

# **GVPT317/GVPT388M: MOCK TRIAL**

**SPRING 2018**

The Mock Trial course is designed to introduce students to the key principles of trial advocacy through experiential learning and to prepare them for intercollegiate competitions sponsored by the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA). The emphasis of the course will be on learning through student participation in exercises and trials as well as the observation and analyses of other students' performances. Through engaging in competition with classmates and teams from other institutions, students develop critical thinking and public speaking skills as well as knowledge of legal practices and procedures. As members of Maryland Mock Trial, you will travel to tournaments as representatives of the University of Maryland to compete against other colleges and universities.

## **Program Director**

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## **Basics**

Room: 2110 Tydings Hall

Time: W: 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Su: 9:00am - 4:00pm (Practice Trials)

## **Learning Objectives**

This course is designed to introduce students to the trial process and advocacy techniques through experiential learning and participation in AMTA sponsored intercollegiate mock trial competitions. Through the readings and exercises for the course, students are expected to:

- Develop an understanding of the trial process and AMTA rules.
- Develop a basic knowledge of the methods and theories used in trial advocacy.
- Develop effective oral communication skills to clearly and coherently present opening statements, direct examinations, cross examinations, and closing arguments.
- Develop proficiency in the analysis and presentation of evidentiary arguments.

## Classroom Texts

All students shall have copies of this year's AMTA case packet, which will be provided electronically.

All students **must** own Mauet, *Trial Techniques* (9<sup>th</sup> edition) [ISBN-13: 978-1454822332]. The 8<sup>th</sup> edition is substantially similar and will suffice.

All students **must** download the AMTA Rulebook, Midlands Rules of Evidence, and the Midlands Rules of Criminal Procedure. You can find those rules at:

<http://www.collegemocktrial.org/AMTA%20Rulebook.pdf>

<http://www.collegemocktrial.org/AMTA%20Rules%20of%20Evidence.pdf>

<http://www.collegemocktrial.org/Criminal%20Procedure.pdf>

Student attorneys are recommended to own Goode & Wellbourn, *Courtroom Evidence Handbook: 2017-2018 Student Edition* [ISBN-13: 978-1683287636]. This handbook is published yearly. Any version after 2014 will suffice.

## Grading Policy

Grading in the Mock Trial course is largely based on your ability to demonstrate preparation for trials and competitions as well as your contribution to the success of the team.

Preparation for each class and trial	40%	A+	97-100%	B+	87-89%
Demonstrated knowledge of the case packet, rules of evidence, and readings	20%	A	94-96%	B	84-86%
Improvement during the semester & ability to incorporate coach feedback	20%	A-	90-93%	B-	80-83%
Commitment to teamwork and civility	10%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-89%
Performance at competitions	10%	C	74-76%	D	64-66%
		C-	70-73%	D-	60-63%

Students who are not selected to compete at ORCs or Nationals will be given the opportunity to compete in in-house practice trials and asked to complete group assignments. Completion of these assignments will be incorporated into the class preparation and improvement during the semester grading sections.

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to take full responsibility for their own academic progress in this course. Students are expected to attend all classes and team trials. If your trial begins at 6:30, you are expected to be in your seat prepared for the trial prior to 6:30. This usually means you want to be in the room by 6:15 on Wednesdays and by 8:30 on Sundays. If you have a conflict, please let us know (we are very accommodating as long as we have advanced notice).

If for any reason, you will be late for class or cannot attend, you must contact the program director, your individual coach, your team captain or, in an emergency only, another member of the class. Because your teammates will be relying on your attendance, we ask you treat mock trial similar to employment. Just as you need to call in sick for work, you must call in sick to class (and inform us as early as possible your brother is getting married out of town). The university attendance policy, which includes a list of university-sanctioned absences, can be found at <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1540>.

### **Travel Policy**

Maryland Mock Trial competes in tournaments throughout the country. Often students will be requested to drive fellow teammates to the competitions where accommodations will be provided. When travelling, student drivers are not allowed to drive after 11:30 PM, in inclement weather, or in any other circumstance in which the coaching staff concludes driving would not be safe. The senior coach at all tournaments shall decide whether the drive home meets these conditions. A coach's decision that driving is not safe is final (a written excuse will be provided for any university-related function). The program will pay for hotel rooms for all students who express reasonable safety concerns after the coaching staff determines that driving is safe (for example, if the driver of a car is exhausted after a tournament).

### **Emergency Policy**

Students are strongly encouraged to provide an emergency contact as well as to disclose any serious health conditions or allergies that may result in a medical emergency. We will ensure that your information remains confidential, unless an emergency occurs that requires disclosure for your safety.

### **Course Related Policies**

Additional university policies relevant to undergraduate courses, including this one, can be found at <http://ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>.

### **Spring Tournament Schedule**

Team members will be notified as soon as possible whether they will be selected for

#### **Regionals**

February 2-4	Richmond, VA	Red & Black teams
February 23-25	Baltimore, MD	Gray & White teams

#### **Openings Round Championships (ORCs)**

March 10 - 11	Wilmington, DE	Teams TBD
March 23 – 25	Lancaster, PA	Teams TBD

#### **National Championship**

April 20-22	Minneapolis, MN	Teams TBD
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### **Class Schedule**

All students are expected to be prepared for team meetings and practice trials on both Wednesday evenings and Sundays during the day. Student will be notified of the trial schedule prior to class meetings.

### **Student Resources**

The University provides appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. The campus's Disability Support Service (DSS) works with students and faculty to address a variety of issues ranging from learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders to physical and psychological disabilities. To receive accommodations, students must first register with the DSS and have their disabilities documented by DSS. The DSS office then prepares an Accommodation Letter regarding needed accommodations. Students are responsible for presenting this letter to their instructors by the end of the drop/add period.