Memorandum to Enrolled Students, Deepwater Horizon Lecture Series

From Professors Houck and Goodell

Subject: Research Guidelines

As you know, this course requires a research paper, one hour credit, to be graded on a Pass/C/Fail basis. This memo is intended to help you understand our expectations, and your freedom to work within them.

1. Topics: Suggested topics are posted on the course website. They are suggestions only; you may choose any topic relating to the incident so long as it has sufficient substance and has a connection to applicable law. The nature of the research may vary a great deal: some may focus on particular scientific, engineering or technical issues (e.g. adequacy of blowout preventers and testing, impacts to particular affected species); or on programs (the relationship between compensation funds and civil actions, the adequacy of contingency plans, natural resources damages regimes for unknown impacts); or on remedies (e.g. pending legislation, administrative reforms, industry practice reforms); or on policy implications for deepwater drilling and energy (e.g. peak oil, subsidies, total costs of oil development, relationship to renewable energy development). Or other subjects (new ones are rising daily), again, so long as they have substantial factual and legal analysis.

2. Teams: you will work in teams of two, three or four students, your choice. A 2-person team will submit a paper from 20-25 pages (absolute max.); a 3 or 4 person team will submit a paper of 30-35 pages (absolute max), double space, footnoted. Reliance on soft sources, ie news articles, is disfavored if hard sources are available … and the information available on the web here is astonishing.

3. Schedule and Faculty Assistance:

   a. Please enroll on the TWEN site for the class. You should begin identifying your topics and research partners as soon as possible; when identified, please post on TWEN (nothing precludes the selection of a topic similar to one previously chosen, so long as the work is done completely independently by each group, Honor Code applies). In your post, please indicate factual and legal analysis expected. DEADLINE: Friday, Sept 17.

   b. Professor Goodell will be available to meet with any interested students about topics or research on Sept 7, 13, 27, from 1:00 to 3:30, in room 255 D. He will also be available on Monday Oct 4 from 10:00 - 11:30 and 1:30 – 6:00 pm. You may sign up for an appointment by contacting him directly at bill@goodelllaw.com. This appointment is not required; it is intended as an assist and sounding board.

   c. Research papers DEADLINE: November 12, which allows sufficient post lecture time for their preparation but does not inroad final papers and exam preparation in other courses. Papers submitted late, without an extension based on unusual circumstances, will receive a one-step reduction.

   We are looking forward to your work in this piece of the program. We are certain that it will provide you better focus on the issues of the course. We will have the option, depending on quality, to publish the best papers on our course website at the end of the year. The best paper, as well, will entitle its authors to a wine of their choice with the professors.