

LEGAL WRITING I

LAW 5792

2 CREDIT HOURS

FALL, 2022

CLASS LOCATION: HOLLAND HALL 360

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS: 3:30-4:25

PROFESSOR: *Sabrina Lopez*

Email: slittle@law.ufl.edu

Office Phone: 352.273.0729

Office Location: Holland 349

OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesdays 10:30-12:30 and by appointment. I will hold extended office hours during the weeks before assignments are due. This will ensure that all students wanting to meet can do so. Please refer to the Canvas page for further information regarding office hours.

Please keep in touch with me! I try to respond to emails quickly. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding the course or a specific assignment.

COURSE WEBSITE: <http://elearning.ufl.edu/> You are responsible for reviewing the page for course updates and for accessing course content.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Coughlin, Rocklin, and Patrick, *A Lawyer Writes: A Practical Guide to Legal Analysis* (3rd ed.)

The Bluebook: *A Uniform System of Citation* (21st ed.)

McKinney and Rose, *Core Grammar for Lawyers* (Online)

Note: To purchase this program at a discounted rate, go to <http://coregrammar.com/getcgl>. Complete the form and be sure to select "FL" for your state and "University of Florida - F. G. Levin College of Law" for your school. On the payment page, enter "UFL2022" into the Access Code field. Your

discounted price will appear immediately. Enter your credit card information, verify the purchase, and continue to create your Core Grammar for Lawyers account. You will be able to start using CGL immediately. Our class code is 322-72-7782.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

First half of a two-part course, both required for graduation. Includes emphasis on written legal analysis and preparation of predictive legal writing for fellow attorneys and clients.

COURSE OBJECTIVE AND GOALS:

The primary objective of this course is to teach you how to analyze a legal issue rigorously and to express that analysis effectively in writing.

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the U.S. legal system and how lawyers use law to resolve legal problems:
- Apply ethical and professional standards in crafting your written work;
- Identify legal issues affecting a client's situation;
- Review facts and evaluate their relevance to a client's legal situation;
- Analyze, interpret, and use statutes and case law to construct legal arguments;
- Apply legal rules to relevant client facts, analogizing and distinguishing precedent;
- Write an analysis of a legal issue predicting its outcome;
- Use effective organizational techniques;
- Write effective topic sentences, transitions, and paragraphs;
- Write precisely, clearly, and concisely;
- Use good grammar, syntax, punctuation, and document format;
- Use legal citation correctly; and
- Revise, edit, and proofread your legal writing.

It is anticipated that you will spend approximately 2 hours out of class reading and preparing for in class assignments for every 1 hour in class.

COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals OR via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

COURSE POLICIES:

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Teaching assistants will take roll during each class period. You are permitted to miss two class periods without penalty. **Missing more than two class periods may result in a reduction of your final grade. Missing more than six classes will result in a failing grade in the course.**

Excessive tardiness will also result in a grade penalty.

QUIZ/EXAM POLICY:

There may be “pop quizzes” over the course of the semester. These scores will be considered as part of your participation grade.

CORE GRAMMAR FOR LAWYERS AND INTERACTIVE CITATION WORKSTATION:

We will utilize numerous asynchronous learning tools during the semester, including but not limited to Core Grammar for Lawyers and the Lexis Nexis Interactive Citation Workstation.

GROUP WORK AND ASSIGNMENT POLICIES:

During the semester, our class will be divided into small groups of approximately seven students working with one teaching assistant. We will use these groups for in-class activities including writing labs, case discussions, peer review, and other in-class exercises. Your teaching assistant will also assist out of class with assignments. I encourage you to get to know your TA and speak with him or her regularly.

Class Participation

Participation grades are based on class preparation, class participation (both online and in person), successful completion of all assignments, and active participation in small group discussions.

Late Policy

Late assignments **will result** in your grade will be lowered by one grade increment per day. An assignment will not be accepted if it is more than three days late.

Professionalism

I will run our classroom like a law office. Students are the new “associates”; TAs are the senior associates; and I am the law partner. I expect professionalism at all times. Each assignment is important and I expect you to write, revise, proofread, and then proofread again.

Plagiarism

All work in this class must be your own. You may discuss cases and ideas; however, you may show your written work product only to me and your TA.

Plagiarism is a very serious offense. There are detailed policies regarding what constitutes plagiarism in your student handbook. Ignorance of the policies is not a defense to a charge of plagiarism.

RECORDING POLICY:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. **Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.**

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

COVID-19 POLICY:

You are required to follow the policies and requirements set forth by the University of Florida with respect to COVID-19. These policies are subject to change from time to time. Please refer to <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/university-updates> for the latest guidelines. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution and removal from the course.

COMPUTER POLICY:

Electronic devices (laptops, tablets, cell phones) must remain stowed away during class time. Please plan to take notes with paper and pen or pencil. However, we will be using computers in class frequently, so do plan to have it available.

ZOOM POLICY:

Please comply with the following during Zoom sessions:

- Cameras are required to remain ON during the entire session.
- Use the “Raised Hand” button under the Chat icon to ask questions during a session.
- Please dress appropriately—as you would during an in-person class—during Zoom sessions.
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UF POLICIES:

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

NETIQUETTE: COMMUNICATION COURTESY: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats.

GETTING HELP:

Resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

GRADING/COURSE POLICIES:

50% Timely and successful completion of Writing Assignments, Core Grammar for Lawyers, assigned ICW activities, and participation
50% Final Memorandum (Final Writing Assignment)

The law school policy on exam delays and accommodations can be found [here](#).

GRADING SCALE:

Grades are recorded permanently by the Office of the University Registrar. The grade point average (GPA) is determined by computing the ratio of grade points of semester hours of work attempted in courses in which letter grades are assigned. Students receive grade points according to the following scale:

Grade	Points
A (Excellent)	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B (Good)	3.0
B-	2.67
C +	2.33
C (Satisfactory)	2.0
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D (Poor)	1.0
D-	0.67
E (Failure)	0.0

No conferences will be held within the 24 hours prior to an assignment due date. This rule applies to conferences with me and with your TA.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Assignments and Course Schedule (subject to change)

August 22	How Attorneys Communicate
Read:	Chapters 1 <i>(all chapters included on this schedule are contained within your assigned textbook)</i> Review the syllabus Visit our class Canvas page prior to first class – Welcome lecture is posted.
Assignment Due:	Post an introductory video on our Canvas Page before the first day of class.

August 24	Sources and the Systems of Law; Reading for Comprehension
Read:	Chapter 2 and 3
*August 28th	
Assignment Due:	Complete the Core Grammar for Lawyers Pre-Test by August 28th at 11:59 PM.
August 29	Case Illustrations; Introduction to Memorandum #1; Preview of WA #1 (Written Assignment #1)
Read:	Section 7.2; Supplementary Material in Canvas; Memo #1 Hypothetical
August 31	Statute and Cases Discussion
Read:	Statute and cases for Memo #1; Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.800; Bluebook: the “Blue pages” in the front.
Assignment Due:	Case Illustration due for class activity.
September 5	Labor Day – No Class
September 7	Legal Memorandum Structure; Finding Your Argument; Organizing Your Legal Authority
Read:	Text – Chapter 4 and 5
Assignment Due:	WA#1 – Case Illustration. Turn in on Canvas <u>before class</u>.
September 12	One Legal Argument; Explaining the Law; Preview WA#2
Read:	Text – Chapters 6 and 7
September 14	Applying the Law; Conclusion to One Legal Argument
Read:	Chapters 8 and 9
September 19	Statutory Analysis; the Discussion Section
Read:	Chapters 11 and 12

September 21	Introduction to Citations
Read:	Bluebook, pages 1-27; Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.800
*September 23	Assignment Due: WA#2 Discussion Section Only for Memo #1 Moot Court Final Four Competition (special class time – attendance in person or viewing competition remotely is required)
September 26	Citations Workshop; ICW #1 and #2 in class
September 28	Shifting Your Analysis to Client Letters: Preview WA#3
Read:	Chapter 17
October 2	*Assignment Due: Deadline to complete <u>all</u> Core Grammar for Lawyers modules satisfactorily and complete the Post- Test with a minimum score of 85% by <u>October 2</u> at 11:59 p.m.
October 3	Client Letter Activity; Class Time as Draft Time
October 5	Asynchronous Day – Outlining Arguments and Shifting to Hypothetical #2; Preview WA#4
Assignment Due:	WA#3 Client Letter Due. Please turn in a copy on Canvas prior to class.
October 10	Question Presented and Brief Answer
Read:	Chapter 13
Assignment Due:	ICW #3 and #5
October 12	Statement of Facts and Conclusion
Read:	Chapter 14 and Chapter 15
October 17	Perfecting Point Headings
Read:	Supplemental Material in Canvas
Assignment Due (Optional): Draft of QP and BA	

October 19	Editing and Polishing
Read:	Chapter 16 and Supplemental Material in Canvas
October 24	Class Time as Draft Time
October 26	Turning to Professional Emails
Read:	Chapter 18; Supplemental Material in Canvas
Assignment Due:	WA#4 Second Memo. Please turn in a copy on Canvas prior to class.
October 31	Asynchronous Class: Texting Clients and Counsel
Assignment Due:	ICW #9
November 2	Evaluations/Final Exam Tips
November 7	No class; Conferences held
November 9	No class; Conferences held
*November 11	Final Exam Drops
November 14	Final Exam Discussion
November 16	Guest Speaker(s)
*November 20	Final Exam Due
November 21	Writing for Clerkships and other Summer Jobs

***Denotes a day class is not usually held.**

Disclaimer:

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.