

**CLASS NUMBER AND NAME:** PLN240A LEGAL RESEARCH I

**TOTAL CLOCK HOURS/UNITS:** PLN240A - 24 hours/2 Units

**PREREQUISITES:** Completion of LGN231F-Estate Planning and Probate.

**TEXT AND MATERIALS:** *Legal Research, Analysis, and Writing* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2004) Joanne Banker Hames, Yvonne Ekern (ISBN 9780135109441); *California Style Manual* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2000). Edward W. Jessen. West Group Publishers, Inc. (ISBN 314233709); *Black's Law Dictionary* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2011) Brian A. Garner. Thompson West Publishing Company. (ISBN 9780314275448)

Recommended: Laptop purchased from the Bookstore or student's own laptop computer (Please see your instructor if you are interested and qualify through financial aid for the laptops available from the Empire Bookstore)

**CLASS DESCRIPTION:** In this course the student will learn how to research, properly cite, and Shepardize cases and codes using the law library and Computer Assisted Legal Research (CALR) including LEXIS and the Internet as resources. The student will learn to use these research sources to find cases and codes covering California and federal law. The student will also learn how to use and understand secondary source resources including treatises, encyclopedias, and practice guides. Class time will be used for lecture, discussion, and assistance with course projects.

**CLASS OBJECTIVES:** To give students an opportunity to learn about proper legal authorities, to locate and research a variety of legal topics, to spot legal issues, and to accurately cite legal authorities. To encourage students to use critical thinking locating correct research materials.

**REQUIREMENTS:** This is an approximate schedule and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. The student is responsible for any missed information and handouts due to absences. Homework includes familiarizing yourself to the Calendar and Syllabus, textbook reading assignments, and study guide homework plus diagrams, flashcards, and practice tests all when appropriate to augment learning. The time spent in preparation for or reflection on course lecture will approximate two hours outside of class for each lecture credit hour utilized by the instructor in delivery of the materials and ¼ hour outside of class for each hour of structured lab time.

**CLASS FORMAT OVERVIEW:** Time in the classroom will be spent on lecture and discussion. The class will also go to the law library, where students will be instructed in how to locate, cite, and analyze various legal materials. Time will also be spent on computers learning Lexis and Internet legal services to Shepardize case law and to locate primary and secondary legal materials that students have first learned to locate in the law library. After lecture and discussion, the

students will work on their assignments for the remainder of the class time.

**CLASSROOM  
ATTENDANCE:**

It is critical to the student's success to attend class every day. The student's presence for the entire hour is an important demonstration of the concept of professional demeanor and shows respect for the class. Therefore, students will only be marked present when they arrive on time and remain for the entire class session. A student must be present for 80 percent of the class, or she or he will be asked to leave the class and will receive a failing grade in the class.

**Legal Research is an intensive class requiring attendance and continual participation. Courtesy and a professional attitude are mandatory in the law library as well as the classroom.**

**GRADING POLICIES:**

The work submitted to the instructor will be evaluated according to the specified requirements of the assigned work and its accuracy. **No late work will be accepted and no make-up work will be permitted. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass.** Students must work individually and must turn in their own work.

Course grades for each module will be based on the average of the scores received on tests, homework, attendance, and other course assignments. No late homework assignments will be accepted by the instructor. The attached course outline provides points available and homework policies.

Weighting of grades is as follows:

100% Homework, Quizzes, Final Exams or Written Papers

Combined grades from attendance, class participation, quizzes, final exams or written papers, as applicable, will be graded on the following scale:

100-90%	A
89- 80%	B
79- 70%	C
69- 65%	D
Below 65%	F

**FINAL GRADE:**

The final grade is a letter grade based upon completing the assignments, total points on assignments, quizzes, and attendance. In order to obtain an A in this class, the student must complete all assignments, have no more than one absence, and receive an average of at least 90 percent on all assignments.

**ANTICIPATED LEARNING  
OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Cite California and Federal Cases.
2. Cite California and Federal Codes.
3. Research cases utilizing all source tools.
4. Research codes utilizing all source tools.
5. Shepardize cases to see if they are still current law and to find other cases on the same subject for further research utilizing all source tools.
6. Find cases and codes which pertain to subject matters using second legal resources such as *Witkin-Summary of California Law*, *California Jurisprudence III*, and *California Forms of Pleading and Practice*.
7. Have a basic understanding of Computer Assisted Legal Research including LEXIS and Internet Legal Research on the freely accessible Internet.

*The instructor reserves the right to reconfigure the above with prior notice to the class.*

**PLN240A & L LEGAL RESEARCH I  
OUTLINE – 6 WEEK MODULE**

WEEK	SCHEDULE	ASSIGNMENTS/HOMEWORK <i>All reading from <b>Legal Research, Analysis, And Writing</b> textbook</i>
<b>One</b>	<b>Introduction to course, review of basics of legal research and introduction to California Style Manual</b> <b>Introduction to case law and tour of law library</b>	<b><u>Reading Homework</u></b> Chapter 1, pp. 1 – 15 Chapter 3, pp. 36 – 65 (to section 3-7) <b><u>Assignment: in class and lab time (Handouts):</u></b> California Case Law (50 points) Federal Case Law (50 points) Legal Vocabulary (10 points)
<b>Two</b>	<b>Introduction to statutory research</b> <b>Tour law library and review Codes</b>	<b><u>Reading Homework</u></b> Chapter 5, pp. 104 – 147 Chapter 6, pp. 151 – 163 (to section 6-4) <b><u>Assignment: in class and lab time(Handouts):</u></b> California Codes (50 points) Federal Codes (50 points) Legal Vocabulary (10 points)
<b>Three</b>	<b>Introduction to secondary research</b> <b>Tour law library and review resources</b>	<b><u>Reading Homework</u></b> Chap. 7, pp. 167 – 191 <b><u>Assignment: in class and lab time (Handouts):</u></b> Secondary Research Assignment No. 1(50 points) Secondary Research Assignment No. 2(50 points) Legal Vocabulary (10 points)
<b>Four</b>	<b>Secondary Research – Cont'd</b> <b>Review citation practices</b>	<u>Continue</u> secondary research assignments <b><u>Reading Homework</u></b> Chapter 9, pp. 219 -244 <b><u>Assignment: in class and lab time (Handouts):</u></b> Secondary Research Assignment No. 3(50 points) Secondary Research Assignment No. 4(50 points) Legal Vocabulary (10 points)
<b>Five</b>	<b>Introduction to Shepardizing on LEXIS</b> <b>LEXIS Lecture</b>	<b><u>Reading Homework</u></b> Chapter 10, pp. 245-262 Chapter 11, pp.264 – 280  <b><u>Assignment: in class and lab time(Handout):</u></b> Shepardizing On-Line w/LEXIS (50 points) Handout Final Project (100 points) Legal Vocabulary (10 points)
<b>Six</b>	<b>Review best methods of research</b> <b>Summary of class/review of projects</b> <b>Final Project Due</b>	Final Project Due Last Day of the module Instructor available for review last day of the module

*The instructor reserves the right to reconfigure the above with prior notice to the class. The class objectives will be met regardless of deviation from this outline.*

*This is an approximate schedule and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. The student is responsible for any missed information and handouts due to absences. Homework includes familiarizing yourself to the Calendar and*

*Syllabus, textbook reading assignments, and study guide homework plus diagrams, flashcards, and practice tests all when appropriate to augment learning. The time spent in preparation for or reflection on course lecture will approximate two hours outside of class for each lecture credit hour utilized by the instructor in delivery of the materials and ¼ hour outside of class for each hour of structured lab time.*