



The Judge Advocate General's School Master Curriculum Plan: Intermediate Sexual Assault Litigation Course

*Course Code: ISA
February 2015*

A. General Information

Location: This course is hosted five times annually. One session is held in the Pacific and one session is held in Europe. The remaining three sessions are held throughout the continental United States.

Length of course: 2.5 days (with 2.5 days of TRIALS program attached when possible)

Student quota and profile: Quota varies depending on the needs of the JAG Corps. Attendees consist of trial counsel, defense counsel, special victims counsel, defense paralegals, military justice paralegals and special victims counsel paralegals. The trial counsel and military justice paralegals are typically the chiefs and NCOICs of military justice and/or adverse actions. Legal offices typically send at least one attorney/paralegal annually.

B. Strategic Course Direction

Mission: To improve the quality of advocacy from all litigators (trial counsel, defense counsel, special victims counsel) and their support personnel, especially in litigating cases of alleged sexual assault. This is accomplished by exposing students to advanced litigation strategies and complex cases through lectures, demonstrations, guided discussions, and exercises. Guest faculty and current litigators frequently teach the courses with support from AFJAGS to enhance student learning by exposing students to different litigation styles from what they have previously observed at AFJAGS. This course evolves every year depending upon current issues facing litigators as well as new developments in the law.

Vision: Adult learner-focused education and training, using multiple instructional methods delivered by high-quality faculty, and mentoring from mature and highly professional commissioned and noncommissioned officers as well as guest lecturers from multiple organizations to include law professors and Department of Justice litigators.

Values: Fostering Air Force Core Values, training efficiency and economy, expertise in military justice and advocacy, critical thinking, communication skills, client service and loyalty, good judgment, moral courage, and ethical conduct while specifically promoting collegiality and civility amongst litigators.

C. Instructional Areas and Strategic Learning Objectives

1. Block I: Course Introduction and Administration

Block objectives:

Comprehend the mission and learning objectives for ISALC.

Know the administrative, logistical, and academic requirements for students attending ISALC.

Characterize attentive, active, and constructive participation in ISALC as important to successful service as a judge advocate.

2. **Block II: Advocacy Training**

Block objectives:

Comprehend effective trial advocacy techniques and components of effective trial advocacy.

Apply facts, principles of law, procedure, evidence, effective communication techniques, and effective advocacy techniques during exercises.

Comprehend ethical decision-making and obligations for litigators and litigation support staff.

Value professional relationships between students and senior litigators.

3. **Block III: New Developments in the Law and Policy**

Block objectives:

Comprehend updates in military criminal law procedure.

Comprehend updates in military and constitutional criminal case law.

Comprehend statutory changes in military criminal law and changes in military justice policy.

4. **Block IV: Complex Cases Involving Sexual Assault Charges**

Block objectives:

Comprehend issues in complex litigation involving alleged sexual assault.

Comprehend the utility of expert witnesses in complex litigation involving alleged sexual assault.

Respond to current and future challenges of sexual assault case litigation.

D. Methods of Instruction, Faculty, and Student Evaluation

JAG School resident faculty, judge advocate and paralegal, design the curriculum and plan the course. Guest speakers are frequently utilized to expose students to different litigation styles and to present perspectives from current military and civilian litigators.

Methods include informal lecture, faculty demonstrations, seminar guided discussions, faculty panel discussions, experiential exercises, and field trips. The experiential exercises will require students to practice advocacy through exercises. In addition to the formative evaluation of student exercises, instructional effectiveness will be assessed by student and faculty end-of-course critiques.

E. JAG Corps Major Knowledge Areas

Professional Legal Knowledge. Knowledge of the law and processes involved in JAG Corps fields of practice.

Legal Skill Sets. Knowledge of the lawyering skills that attorneys and paralegals must maintain or be able to support (e.g., advocacy, client services, discovery management, interviewing, investigating, legal and factual research, legal writing, and litigation).

Universal Skills. Skills required by all who (1) lead and work with people and (2) manage and use resources. These skills include communications, information technology, interpersonal skills, leadership, mentoring, office management, and personnel development.

Professional Situational Awareness. Knowledge that provides context on national security issues and on JAG Corps, unit, command, and Air Force history, missions, organizational structures, and perspectives.

F. Lesson Fields

Professional Legal Knowledge:

Ethics & Professional Responsibility

New Developments in Criminal Law and Military Justice

Neurobiology of Sexual Trauma

Principles of Victim Psychology

Special Interest Topics (e.g., Computer Forensics)

Legal Skill Sets:

Trial Advocacy

Complex Litigation Management

G. Student Requisites and Selection

Student selection will be made by The Judge Advocate General based on nominations from the field. Qualified applicants must be Judge Advocate Staff Officer Course (JASOC) graduates. Typical attendees will have between 0-4 years litigation experience as trial counsel, and/or defense counsel.