

PL125  
**LEGAL RESEARCH & WRITING**  
**SYLLABUS**

<b>Course Title:</b> Legal Research & Writing	<b>Course Number:</b> PL125	<b>Effective Date:</b> 01/18/2012 <b>Revision Date:</b> 12/2011 <b>Applies to:</b> All Campuses <b>Online available for approved campuses</b>	
<b>Quarter Credit Hours:</b> 4	<b>Course Length:</b> 12 weeks	<b>Lecture Hours:</b> 30 <b>Laboratory Hours:</b> 20 <b>Externship/Clinic Hours:</b> 0 <b>Study/Prep/Review Hours:</b> 65	
<b>Instructor's Name:</b> William Martin Sloane, LL.M. (Labor), Ph.D. Attorney at Law, Maryland & Pennsylvania	<b>Instructor's Office Hours:</b> Before and after class and by appointment	<b>Meeting Days/Times:</b> M-Tu-W-Th, 10:30-11:55a <b>Term Dates/Year:</b> 18 January to 4 April 2012 <b>Room:</b> 203	
<b>Course Catalog Description:</b> Foundations in legal research, including statutes, cases, treatises, and computer-aided searches, and writing methodologies, including memoranda, legal briefs, and correspondence, are introduced. Through practiced researching and frequent writing assignments, the development of proficient legal document preparation is achieved. Representative legal documents are created for the student's professional portfolio.			
<b>Course Prerequisite(s):</b> PL100 or EN102  <b>Course Corequisite(s):</b> None	<b>Challenge Examination available?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Research Component included?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Portfolio Piece(s) included?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Required Media/Equipment/Software:</b>  Custom Package ISBN: NA Package Includes: <u>Legal Research, Analysis, and Writing</u> , 4 <sup>th</sup> edition, Hames & Ekern, Pearson, 2012, ISBN 9780135109441  Note book, pen, pencil, highlighter, and computer disk or USB storage device.			
<b>Resources:</b> Library materials, periodicals, newspapers, and Internet resources may be used for research and other purposes. Bookmark these free online legal dictionaries: <a href="http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/dictionary.htm">http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/dictionary.htm</a>			
<b>Teaching Strategies:</b> Instructors utilize a variety of teaching strategies and methods in the instruction process. These may include, but are not limited to, lectures, demonstrations, case studies, group projects, research projects, guest speakers, field trips, audio-visual presentations, on-line activities, and simulated work experiences.			
<b>Additional Hours Outside of Class:</b>  Hours currently identified as Lecture, Laboratory or Externship hours are identified on the syllabus as calculated time required for delivery of content, demonstration of skill, and practical application required for reinforcement of course competencies. Additionally students will be assigned specific activities to incorporate out-of-class hours in achievement of course objectives. Out-of-class assignments will be graded as part of the overall course grade.  <b>Outside Hours:</b> For converted clock hour programs, assigned outside hours may be used in the calculation of total credits awarded in the class. For specific assignments, see attached course outline.  <b>Study/Prep/Review Hours:</b> Students are expected to be prepared for the distribution of information from their instructor through utilization of their required textbook, workbook, web resources or other outside materials. Time spent in preparation for or reflection of course lecture will approximate two hours outside of class for each lecture contact hour utilized by the instructor in delivery of the material and 1/4 hour outside of class for each hour of structured lab time. This outside preparation time may include the reading/skimming of textbook material, homework assignments, preparation for lab assignments, workbook activities, awareness/review of any safety precautions, or research of relevant supplemental information. Additionally, students are expected to record notes from course lecture to be reviewed as background for subsequent lessons, homework, or in preparation for exams. Review and reflection of classroom discussions, demonstrations, or presentation are included in the recognition of the additional outside course hours.			

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate the ability to conduct legal research using proper and effective resources;
2. Demonstrate the ability to create legal documents according to established standards;
3. Identify the variety of legal documents and their purposes;
4. Explain the different sources of law in the United States and in this State, in particular, including constitutions, statutes, regulations, ordinances, court rules, and case law;
5. Utilize correct citation form for case law, constitutions (both state and federal), statutes, court rules, and relate the importance of the *Uniform System of Citations* (a.k.a. "The Blue Book");
6. Explain the differences between primary and secondary authority;
7. Utilize the IRAC method or other similar methods for briefing a case;
8. Describe the basic principles for developing paragraphs in a legal document;
9. Explain the use of checklists and forms in preparing legal documents;
10. Employ proper and correct use of the English language in preparing legal documents.

**Topical Outline**

The key topics/concepts in this course are as follows:

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sources of Law                   | 7. Legal Writing Fundamentals                   |
| 2. Legal Reasoning and Analysis     | 8. Transmittal letter and Client Opinion Letter |
| 3. Primary and Secondary Sources    | 9. Writing Contracts                            |
| 4. Citators                         | 10. Law office Memo                             |
| 5. The Research Process             | 11. Memorandum of Law                           |
| 6. Computer-assisted Legal Research | 12. Appellate Brief                             |

**Course Completion Requirements:**

Complete all required homework/assignments, quizzes, examinations, and projects with a passing grade.

**Grading and Evaluation:**

Course requirements include evaluation in the areas of class participation (including attendance), homework, quizzes, examinations, and projects as follows:

*Final Grades will be determined by:*

Class Participation	10%
Homework/Assignments	10%
Quizzes	10%
Examinations	40%
Projects	25%
Portfolio	<u>5%</u>
Total	100%

*Grading Scale:*

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	F

**Class Participation:** This portion of the grade includes evaluation of self-directed work habits such as attendance, class preparedness, communication, and (where appropriate) professional vocabulary, dress, or grooming. Students are expected to have read the assigned chapter(s) as identified on the syllabus and be prepared to discuss the content during class hours. Class participation may include group activities, peer review, and demonstration. Class preparation will require additional study/preparation time outside of scheduled class hours. Instructor facilitated discussions may be used in verification of course objectives

**Homework/Assignments:** Homework will be assigned in this course. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Assignments turned in after the scheduled due date and time for any reason may be assessed as late credit by the instructor. Homework is assigned as indicated on the course syllabus. Homework assignments will require outside preparation on the part of the student to execute activities in assessment of course objectives.

**Quizzes:** There will be both announced and unannounced quizzes. Quizzes missed for any reason will receive grades of zero (0) and cannot be made up. The lowest recorded quiz will not be counted in the final grade. Announced and unannounced quizzes will be used as a means to verify attainment of course objectives. Students will be expected to spend time outside of class studying materials in preparation for any quiz as well as time spent reviewing quiz results in preparation for homework, class discussion or examination

**Examinations:** The number of examinations will be equivalent to the credit hours earned in this course and may include a comprehensive final examination. There is no makeup of examinations missed. Extreme cases of absence due to documented mitigating circumstances will be handled at the discretion of the instructor. Students are expected to utilize time outside of class in preparation for assessments. Assessments will be utilized to verify acquisition of course objectives.

**Projects:** Project requirements will be outlined in detailed separate instructions and will reflect the practical application of fundamentals and principles discussed in this course. Projects include library research and may also include classroom/laboratory, clinic/externship/practicum, and/or other activities. Project assignments require utilization of course materials and resources in demonstration of course objectives. Students are expected to incorporate time outside of class to research, create, and prepare projects for demonstration and assessment.

**Portfolio:** Instructor-identified portfolio assignments will require additional time outside of class in preparation for final submission of course portfolio. Portfolio assignments are an integral part of the recognition of attainment of course objectives.

**Attendance Policy:**

Because of the intensive nature of this course, attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to comply with the school's attendance policy as published in the school's catalog. All absences, late arrivals, and early departures are recorded and become a part of the student's permanent record. No distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences. Failure to comply with the attendance policy can result in reduction of the final grade, course failure, suspension, or dismissal. Externship and clinic courses and programs which are considered clock hour programs for Title IV purposes, have their own specific attendance criteria and may require make-up of all hours missed.

**Make-up Policy:**

Students are accountable for all work missed during periods of absence. Students are responsible for contacting their instructors about any make-up of class work. All make-up is at the sole discretion of the instructor. Make-up of missed classes does not erase an absence from a student's record. See Grading, above, for additional information.

**Special Needs:**

Students in need of special accommodation should notify the instructor in writing by the second class session.

**Course Outline:**

See attached.

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 COURSE OUTLINE

SESSION	DISCUSSION TOPICS Chapters Covered, Guest Speakers, Field Trips, Exams, Quizzes	ASSIGNMENTS FOR <u>THIS</u> CLASS	NOTES DUE DATES
<b>January</b> Wed. 18th #1	Welcome & Introductions Course Overview (Syllabus, Course Outline) Intro Lecture: Introduction to Legal Research, Writing, and Analysis (Chapter 1)	Read Chapter 1, pp. 1-14 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 13-14	Announced and unannounced quizzes will be given by the instructor.
Thu. 19th #2	Chapter 2 – The Starting Point: Analyzing Facts and Identifying Legal Issues	Read Chapter 2, pp. 15-30 Complete Questions and Exercises, p. 30	
Mon. 23rd #3	Chapter 2 – The Starting Point: Analyzing Facts and Identifying Legal Issues (continued)		
Tue. 24th #4	Chapter 3 – Finding and Analyzing Case Law	Read Chapter 3, pp. 31-75 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 74-75	
Wed. 25th #5	Chapter 3 – Finding and Analyzing Case Law		
Thu. 26th #6	Chapter 4 – How to Brief a Case Library Tour	Read Chapter 4, pp. 76-99 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 99-100	
Mon. 30th #7	Chapter 4 – How to Brief a Case		
Tue. 31st #8	Present and discuss research assignments; Review for exam	<b>Study for Exam</b>	
<b>February</b> Wed. 1st #9	<b>Exam on Chapters 1-4</b>		<b>Exam</b>
Thu. 2nd #10	Chapter 5 – Constitutions, Statutes, and Administrative Regulations	Read Chapter 5, pp. 101-141 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 139-141	
Mon. 6th #11	Chapter 5 – Constitutions, Statutes, and Administrative Regulations		
Tue. 7th #12	Discuss Research Assignment Chapter 6 – Statutory and Constitutional Analysis	Read Chapter 6, pp. 142-166 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 163-164	
Wed. 8th #13	Chapter 6 – Statutory and Constitutional Analysis	Read Chapter 7, pp. 167-193 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 191-193	
Thu. 9th #14	Discuss research exercises Chapter 7 – Secondary Sources	Read Chapter 8, pp. 194-218 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 217-218	
Mon. 13th #15	Chapter 8 – Digests Statutes, KeyCite; demonstration in law library/Westlaw		
Tue. 14th #16	Review for Exam	<b>Study for Exam</b>	
Wed. 15th #17	<b>Exam on Chapter 5-8</b>		<b>Exam</b>
Thu. 16th #18	Chapter 9 – Validating Your Research: Using Shepard’s, KeyCite, and Other Citators	Read Chapter 9, pp. 219-242 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 241-242	
Mon. 20th #19	Chapter 10 – Computer-Assisted Legal Research (CALR): Lexis and Westlaw	Read Chapter 10, pp. 245-263 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 262-263	
Tue. 21st #20	Chapter 10 – Computer-Assisted Legal Research (CALR): Lexis and Westlaw	<b>Study for Exam</b>	

Wed. 22nd #21	<b>Exam on Chapters 9-10</b>		<b>Exam</b>
Thu. 23rd #22	Chapter 11 – Computer-Assisted Legal Research (CALR): The Freely Accessible Internet	Read Chapter 11, pp. 264-282 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 280-281	
Mon. 27th #23	Chapter 12 – Basic Legal Writing Tools	Read Chapter 12, pp. 283-304 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 303-304	
Tue. 28th #24	Chapter 13 – Predictive Legal Writing: The Memorandum	Read Chapter 13, pp. 305-333 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 332-333	
Wed. 29th #25	Chapter 13 – Predictive Legal Writing: The Memorandum	Write Law Office Memo & Memorandum of Law	Portfolio Piece
<b>March</b> Thu. 1st #26	Review Law Office Memo and Memorandum of Law	Read Chapter 14, pp. 334-368 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 366-367	
Mon. 5th #27	Chapter 14 – Persuasive Writing: Writing to the Court		
Tue. 6th #28	Chapter 14 – Persuasive Writing: Writing to the Court	Read Chapter 15, pp. 374-399 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 398-399	
Wed. 7th #29	Chapter 15 – Motion Practice: Research and Writing Issues		
Thu. 8th #30	Chapter 15 – Motion Practice: Research and Writing Issues	Read Chapter 16, pp. 400-412 Complete Questions and Exercises, pp. 411-412	
Mon. 12th #31	Chapter 16 – Legal Correspondence		
Tue. 13th #32	Discuss and Present prepared samples		
Wed. 14th #33	Discuss and Present prepared samples		
Mon. 19th #34	Discuss and Present Letters; Copy for Portfolios		
Tue. 20th #35	Discuss and present Letters; Copy for Portfolios	Write a Transmittal Letter and a Client Opinion Letter	Portfolio Piece
Wed. 21st #36	Review Appellate Brief	Read pp. 481-500	
Thu. 22nd #37	Student Presentation of portfolio piece		All portfolio pieces are due
Mon. 26th #38	Student Presentation of portfolio piece; Review for final exam	<b>Study for Exam</b>	All portfolio pieces are due
Tue. 27th #39	Review for Final Exam		
#40	<b>Final Exam</b>		