

Legal Writing
LAW 5792, Class #22448 (Section 2)
Fall 2022

Instructor: Paige L. Snelgro
Mondays & Wednesdays, 1:15 p.m.-2:10 p.m.
Holland Hall, Room 283

SYLLABUS

Professor: Paige L. Snelgro
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Fridays, 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. (via Zoom) 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.

Required Textbooks: Christine Coughlin, Joan Rocklin & Sandy Patrick, *A Lawyer Writes* (3rd ed., 2018).
Core Grammar for Lawyers, software by Carolina Academic Press.
Lexis/Nexis Interactive Citation Workstation (ICW), software by LexisNexis
The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (21st ed., 2020).
Additional Course Materials available on Canvas
(These books will also be used during Spring 2023 for Persuasive Writing & Appellate Advocacy.)

Suggested: Deborah Cupples & Margaret Temple Smith, *Grammar, Punctuation & Style: A Quick Guide for Lawyers & Other Writers* (2013).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The primary objective of this course is to teach you how to perform a rigorous analysis of a legal problem and express that analysis effectively in writing.

If you devote yourself to doing the best work you can, at the end of the semester you should be able to:

- ✓ Demonstrate an understanding of the U.S. legal system and how lawyers use law to advise clients and resolve legal problems;
- ✓ Apply ethical and professional obligations 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.

Note: You will learn how to conduct legal research in a separate course. However, your research professor and I will collaborate, and one of your research exercises will require you to locate authority to use in a memorandum for my class. We will provide more details as they become relevant.

ATTENDANCE:

We will take attendance during each class period. You are permitted to miss two classes without penalty. Your participation grade may be lowered due to additional unexcused absences. Missing more than six classes will result in a failing grade in the course.

Excessive tardiness may also result in a grade penalty. Requirements for class attendance, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with UF policies posted at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

CLASS PREPARATION:

You are expected to read all assigned materials and complete all assigned exercises, if any, before class. You will be called on in class to discuss the material and exercises assigned. If you are unprepared to discuss the material or exercises assigned for class, you will be counted as absent for the day.

CORE GRAMMAR FOR LAWYERS:

These lessons must be completed outside of class. To pass the class you must satisfactorily complete the Core Grammar pre-test and every module for which you do not “test out” in the pre-test. Please note that Core Grammar has a post-test as well; you will be required to complete that post-test by Sunday, October 2, 2022, with a minimum score of 85%. You will earn 100 points for completing the Pre-Test *and* achieving at least 85% on the Post-Test by the specified deadlines. It is each student’s responsibility to work on the lessons early in the course and not procrastinate. All too often, students who wait to do the lessons close to the Post-Test deadline fail to achieve the minimum score needed to receive credit for Core Grammar. Students who fail to achieve an 85% or higher on the Post-Test by the deadline stated in the Course Calendar will earn zero credit for Core Grammar.

Information on Accessing Core Grammar:

1. Go to <http://coregrammar.com/getcgl> in your browser.
2. 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.
3. On the payment page, enter "UFL2022" into the Access Code field. Your discounted price will appear immediately. You need to purchase a one-year subscription.
4. Enter your credit card information below, verify the purchase, and continue on to create your Core Grammar for Lawyers account.
5. To activate your subscription, enter this exact Class Code: 322-72-6002 (which is unique for our section)
6. You will be able to start using CGL as soon as you are provided with our Class Code. Before we meet for Week 2 of classes, you must take the Pre-Test (available on a link from the home page or “Bookshelf”).

LEXISNEXIS ICW EXERCISES. This is a free online platform that tests Bluebook citation proficiency. These exercises will be completed during class. If a student does not complete the entire exercise during the designated class session, they will have until 11:59 p.m. that same evening to complete the exercise. Students may work ahead on ICW exercises but the option to reset an exercise will only be granted once. Prior to beginning the exercises, select my name so that I can see your certificates of completion as you receive them. For each question in the ICW, you will have five chances to get the right answer. **You may request one reset for each exercise.** Once you have completed

the exercise, it is your responsibility to make sure that you properly submit by the deadline. Exercises that are still in progress after the deadline will earn no credit.

For these exercises, the standards of good faith effort, substantial completion, and satisfaction of minimum requirements will be based on whether the student achieves the minimum acceptable score on the exercise (correct answers for 50% of the exercise questions). To receive credit based on this 50% threshold, you must **complete all questions** in the assigned ICW exercise no later than the specified deadline. The late submission of an ICW exercise will not be accepted for any reason. An ICW exercise that is submitted late will earn no credit (zero score).

ICW Assignments and Due Dates	
Due Date (exercises due by 11:59pm on date posted)	Assignment
September 18	ICW #15
September 25	ICW #1 & 2
October 2	ICW # 3 & 5
October 9	ICW #7 & 8
October 16	ICW #9
October 23	ICW #13

MEMO II CONFERENCES: For the Memo II Assignment each student is required to attend a mandatory meeting during the time period assigned for mandatory meetings (review the Course Calendar for more information). An appointment schedule will be established during the mandatory meeting period. Any student who fails to attend a mandatory meeting, arrives late for a mandatory meeting, or is unprepared for a mandatory meeting will be penalized with a five percent (5%) deduction on their overall score for the Memo II Assignment.

GRADING:

Assuming a student has a satisfactory attendance record, the student's final course grade will be determined primarily by your performance on your Final Memo Assignment. This assignment will serve as your 'final exam' and will offer you the opportunity to apply the skills you develop during the course.

Timely and satisfactory performance in all class activities and interim assignments is also required. Thus, 50% of your grade is based on the Final Memo Assignment, and 50% on your timely and satisfactory performance on all other written assignments, Core Grammar exercises, ICW exercises, in-class participation and written participation assignments.

Summary of Assignments, Due Dates and Their Relative Weight

Assignment	Due Date*	Weight
Case Illustration	September 12, 2022	50 %
Memo I (Argument only)	September 25, 2022	
Core Grammar Post Test (Minimum Score of 85%)	October 2, 2022	
Client Letter	October 11, 2022	
Email Memo	TBD	
Memo II (Full Memo)	October 30, 2022	
ICW Exercises	<i>See schedule above or course calendar</i>	
Participation	<i>These assignments will vary and will be announced in class</i>	
Final Memo Assignment	November 19, 2022	50%

* due by 11:59 p.m. on date listed

GRADE VALUES FOR CONVERSION:

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0

The law school grading policy is available at: <https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/uf-law-student-handbook-and-academic-policies>. Requirements for class attendance, and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with University of Florida policies that can be found at: <https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/uf-law-student-handbook-and-academic-policies>.

POLICY REGARDING LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

A penalty for late submissions will be imposed. If you turn in a writing assignment late, and have not received prior permission from me, the score on **that assignment** will be lowered by 10 points for every 24 hours the assignment is late. If you have an emergency, you must contact me at your earliest opportunity to obtain a special

arrangement. There is no guarantee that I will allow any special arrangement or late submission of work absent a true emergency. This is the same professionalism you would be expected to provide to your law partner, a judge, or a client. Your professional career starts now.

If you have a religious holiday that falls on a class date or assignment due date, please contact me BEFORE that holiday to make arrangements that may be necessary. It is the University of Florida's policy to accommodate religious holidays, and that policy will be honored.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to complete all readings prior to class. Your readings are outlined in the syllabus. Additional readings may be assigned during the semester and posted to the Canvas site for this course. Your participation score is based on your preparedness and participation during class, your completion of drafts and other written assignments that will be announced throughout the semester and on your successful completion of all assignments. Each assignment will be evaluated for completeness, accuracy and timeliness.

ELECTRONICS:

While I recommend taking notes by hand, if you prefer, you may use a laptop or tablet to take notes or to engage in class activities only. Please do whatever is necessary to ensure that notifications, emails, and the like do not distract you. I may revisit or revise this policy as needed.

We will be using computers and cell phones in class frequently, so do plan to have your phone and computer available; however, you may not communicate with one another during class via electronics unless specifically instructed to do so.

ZOOM:

Please comply with the following during Zoom sessions:

- Cameras are required to remain on during the entire session.
- If you are in a group session, please use the "raise hand" feature to ask questions.
- Dress appropriately – as you would during an in-person class or meeting.
- Sit upright – as you would during an in-person class or meeting.

OTHER POLICY STATEMENTS:

A. Policy related to Make-up exams or other work.

The law school policy on delay in taking exams or submitting other assignments can be found at: <https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/forms-applications/exam-delays-accommodations-form>.

B. Statement related to accommodations for students with disabilities.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Disability Resource Center (tel: 352-392-8565, or online at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the Dean Mitchell when requesting an accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

C. 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 or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

D. Honor Code.

Collaboration. You are bound strictly by the Honor Code. We will have some in-class group assignments. However, for the main written assignments, the work you do must be your own. Although you may discuss assignments with each other, you may not give answers to or receive answers from anyone. If you need help completing your assignments, please see me or contact your teaching assistant.

Plagiarism. Representing another's work as your own constitutes plagiarism. Further, paraphrasing or quoting from a case, law review article, or any other source without properly acknowledging the source or without including quotation marks where such marks are appropriate constitutes plagiarism. The commission of plagiarism is prohibited. Any paper evidencing plagiarism will receive a failing grade and will be referred to the law school's Honor Committee. It is no defense to a charge of plagiarism to plead ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism or lack of intent to plagiarize.

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>.

E. Format Requirements.

All writing assignments this term should be written in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, one-inch margins on all sides, and NOT justified, so that the text has a jagged edge on the right (like the text in this document). Each page should be numbered (bottom, center), and all citations should comport with the rules of *The Bluebook* or FLORIDA RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE 9.800.

F. Class Preparation.

This course complies with ABA Standard 310. The required readings for this course, will require approximately 120 minutes of reading and preparation for each class session.

G. Your Responsibilities to Other Classes.

As an attorney you will be responsible for many clients at the same time. You must attend to the legal affairs of multiple clients at once, even when you have a big project for one client. Similarly, when you have an assignment for this course, you are still responsible for attending your other classes and completing the work for those classes on time.

H. Recording Lectures

“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.”

COURSE CALENDAR

Class Meeting Schedule and Reading Assignments

August 22 Read:	How Attorneys Communicate Chapters 1 (<i>all chapters included on this schedule are contained within your assigned textbook</i>) How To Read a Legal Opinion (in Canvas) Review the syllabus Visit our class Canvas page prior to first class
August 24 Read:	Sources and the Systems of Law; Reading for Comprehension Chapter 2 and 3
August 29 Read:	Case Illustrations; Introduction to Memorandum #1 Section 7.2; Supplementary Material in Canvas; Memo #1 Hypothetical
August 31 Read:	Statute and Cases Discussion Statute and cases for Memo #1; Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.800; Bluebook: the “Blue pages” in the front.
September 5	Labor Day – No Class
September 7 Read:	Legal Memorandum Structure; Finding Your Argument; Organizing Your Legal Authority Text – Chapter 4 and 5
September 12 Read:	One Legal Argument; Explaining the Law Text – Chapters 6 and 7
September 14 Read:	Applying the Law; Conclusion to One Legal Argument Chapters 8 and 9
September 19 Read:	Statutory Analysis; the Discussion Section Chapters 11 and 12
September 21	Introduction to Citations

Read:	Bluebook, pages 1-27; Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.800
September 26	Citations Workshop
September 28 Read:	Shifting Your Analysis to Client Letters 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
October 10 Read:	Question Presented and Brief Answer Chapter 13
October 12 Read:	Statement of Facts and Conclusion Chapter 14 and Chapter 15
October 17 Read:	Perfecting Point Headings Supplemental Material in Canvas
October 19 Read:	Editing and Polishing Chapter 16 and Supplemental Material in Canvas
October 24	Class Time as Draft Time
October 26 Read:	Turning to Professional Emails Chapter 18; Supplemental Material in Canvas
October 31	Asynchronous Class: Texting Clients and Counsel
November 2	Evaluations/Final Exam Tips
November 7	No class; Memo II Conferences held
November 9	No class; Memo II Conferences held
November 14	Final Exam Discussion
November 16	Guest Speaker(s)

***November 19**

Final Exam Due

November 21

Writing for Clerkships and other Summer Jobs

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

DISCLAIMER: The terms of this Syllabus are subject to modification at the Instructor's discretion. If modifications are made, students will be notified through their Professor's Canvas page or in class.