upon will be deemed an unexcused absence.**

The goal for class discussions is for the entire class to benefit from everyone taking class preparation seriously. You will learn the material better if you prepare well enough to present the material to others, including responding to anticipated questions, similar to preparation for an oral argument or motions hearing. If, due to extenuating circumstances, you may not be able to be adequately prepared for a class, please email me at least 30 minutes before that class and ask that I not call on you. I also expect and provide an opportunity for volunteering students to participate in the class discussion. As long as you have adequately prepared, I encourage you to take the risk of participating, even if you haven't always fully thought out your opinions or arguments, as well as to express opinions even when others do not share them in the class.

This is a professional school. Conduct yourself as a professional at all times in the classroom. Please be in your seat before class begins and throughout the class unless you have an exigent circumstance. Turn off your cell phones and use your laptops only for class purposes. My goal is to create a classroom that is conducive to learning for everyone.

#### B. Grades

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- 1) Class assignments including participation in class discussions and role plays (10%); court observation assignment (5%); divorce complaint (10 %), and client letter (5%) total (30%);
- 2) Midterm Quiz (20%);
- 3) Final in class closed book examination (50%)

#### C. Attendance

Consistent with the attendance requirement of the School of Law, students are permitted up to five (excused and unexcused) absences. Students who exceed five

absences may be prohibited from taking the final examination.

D. Laptop and other Devices Policy

Non-class related use of laptops, cell phones and other devices is prohibited in class. Studies show that students are more effective and learn more if they take hand-written rather than typewritten notes. Non-class related use of computers and other devices also creates a distraction for other students. Therefore, students may use laptops in the classroom only for note taking and class purposes as directed by the professor. During role plays and other class times, you will be told to close laptops so you should always be prepared in class with paper and pen to take notes.

**IV. Class Cancellation:**

If I must cancel a class, notices will be sent to students via email and posted on the classroom door. If there is inclement weather, students should visit the University of Baltimore web site or call the University's Snow Closing Line at (410) 837-4201. If the University is open, students should presume that classes are running on the normal schedule.

**IV. SYLLABUS**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
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**A. Introduction**

Class 1 Monday	1/13/20	Introduction to Family Law: TWEN : Introduction Changing Definition of Family and State Regulation of the Family	
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**B. Marriage**

Class 2 Wednesday	1/15/20	Marriage Requirements	TWEN: Marriage I
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Class 3

12-2-19

Wednesday 1/22/20 Void and Voidable Marriages: Annulment TWEN: Marriage II

Class 4

Monday 1/27/20 Constitutionalizing the Marriage Relationship TWEN: Marriage III

**C. Dissolution of Family Relationships: Jurisdiction, Divorce and Domestic Violence**

Class 5

Wednesday 1/29/20 Family Law Jurisdiction TWEN: Jurisdiction  
ONLINE CLASS

Class 6

Monday 2/3/20 Grounds for Divorce: TWEN: Divorce I

Class 7

Wednesday 2/5/20 Divorce: Interviewing Clients TWEN: Divorce II

Class 8

Monday 2/10/20 NO CLASS- COURTROOM OBSERVATION

Class 9

Wednesday 2/12/20 Domestic Violence I TWEN: Domestic Violence I

Class 10

Monday 2/17/20 Domestic Violence II TWEN: Domestic Violence II  
**Divorce Complaints Due**

Class 11

Wednesday 2/19/20 **Mid-Term Quiz**

**E. Restructuring Parent-Child Relationships At Family Breakup**

Class 12

Monday 2/24/20 Child Access (Parents) TWEN: Child Access I: Parents

Class 13

Wednesday 2/26/20 Child Access (cont.) TWEN: Child Access II

12-2-19

Class 14 Monday	3/2/20	Child Access: Counseling Clients	TWEN: Child Access: Third Parties
Class 15 Wednesday	3/4/20	International Family Law	TWEN: International Family Law
Class 16 Monday	3/9/20	Interstate Child Custody Jurisdiction <b>Client Letters Due</b>	TWEN: Uniform Child Custody Juris

**F. Economic Consequences of Family Breakup**

Class 17 Wednesday	3/11/20	Child Support	TWEN: Child Support I
<b>Spring Break</b>			
Class 18 Monday	3/23/20	Establishing & Modifying Child Support	TWEN: Child Support II
Class 19 Wednesday	3/25/20	Establishing Alimony	TWEN: Alimony I
Class 20 Monday	3/30/20	NO CLASS COURTROOM OBSERVATION	
Class 21 Wednesday	4/1/20	Alimony: Negotiating for Client	TWEN: Alimony II
Class 22 Monday	4/6/20	Marital Property	TWEN: Marital Property I
Class 23 Wednesday	4/8/20	Marital Property	TWEN: Marital Property II
Class 24	4/13/20	Marital Property	TWEN: Marital Property III

12-2-19

Monday

**G. Private Ordering in Family Law**

Class 25 4/15/20 Dispute Resolution Options TWEN: Dispute Resolution  
Wednesday

Class 26 4/20/20 Premarital/Post Marital Agreements TWEN: Agreements  
Monday

**G. Non-Marital Families**

Class 27 4/22/20 Unmarried Co-Habitants : Adults TWEN: Non-Marital  
Wednesday **Court Observation Assignment Due** Families: Adults

Class 28 4/27/19 Unmarried Parents and Their Children TWEN: Non-Marital Families:  
Monday Final Exam Review Children

**FINAL EXAM: TBA**