

**TULANE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES - PARALEGAL STUDIES  
LEGAL WRITING**

**COURSE SYLLABUS  
(Updated May 2007)**

**COURSE INFORMATION**

PARA 303-81

Elmwood Campus  
Credits: Three

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course builds on where your legal research course ended. The course objective is to analyze the law and cases, apply this legal analysis to specific facts and effectively communicate the conclusions resulting from your legal research and analysis in a clear and concise written form.

**PREREQUISITE:** Legal Research, UPAR 302

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To introduce the student to the paralegal profession in the context of the U.S. legal system and current ethical, regulatory, educational and workplace issues.
2. To introduce the student to federal and state court systems.
3. To familiarize the student with basic legal terminology and vocabulary.
4. To develop critical thinking, writing and legal analysis skills.
5. To develop legal analysis skills by teaching case briefing and problem solving.
6. To assist students in entering the paralegal profession, achieving career goals and making them aware of the importance of continuing legal education and lifelong learning.
7. To continue the development of students to legal research skills.
8. To instruct and discuss with the student ethical and professional concerns

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Name: Joni A. Johnson  
Telephone: (w) 620-4183  
E-Mail: andignac@tulane.edu  
Office hours: Immediately after class or during class break

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

William H. Putnam, Legal Research, Analysis and Writing, (West Legal Studies 2004)

Plain English for Lawyers, Richard Wydick (latest edition) ["PEL"]

**RECOMMENDED READING**

The Elements of Style, William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White

Edward H. Hein & Beth Walston-Dunham, Citation-At-A-Glance: Citations for Use in Legal Memoranda and Documents (rev'd ed. West Legal Studies)

A Uniform System of Citation, Harvard Law Review Association (latest edition) ["Blue Book"]

**Or**

ALWD Citation Manual A Professional System of Citation, Darby Dickerson, Latest Edition

## HONOR BOARD POLICY

ALL STUDENT WORK IS GOVERNED BY THE TULANE UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE. THE HONOR CODE URL IS: [www.tulane.edu/~jruscher/dept/Honor.Code.html](http://www.tulane.edu/~jruscher/dept/Honor.Code.html). ONLY THOSE PROJECTS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNATED AS GROUP PROJECTS CAN BE WORKED ON TOGETHER, ALL OTHER WORK MUST BE PERFORMED SOLELY BY THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT. ANY VIOLATIONS WILL BE REPORTED TO THE HONOR BOARD FOR REVIEW.

## INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD

Lecture, case briefing, discussions, written assignments, research assignment, papers and exams

## EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Your final grade will be based on the total score earned throughout the semester as set forth below:

Homework assign/exercises	5 %
Class presentation	5 %
Research Memo	10 %
Case brief	15 %
Mid-term In-class exam	20 %
Office Legal Memorandum	15 %
Correspondence Assignment	10 %
Final Examination	20 %

In accordance with University College policy, no extra credit can be given.

## GRADING SCALE

94 – 100	A	80 – 82	B-	67 – 69	D+
90 - 93	A-	77 – 79	C+	64 – 66	D
87 – 89	B+	73 – 76	C	60 – 63	D-
83 – 86	B	70 – 72	C-	00 – 59	F

## INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Lecture, case briefing and discussion, written assignments, tests, scenarios presented for class discussion, class discussion of exercises, research in library, students prepare and teach a section of Plain English for Lawyers.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is important, this material is difficult and it helps to attend the lectures and review the exercises. **Please get a contact number from a classmate to get notes or missed assignment information. You are responsible for securing this information from your contact buddy.** Absence on the date of the mid-term or final examinations will presumptively result in a failing grade for the missed examination absent a detailed physician's note or equivalent documentation.

## PROFESSIONALISM IN THE CLASSROOM

Information in class will be presented via lectures, in-class exercises, and other means. Assigned reading is to be accomplished **prior** to class so that you may participate in discussions and exercises.

Please use the “buddy system”--get notes from a class buddy if you miss any sessions. If you know that you will be absent on a particular date when an assignment is due or an exam is scheduled, please let me know as soon as possible. Makeup examinations are allowed only in the event of an emergency.

**Please refrain from use of cell phones or pagers while in class.**

## WRITING WORKSHOP

When preparing written assignments, students may wish to use the tutoring services available at the Writing Workshop. The Writing Workshop is located in the Educational Resources and Counseling Department, in the Mechanical Engineering Building on the uptown campus. Evening and weekend appointments are available. You may call 865-5103 or access the schedule at <http://erc.tulane.edu/studying/index.php>

## ASSIGNMENTS

If you miss a class, you are still responsible for handing in the homework assignment due at the next class period. Any homework assignments handed in late will not count toward the grade unless excused by me. The brief and writing assignments must be handed in on their due dates. *These writing assignments will automatically receive an “F” if handed in late.*

## ASSIGNMENT CRITERIA

Cover sheet: Assignment title, Student’s name & Instructor’s name, date  
Paper: 8 ½ “x 11”  
Format: 1” margins, No smaller than 12 point letter size, typewritten, Double-spaced, except block quotes, Number each page (Letter assignment shall be single spaced)  
Citation: In accordance with the Blue Book or ALWD  
Number: **Two copies** – one for handing in and one for class participation

**PLEASE RETAIN A COPY OF YOUR ASSIGNMENTS. IF ANY WORK IS LOST, YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING AN ADDITIONAL COPY.**



Assignment: Student PEL discussion – Third Part of Class  
Read Chapter 18 and PEL Chaps & assignments TBA

**Class 11** Lecture: Persuasive Writing – First Part of Class  
Student PEL discussion – Second Part of Class  
**Office Legal Memorandum #1 due**  
Assignment: Read Chapter 19 and PEL Chaps & assignments TBA

**Class 12** Lecture: Correspondence – First Part of Class  
Student PEL discussion – Second Part of Class  
**Correspondence Assignment handed out**  
Assignment: Work on Correspondence Assignment  
Study for exam

**Class 13** Lecture: Final Exam Review  
Question and Answer  
Assignment: Complete Correspondence Assignment  
Study for exam

**Class 14**  
**Final Exam:** **Chapters 14-19**  
**Writing Assignment #2 due**