

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
College of Health & Human Services

PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

ADVANCED LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING

FALL 2018 SYLLABUS

LGL 3030:002: M/W 5:30 to 6:50 p.m.

LGL 3030:003: M/W 2:30 to 3:50 p.m.

Instructor: Karin L. Coble, Esq.

Office Phone: 888-268-3625

(Please leave VM if you want a call back.)

Email: karin.coble@utoledo.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW: This course focuses on advanced legal research and writing. Students will be expected to master computer-assisted legal research methods and analytical legal writing. Learning occurs through instructor-led lectures, work assignments with individual feedback, and self-paced computer learning with immediate feedback.

PREREQUISITES: LGL 1010 (Introduction to Law) and LGL 1160 (Legal Research and Writing)

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Foundations of Legal Research & Writing, by Best and Hawkins (Fifth Edition) ISBN: 9781133278290

The Bluebook, by Harvard Law Review (Twentieth Edition) ISBN: 9780692400197

Interactive Citation Workbook for The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation, by McGaugh Norton, Hart, and Jackson (2015 Edition), ISBN: 9781632833686

Core Grammar for Lawyers online access: <https://www.cap-press.com/coregrammar/purchase.php>

COURSE POLICIES/EXPECTATIONS OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS

Class Communications: All email communications to me should be sent to Karin.Coble@utoledo.edu.

a. **Attendance/Missed Class:** Class attendance is required. I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. Be punctual and remain until dismissal. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to make sure I mark you present for that class. Time management is a crucial skill in the paralegal field. Courts and employers require prompt attendance despite busy schedules. Attendance and participation will affect grades. Please read The University of Toledo's Missed Class Policy.

b. **Class Preparation and Participation:** Preparation for each class is critically important to learning. Preparation for class is also critically important to career training, where courts and employers expect adequate and timely preparation. Furthermore, preparation enables valuable contributions to class discussions and defines questions raised by course materials that can then be addressed in class. Consistent and adequate preparation for class will be considered in course grades.

The ability to communicate through the written and spoken word is essential to success in a paralegal career. A paralegal must be able to clearly and persuasively communicate research, ideas and arguments to attorneys, clients, colleagues and courts. The student's participation in every class is a valuable opportunity to develop those crucial communication skills.

c. **Work Product:** Students are responsible for completing the work assigned. Plagiarism and cheating will be addressed in accordance with the applicable policy of the University of Toledo. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please read The University's Policy Statement on Academic Dishonesty.

d. **Assignments:** This course requires completion of all assignments. Unless otherwise instructed, all assignments must be typed and must follow the proper format as (1) announced in class and/or (2) as written in the Blackboard materials for the particular assignment.

Retain your own copy in case something should happen to the original. Students are expected to complete and submit all assignments at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will not be permitted unless arrangements are discussed and approved well before the required due date. Only a severe emergency constitutes a valid excuse for submitting a late assignment. Problems with downed computers or similar issues are not valid excuses for missing deadlines in the practice of law and they will not be accepted as valid excuses for the submission of late assignments in this course. If a severe emergency that would prevent the timely submission of an assignment should arise, the student must contact the Instructor immediately in order to make alternative arrangements. The Instructor may ask for verification/documentation of the emergency. If the Instructor determines that a valid excuse did exist, the Instructor will set a new deadline for the student and there will be no penalty if the assignment is submitted before the new deadline. Ask questions as soon as possible by email or by phone if you do not understand an assignment.

e. **Accessibility and Special needs:** Students who qualify for services approved by the Office of Accessibility are to provide documentation to the instructor the first week of classes. Students who have accessibility needs should feel free to discuss those needs with the Office of Accessibility and the Instructor in private. A student's accessibility needs will be accommodated in accordance with university policy. Any student requiring accommodation for purposes of class or assignments must contact the Office of Accessibility and notify the Instructor by the second class of the semester. Any student wishing to discuss such issues with the Instructor should do so privately before or after class.

The UT Learning Enhancement Center provides students with academic assistance and support. The website is: <http://www.utoledo.edu/success/lec/>. A full range of additional student services is provided through the Office of Student Services.

f. **Statement of Diversity and Inclusion:** In concert with the University of Toledo's values and expectations, the faculty of the College of Social Justice and Human Services upholds the tenets pledged by the University to respect and value personal uniqueness and differences. Specifically, we actively participate in the initiatives of the University to attract and retain diverse faculty, staff, and students; to challenge stereotypes; and to promote sensitivity toward diversity and foster an environment of inclusion in all curricular and extra-curricular activities. Hence, all students enrolled in this course will be expected to:

- Be considerate of the thoughts and ideas of others
- Demonstrate accountability, integrity and honor in all course-related activities
- Promote a collaborative and supportive educational environment
- Treat every individual with kindness, dignity, and respect regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, impairment(s)/disability, political views, and other element(s) of uniqueness.

TECHNICAL SKILLS: To succeed in this course, you **MUST** possess the following technical skills. If you do not have the following technical skills, then you **MUST** seek help in learning these skills at the beginning of the course:

1. Rename, delete, organize, and save files.
2. Create, edit, and format word processing and presentation documents.
3. Copy, paste, and use a URL or web address.
4. Download and install programs and plug-ins.
5. Send and receive emails with attachments.
6. Locate and access information using a web search engine.
7. Use Lexis Advance for research.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS: Students need to have access to a properly functioning computer with an internet browser and a word processing program throughout the semester. High-speed internet access is recommended. Such programs and computers are available for free, on campus, for all students.

Use of Public Computers

If using a public library or other public access computer, please check to ensure that you will have access for the length of time required to complete tasks and tests. A list and schedule for on-campus computer labs is available at: [http://www.utoledo.edu/it/CS/Lab hours.html](http://www.utoledo.edu/it/CS/Lab%20hours.html).

UT Virtual Labs

On-campus labs offer students computer hardware and software they might not otherwise have access to. With UT's Virtual Lab, students can now access virtual machines loaded with all of the software they need to be successful, through your own broadband Internet connection and web browser. The virtual lab is open 24/7 and 365 days a year at:

<http://www.utoledo.edu/it/VLab/Index.html>.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will refine their legal research and writing skills.
2. Students will improve their understanding of legal resources and authorities.
3. Students will be able to conduct efficient computer assisted legal research.
4. Students will improve their legal writing style, grammar, and citation skills.
5. Students will improve their critical thinking and analysis skills.
6. Students will apply their knowledge to research legal issues and draft legal documents.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE/OUTCOME MEASURES: Students will complete at least the following:

1. Assigned Interactive Citation Exercises
2. Interoffice Memos and Motion
3. Legal Research and Writing Assignments

GRADING POLICIES

Student work will be assessed as follows. Specific guidelines, grading criteria, and a timeframe for grades and feedback will be provided as each assignment is announced. Grades will be determined by the following weighing methods:

Grading Scale*:

- A= 90-100%
- B = 80-89%

- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = < 59%

*Final grades may be adjusted upwards or downwards one grade level (e.g., from B to B+ or from B to B-) based on attendance and classroom participation. An exceptional attendance record and thoughtful contributions to class may result in an upward adjustment. Unexcused absences, unpreparedness, unprofessional conduct in the classroom, or failure to meaningfully participate in class may result in a downwards adjustment.

GRADE COMPONENTS:

Assignments: may be either: (1) posted on Blackboard and due before class, or (2) given in class. (Hence, class attendance is mandatory.)

- Interactive Citation Workstation: Total assignments are 10% of grade
- Various in-class exercises and assignments: 10% of grade
- Memo 1: 15% of grade
- Memo 2: 15% of grade
- Memo 3: 15% of grade
- Memo 4: 15% of grade
- Motion for Summary Judgment: 20% of grade

Semester Credit Hour Definition

One semester credit hour will be awarded for a minimum of 750 minutes of formalized instruction. One semester credit hour typically requires students to work at out-of-class assignments an average of twice the amount of time as formalized instruction (1,500 minutes). Formalized instruction may occur in various modes. Students will be expected to work at out-of-class assignments on a regular basis which, over the length of the course, would normally average two hours of out-of-class study for each hour of formal class activity. Out-of-class study shall not be counted as part of the classroom hour for credit.

ASSIGNMENT AND READING SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative course outline and subject to change. Check Blackboard for the most up to date and detailed schedule. If you are unable to attend class, you are responsible for obtaining the information and materials from class.

Key: ICW = Interactive Citation Workbook

BH = Foundations of Legal Research & Writing, by Best and Hawkins

Week I: Refresh on Legal Research, Writing, and Citations

Monday 8/27: Introduction to course, review syllabus, and review basic concepts

Wednesday 8/29: Review, continued

DUE: Syllabus review

Read: ICW: When Do I Cite? – In-class exercise

Read: BH: Chapter 7 (Overview of the Research Process)

Week 2: Begin Review & Research Memo I

Monday 9/3: NO CLASS - Labor Day

Wednesday 9/5:

DUE: ICW: When to Cite

Read: BH: Chapter 5 (Primary Sources)

In-class review of: Memo 1 materials, review case briefing, discuss assignment, review Citation Formats

Week 3: Citations

Monday 9/10:

DUE: Research and Case Briefs for Memo I

Read: BH: Chapter 10 (Fundamentals of Writing)

Wednesday 9/12:

Read:

ICW: Cami Documents

ICW: Signals

ICW: Parentheticals

ICW: Prior and Subsequent History

Week 4: Editing and Presentation

Monday 9/17: DUE: Research Memo I – in-class review

Read: BH:

Wednesday 9/19:

Memo 2 – review materials, review case briefing, discuss assignment

Week 5: Case Validation

Monday 9/24:

DUE: Research and Case Briefs for Memo 2

In Class: Case History, Shepardizing

Wednesday 9/27:

DUE: Complete Core Grammar Post Test

DUE: Citator Assignment

Week 6: Begin Review and Research Memo 3

Monday 10/1:

DUE: Memo 2

In-class Review: Memo 3 materials

Wednesday 10/3:

Week 7: Memo 3, continued

Monday 10/8:

DUE: Outline of Memo 3

Wednesday 10/10: NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

Week 8: Memo 3, continued. Begin: Research Jury Instructions, Court Documents, Local Rules

Monday 10/15:

Wednesday 10/17:

DUE: Memo 3

In-class: Drafting Professional Emails

Read: BH: Chapter 11

Week 9: Memo 4

Monday 10/22:

DUE: Review Materials for Memo 4

Wednesday 10/24:

Continue Memo 4

Week 10: Memo 4, Continued

Monday 10/29:

Wednesday 10/31

DUE: Email for Memo 4

Week 11: Introduction to Motions for Summary Judgment

Monday 11/5:

Read: Judge Skow case

In-class: Review of last-minute Memo 4 issues

Wednesday 11/7:

DUE: Memo 4

Week 12: Writing

Monday 11/12: VETERANS DAY OBSERVED

Wednesday 11/14 (shortened evening class)

Week 13: Motions for Summary Judgment, continued

Monday 11/19:

Wednesday 11/21: NO CLASS – HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Week 14: ***** *Students must begin scheduling individual semester-end feedback and review sessions for exam week. Such sessions are optional.*

Monday 11/26:

Wednesday 11/28:

Week 15:

Monday 12/3:

**** Scheduling for individual sessions CLOSES. No appointments for exam week will be made after today.*

Wednesday 12/5:

EXAM WEEK:

Wednesday, 12/12:

DUE: FINAL PROJECT: MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT