LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

CRJU C430-Z51:
INTRODUCTION TO THE FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGAL RESEARCH & WRITING
SPRING 2009

Instructor: Karla S. Alvarez, M.S.C.J., J.D.
Day/Time: Wednesdays / 6:15 p.m. – 10:15 p.m.
Class Dates: Mar 4, 11, 18, 25, Apr 1, 15, 22, & 29
Location: Bobet Hall
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Home Phone: 504-710-3750
CJ Dept. Phone: 504-865-3323

Dates and Times: The course will follow an eight week format with the dates noted on the syllabus. The course begins March 4, 2009 and will end April 29, 2009.

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the fundamentals of legal research and writing, legal terminology and skills needed to communicate effectively in legal matters. Students will learn to use and locate primary and secondary authorities. The course will include a general overview of the federal and state court systems. Students will learn the elements of a court decision, how to locate cases through the use of digests, and how to brief a case. The course reviews the techniques of legal writing customarily taught in law school; citation form; cite checking; the methods of compiling legislative histories; administrative and international legal research; and the writing of law office memorandum and court briefs. The course will include lectures, research in the law library, an introduction to computer-based research, and a series of writing assignments. The course emphasizes that writing is not only a tool for communicating, but also is a tool for developing analytical skills.

Course Objective: After successful completion of this course, the student should be prepared to perform law clerk or paralegal duties such as legal research and writing; locate the commonly-used legal research materials in a law library and on-line; analyze statutory and case authority and relate it to a given fact pattern; prepare an objective legal memo; cite to the commonly-used legal materials using the proper Bluebook form; and general legal assistant duties. The student will also be prepared to enter into their first year of law school with an understanding of the theories of legal research and writing and a general overview of the legal system.

Course Format: This is a lecture-based course in which topics are presented by the instructor and supplemented with class discussion. Students will be assigned to read material in preparation for class discussion. Students will be expected to conduct legal research in the law library and will learn to use one of the computer assisted research tools. Through a series of projects, the students will demonstrate their mastery of their own research, writing, and citation skills. Guest lecturers may also present material.
Assignments: There are no tests in this class. Grades are based solely on projects assigned and completed. The courts are very exacting about deadlines. Failure to timely file a document can result in the client losing his or her case. This is a very high penalty! Accordingly, the practice of timely submission of assignments, to receive full credit, is required in this course. To receive full credit for the assignment, you must have submitted the written assignment by the deadline, or you must have obtained an extension, in advance of the deadline, from me. Any assignment that is not turned in on time will be penalized by lowering the letter grade by one letter for each day the assignment is late. For example, an assignment submitted one day late, for which the timely-submitted grade would have been an A, will receive a B.

To obtain an extension, you must contact me by email. In your email, please provide the date on which you propose to submit your assignment. I will respond by email to you. Generally, I am very liberal in granting extensions. I understand that work and family demands may make extensions necessary; however, too many extensions may make it very difficult for you to complete the course. So it is a good idea to stay current with all assignments.

Grading Scale: 93-100 = A; 84-92 = B; 76-83 = C; 63-75 = D; 0 -62 = F.
Coursework will be weighed as follows:

- Weekly Chapter Assignments = 10%
- In Class Participation = 10%
- Case Briefs = 20%
- Client Letter = 20%
- Closed Legal Memorandum = 40%

Because 10% of your grade depends on in class participation, attendance will be taken during each class session.

Required Texts:
1. Basic Legal Research: Tools and Strategies (3rd Edition 2005), by Amy E. Sloan;
2. Legal Research and Writing for Paralegals (5th Edition 2008), by Deborah E. Bouchoux;
3. Effective Legal Writing (5th Edition 1999), by Gertrude Block; and

Recommended Texts:
2. Black's Law Dictionary

Abbreviations used to distinguish between texts:
- BLR – Basic Legal Research
- LRWP – Legal Research and Writing for Paralegals
- ELW – Effective Legal Writing
- BB – Bluebook
**Course Outline: (This Outline is Subject to Change)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Assignments</th>
<th>Assignments to be Submitted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>Introduction to Legal Research</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapters 1 &amp; 2&lt;br&gt;BLR = Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>No Assignments Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Statutory Law, Case Law &amp; Judicial Opinions&lt;br&gt;Law Library Tour</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapters 3 &amp; 4&lt;br&gt;BLR = Chapters 4 &amp; 6</td>
<td>LRWP Assignments for Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>Secondary Resources &amp; Citations&lt;br&gt;Lexis/Nexis Training</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapters 5, 6, 8 &amp; 9&lt;br&gt;BLR = Chapters 3 &amp; 5</td>
<td>LRWP Assignments for Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td>Federal Legislative History and Federal Administrative Law Research &amp; Electronic Legal Research&lt;br&gt;Westlaw Training</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapters 10, 11 &amp; 12&lt;br&gt;BLR = Chapters 7, 8 &amp; 10</td>
<td>LRWP Assignments for Chapters 5, 6, 8 &amp; 9</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Developing a Research Plan, Grammar and Meaning, Strategies for Effective Legal Writing &amp; Case Briefing</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapters 13, 14 &amp; 15&lt;br&gt;BLR = Chapter 11&lt;br&gt;ELW = Chapters 1, 2, &amp; 3</td>
<td>LRWP = Assignments for Chapters 10, 11 &amp; 12&lt;br&gt;<em>In Class Assignments ELW Chapters 1, 2 &amp; 3</em></td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>Legal Correspondence Legal Reasoning</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapter 16&lt;br&gt;ELW = Chapter 4</td>
<td>LRWP = Assignments for Chapters 13, 14 &amp; 15&lt;br&gt;<em>Case Briefs</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>In Class Assignments ELW Chapter 4</em></td>
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<td>April 22</td>
<td>Inter-Office Memorandum of Law</td>
<td>LRWP = Chapter 17&lt;br&gt;ELW = Chapter 5&lt;br&gt;Closed Legal Memorandum</td>
<td>LRWP = Assignments for Chapter 16 &amp; Client Letter&lt;br&gt;<em>In Class Assignments ELW Chapter 5</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>Legal Memorandum Review</td>
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<td>Closed Legal Memorandum</td>
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Assignments for LRWP can be found at the end of each chapter.<br>Assignments for ELW chapters will be provided the week prior to class discussion.<br>Bring Bluebook to each class!

*All exercises and the Final Memorandum should be typed with double spacing. The maximum length of the Closed Legal Memorandum is five (5) pages. The minimum length is three pages. The Blue Book should be referred for citations. Errors in citation will result in a deduction of points per citation. The Closed Legal Memorandum is due the last day of class. Any delay will result in a letter grade deduction for each day the Memorandum is late.*
College Attendance Policy: If a student misses 20% or more of class meeting time, a one full letter grade reduction can be applied to the final course grade. Twenty percent of classes amounts to one and one-half (1 ½) classes in an eight week format. College faculty consider interaction with students crucial to the teaching and the learning process.

Attendance and Participation: To participate in the academic process and procedure, the student must attend class. Attendance will be taken each class.

Disability Statement: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services at 865-2990 as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Policy Regarding Return of Student Work: All students have the right to receive copies of their graded work and are encouraged to do so in order to benefit from faculty feedback on the work. Graded assignments, projects, and papers not returned directly to students while the class is in session will be made available for students to pick up at least six weeks after the beginning of the subsequent semester, excluding summer. Following this time period, graded work being held for pick up may be destroyed. Students who wish to receive copies of graded work should communicate directly with the course faculty to arrange to receive the desired materials. Students should be aware that faculty who do not teach summer classes may not be available to return papers until the beginning of the subsequent fall term.

Statement on Incomplete Grades: Grades of “I” (incomplete) change to “F” automatically if the course is not completed and the grade changed by the sixth week of the subsequent term, excluding summer terms. The resulting F grade remains the permanent grade for the course.

Statement on Intellectual Honesty: It must be remembered that written work stands on its own, not on the intention of the writer. The burden of academic honesty rests on the student, not on the instructor. If students have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism or what is required, they should inquire before the work is submitted. Otherwise, they open themselves to charges of plagiarism. Intellectual honesty is simply acknowledging, through documentation, all those sources that the writer has used in preparing any written work. Plagiarism, the obverse of intellectual honesty, is the use of any form of material, whether written or verbal, without formal indebtedness through documentation. The paraphrasing of any work, either written by other students or found in print or in electronic form, without acknowledgement, is plagiarism. Not properly identifying the source of a quotation, even though the quotation is enclosed in quotation marks, is also plagiarism. Not only the exact language of a sentence or phrase, but any material falsely presented as one’s own- idea, a concept, data graphs, or a line of argument constitutes plagiarism. Any material that neither originates with the student nor is common knowledge among educated persons must be formally acknowledged. The penalties for plagiarism are severe. A student who is found to have plagiarized or to have assisted another student in plagiarizing may be given a failing grade for the course on the first violation; a second offense may result in exclusion or dismissal from the university.

Evacuation Statement: Students must log on to the College emergency web site (www.loyno.la) and the University Blackboard site (http://loyno.blackboard.com/) within 48 hours of any University evacuation to receive further information regarding contacting course instructors for assignments, etc. Students will be required to do assigned course work for any evacuation of more than 48 hours. Students should also monitor the University site (www.loyno.edu) for general information