

Effective Legal Writing Skills Workshop
Prof. Belle
Syllabus and Class Assignments

Course Name:	Effective Legal Writing Skills Workshop
Units:	None – Certificate of Completion
Professor:	Louise J. Belle, Esq. ljbelleslettres@gmail.com
Prerequisite:	None
Session:	05/10/17-07/12/17
Class Time:	Wednesdays, 3:00-6:00 p.m.
Required Reading:	Garner, <i>The Elements of Legal Style</i> (2d ed. 2002), Oxford University Press, ISBN 978-0-19-514162-7. Garner, <i>Legal Writing in Plain English</i> (2d ed. 2013), University of Chicago Press, ISBN 978-0-226-28393-7.
Course Description:	This course will focus on effective skills for all types of legal writing, both objective and persuasive. We will discuss and practice elements of usage and style, including punctuation, grammar, word choice, syntax, paragraph structure, and document organization. Special emphasis will be on brevity, clarity, and structural simplicity.
Class Attendance:	Regular and punctual attendance is essential. Students should plan to attend every class. Students must attend a minimum of 80% of the classes in order to receive the Certificate of Completion. Roll will be taken at each class. Absence for any part of a class will be recorded as an absence for the entire class. (Exceptions are at the Dean's discretion.)
Class preparation:	Be prepared to discuss readings and written assignments prepared for (and during) each class.
Grading:	Pass/fail, based on class participation (50%) and take-home assignments (50%). Both the quantity and quality of participation will be considered.

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- 5/10/17 Topics: Introduction; punctuation; grammar
Reading: *Note: The assigned reading is due on the first day of class.*
- Style, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-13)
 - Plain, Introduction (pp. 1-3)
 - Plain, §§ 49-50 (pp. 168-172)
 - Style, §§ 2.1-2.12, 4.9 (pp. 15-28, 84-86)
 - Plain, Appendix A (pp. 173-190)
 - Style, §§ 2.21-2.28, 7.11-7.12 (pp. 40-52, 198-201)
 - Plain, §§ 5, 9, 13, 15, 36 (pp. 24-27, 36-39, 48-50, 53-55, 128-133)
- Assignment:
- Punctuation exercise #1 (hand out 5/10, due 5/17)
 - Punctuation exercise #2 (hand out 5/10, due 5/17)
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- 5/17/17 Topics: Punctuation; grammar
Reading:
- Style, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-13)
 - Plain, Introduction (pp. 1-3)
 - Plain, §§ 49-50 (pp. 168-172)
 - Style, §§ 2.1-2.12, 4.9 (pp. 15-28, 84-86)
 - Plain, Appendix A (pp. 173-190)
 - Style, §§ 2.21-2.28, 7.11-7.12 (pp. 40-52, 198-201)
 - Plain, §§ 5, 9, 13, 15, 36 (pp. 24-27, 36-39, 48-50, 53-55, 128-133)
- Assignments:
- Punctuation exercise #1 (hand out 5/10, due 5/17)
 - Punctuation exercise #2 (hand out 5/10, due 5/17)
 - Grammar exercise #1 (hand out 5/17, due 5/24)
 - Grammar exercise #2 (hand out 5/17, due 5/24)
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- 5/24/17 Topic: Grammar; usage/word choice
Reading:
- Style, §§ 2.21-2.28, 7.11-7.12 (pp. 40-52, 198-201)
 - Plain, §§ 5, 9, 13, 15, 36 (pp. 24-27, 36-39, 48-50, 53-55, 128-133)
 - Style, §§ 2.13-2.20 (pp. 29-40)
 - Style, Chapter 5 (pp. 99-147)
 - Plain, §§ 35, 37 (pp. 125-128, 133-135)
- Assignments:
- Grammar exercise #1 (hand out 5/17, due 5/24)
 - Grammar exercise #2 (hand out 5/17, due 5/24)
 - Grammar exercise #3 (hand out 5/24, due 5/31)
 - Usage/word choice exercise #1 (hand out 5/24, due 5/31)

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- 5/31/17 Topic: Grammar; usage/word choice
Reading: • Style, §§ 2.21-2.28, 7.11-7.12 (pp. 40-52, 198-201)
 • Plain, §§ 5, 9, 13, 15, 36 (pp. 24-27, 36-39, 48-50, 53-55, 128-133)
 • Style, §§ 2.13-2.20 (pp. 29-40)
 • Style, Chapter 5 (pp. 99-147)
 • Plain, §§ 35, 37 (pp. 125-128, 133-135)
Assignments: • Grammar exercise #3 (hand out 5/24, due 5/31)
 • Usage/word choice exercise #1 (hand out 5/24, due 5/31)
 • Usage/word choice exercise #2 (hand out 5/31, due 6/07)
- 6/07/17 Topics: Brevity; clarity; simplicity
Reading: • Style, §§ 3.1-3.2 (pp. 53-58)
 • Style, Chapter 6 (pp. 149-176)
 • Style, §§ 7.7-7.10, 7.13-7.20 (pp. 191-198, 201-219)
 • Plain, §§ 5, 12, 14, 16-20 (pp. 24-27, 44-48, 50-53, 55-65)
Assignments: • Usage/word choice exercise #2 (hand out 5/31, due 6/07)
 • Brevity/clarity/simplicity exercise (hand out 6/07, due 6/14)
- 6/14/17 Topic: Sentence structure
Reading: • Style, §§ 3.5, 6.8-6.14 (pp. 66-73, 160-167)
 • Plain, §§ 5-11 (pp. 24-43)
Assignments: • Brevity/clarity/simplicity exercise (hand out 6/07, due 6/14)
 • Sentence structure exercise #1 (hand out 6/14, due 6/21)
 • Sentence structure exercise #2 (hand out 6/14, due 6/21)
- 6/21/17 Topics: Sentence structure; paragraph structure
Reading: • Style, §§ 3.4-3.5, 6.8-6.14 (pp. 62-73, 160-167)
 • Plain, §§ 3, 5-11, 24-27 (pp. 16-19, 24-43, 81-94)
Assignments: • Sentence structure exercise #1 (hand out 6/14, due 6/21)
 • Sentence structure exercise #2 (hand out 6/14, due 6/21)
 • Paragraph structure exercise #1 (hand out 6/21, due 6/28)
 • Paragraph structure exercise #2 (hand out 6/21, due 6/28)

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- 6/28/17 Topics: Paragraph structure; document organization
Reading: • Style, §§ 3.3-3.4 (pp. 58-66)
 • Plain, §§ 3-4, 21-27, 32, 34, 43
 (pp. 16-23, 69-94, 112-116, 120-125, 148-150)
Assignments: • Paragraph structure exercise #1 (hand out 6/21, due 6/28)
 • Paragraph structure exercise #2 (hand out 6/21, due 6/28)
 • Paragraph structure exercise #3 (in class, 6/28)
 • Document organization exercise #1 (assign 6/28, due 7/12)
 • Document organization exercise #2 (hand out 6/28, due 7/12)
- 7/05/17 No class session
- 7/12/17 Topic: Document organization
Reading: • Style, §3.3 (pp. 58-62)
 • Plain, §§ 4, 21-23, 32, 34, 43
 (pp. 20-23, 69-81, 112-116, 120-125, 148-150)
Assignments: • Document organization exercise #1 (assign 6/28, due 7/12)
 • Document organization exercise #2 (hand out 6/28, due 7/12)
 • Document organization exercise #3 (in class, 7/12)
 • Rewriting exercise (in class, 7/12)