Welcome to the class! I look forward to working with you this semester.

**First Assignment**

Attend the introductory course meeting on Zoom on Thursday, August 27 at 7:30 pm. In preparation for the first class:

- Review the Canvas course page [https://courses.missouri.edu/](https://courses.missouri.edu/), read the syllabus and sign up for an office meeting for your major course project (Sept 23-Oct 2).

- Please email your responses to the questions below to diamondrj@missouri.edu or post your responses on Canvas (under Assignments) by **11pm on Wednesday, Aug 26**.

1. **How would you tout your research skills to a prospective employer?** Describe particular strengths. Share research successes prospective employers would value.

2. **Briefly describe your worst legal research experience.** What made it bad, discouraging, etc. What did you learn from the experience?

3. **What do you need from this course to improve your research skills?**

4. **Your major course project** will be to develop knowledge in an area of the law through research I will assign you. At the end of the semester, you will share your emerging expertise with the class in a presentation similar to a CLE program. More about this project at the August 27 Zoom class, but to begin identifying a suitable topic, please answer the following questions. These are merely topic finding prompts – okay to say “not sure” and fine to identify interests/preferences I have not mentioned.
   a. **What type of law would you like to practice?** Civil or Criminal? Litigation or Transactional? (If you don’t intend to practice law, how will your law degree assist with career goals and what law or law-related research interests you?)
   b. **Private or public practice?** If law firm practice appeals to you, what size – large, medium, small, or solo?
   c. **If you prefer the public sector or non-firm, what setting, e.g., AG office, state or federal government, university counsel, legal aid, charitable organization, non-profit prosecutor, public defender, other?**
   d. **What type of law interests you?** The following is a random, non-comprehensive list. It is merely suggestive of what may be or might become your career path and passion. IP, Civil Rights, Criminal Prosecution, Criminal Defense, Education Law, Employment Law, Privacy, Health Law, Arbitration, Mediation Corporate, Family Law, Trusts and Estates, Tax, Immigration, Consumer law, Products Liability, M&A, Blockchain, Pharmaceutical and Medical Device, Poverty Law, Artificial Intelligence, White Collar, Death Penalty, Workers Comp, Juvenile Justice, other?
e. Areas of the law or legal issues you might like to research in greater depth not mentioned in the previous section, if any.

f. The major course project topic proposal is due Sept 2. I am happy to assist with identifying a topic or with narrowing the scope of an area of interest to a manageable-sized project.

5. Assign me a challenging research question. The harder the better! Fine for your question to come from
   a. a course assignment
   b. a journal, competition, or other academic activity
   c. a faculty research assistant assignment
   d. a particularly taxing, factually dense or factually bereft work assignment, given without much guidance, direction, or prospect of finding a semblance of a reasonable answer (the kind of question that left you momentarily, or longer, hating legal research)
   e. a legal issue in the news that peaks your interest
   f. a family member, friend, or acquaintance or some other source

I bill by the hour, but this one’s on the house. Fire away!

CAVEAT – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY
If the challenging research question involves a real-life client matter, do not identify the client by name and do not share information with me that is privileged or your employer would not want disclosed. I will sometimes use these questions for classroom instruction unless you tell me not to share with the class. In that case, give me a second challenging question I may use in class.