LAW 5497: Death Penalty Law
University of Missouri School of Law, Fall 2020

Course text:
Rivkind et al., CASES AND MATERIALS ON THE DEATH PENALTY (4th ed.)

Reading assignments, first week:
Class 1: pages 3-31
Class 2: 55-87

Writing assignment, due first day of class:
Please write a very short essay (1-3 paragraphs or 1 page at most) on the following:
After reading the first reading assignment, please write down your thoughts about whether the death penalty is a morally permissible punishment and/or whether it represents good criminal justice policy. The primary purpose of this writing assignment is to document your thinking about the moral and policy arguments related to the death penalty before studying the law. What arguments do you find most persuasive? What matters most, in your opinion? (Whether the death penalty deters crime? Whether there are offenders who deserve it? Whether the system can produce fair and accurate results? Other considerations?) This assignment is due on the first day of class. Please submit via Canvas. However, it will not be part of a graded assignment until the end of the semester. (See “iii” below).