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

**First Assignment**

In preparation for January 20th class:

- Review the Canvas course page [courses.missouri.edu](http://courses.missouri.edu) or [canvas.missouri.edu](http://canvas.missouri.edu) and syllabus.

- View Westlaw Advanced Legal Research “Power of Terms and Connectors” tutorial at [https://trainingtools.thomsonreuters.com/alr/techniques/termsconnectors](https://trainingtools.thomsonreuters.com/alr/techniques/termsconnectors) (If interested, see info about Westlaw Certifications [here](https://trainingtools.thomsonreuters.com/alr/techniques/termsconnectors)).

- Please post your responses to the questions below on Canvas (or email your responses to me [diamondrj@missouri.edu](mailto:diamondrj@missouri.edu)) **by 8pm on Wednesday, January 18.**

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 and analytical skills 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 our first 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, Corporate Law, 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 February 1. I am happy to assist with identifying a topic or with narrowing the scope of an area of interest to a manageable size project.

5. Assign me a challenging research question. The harder the better! Fine for your question to come from any of the following
   a course assignment
   a journal, competition, or other academic activity
   a faculty research assistant assignment
   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)
   a legal issue in the news that piques your interest
   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 may sometimes use these questions for classroom instruction unless you tell me not to share with the class. In that case, please give me a second challenging question I may use in class.