

CLASS NUMBER AND NAME: **PLN310A — Writing for the Legal Professional I**

TOTAL HOURS/UNITS: 24 HOURS—2 UNITS

PREREQUISITES: PLN240B— Legal Research II

TEXTS AND MATERIALS: *Legal Research, Analysis, and Writing* (5th Ed. 2015) Joanne Banker Hames, Yvonne Ekern (ISBN 9780135109441); *California Style Manual* (4th Ed. 2000). Edward W. Jessen. West Group Publishers, Inc. (ISBN 314233709); *Black's Law Dictionary* (4th Ed. 2011) Brian A. Garner. Thompson West Publishing Company. (ISBN 9780314275448)

CLASS DESCRIPTION: The student will be introduced to the legal writing process, including comprehensive and critical thinking exercises, editing, legal analysis, and the process of using IRAC, with an emphasis on case briefing.

CLASS OBJECTIVES: This course is the first of a two-part series of legal writing classes designed to guide the student through the writing process for paralegals. In the first part of the series, objective writing is explored in great detail. The student will practice and review fundamental writing principles, practice proofreading and editing skills, learn legal analysis skills through briefing cases, learn to articulate legal concepts, and draft documents in a manner reflecting legal analysis.

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: Instruction will include a combination of lectures, class discussions, independent study, and exercise completion. Each week the student will have reading and writing assignments. The writing assignments will be reviewed in class and students must be prepared to be called upon in class.

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. Class participation and professionalism are part of your grade so missing classes, coming in late, or leaving early, will negatively affect your grade.

Legal Writing 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.

TESTING:

There are no tests in the classical sense, but there is in-class drilling on grammar and legal citation. All grades will be based upon in-class assignments, homework, and attendance.

GRADING POLICIES:

The student will complete all assigned exercises and coursework, as well as briefs. Points assigned for each project are noted on the attached course outline. **There is no late work accepted in legal writing.**

Weighting of grades is as follows:

100% Homework, Quizzes, Final Exams or Written Papers (Points will be taken off for absences.)

Class participation is part of your grade. This means that every class period, you have an opportunity to get 100% for that period in the instructor's gradebook (as well as being marked absent in the attendance log). If you fail to come to class, you will receive a zero. If you show up late or leave early, without permission from your instructor, you will have your class grade reduced accordingly. If you work on assignments from other classes, text or otherwise use your cell phone, run out of class to use your cell phone on a consistent basis, leave to go to the bathroom or smoke a cigarette or visit with friends from other classes, etc., and are gone for a large chunk of time, or are otherwise somewhere else physically or mentally, then your grade will be lowered accordingly. Your in-class performance is an opportunity for your instructor to evaluate your suitability for working as a paralegal. Your grade will reflect an honest assessment from your instructor of your ability to act professionally and intelligently in a law office environment.

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

ANTICIPATED LEARNING
OUTCOMES:

Upon completing this course, the student will:

1. Practice and polish the essentials of good grammar, punctuation, and editing in order to effectively and clearly communicate in writing;
2. Understand how to identify legal issues in a client's case and compare them with case law facts and issues;
3. Practice the fundamentals of good legal writing using step-by-step techniques: prewriting, drafting, and revising.
4. Understand the anatomy of a case brief: determining the legal issues, the holding, the analysis, and rationale of the court, and the disposition.
5. Understand statutory and constitutional analysis and how to analyze a factual situation controlled by statutory law.
6. Have a basic understanding of synthesizing case law and statutory law as applied to a fact situation.

PLN310A— Writing for the Legal Professional I
SCHEDULE OUTLINE

Week	TOPIC	Schedule 6-Week Module
One	<p>Identifying Issues and Relevant Facts</p> <p>Concentrating on: <u>Facts</u> <u>Issue</u> Rule Analysis Conclusion</p> <p>Review of Basic Grammar and Punctuation Requirements in a Legal Writing Context</p> <p>Review of Proper Citation</p>	<p><u>Chapter 2 – The Starting Point: Analyzing Facts and Identifying Legal Issues, Read pp. 15 – 30</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Homework Assignment</u>: Questions for Review, p. 30, 1-8. The more you are able to write in your own words, the better your grade will be for this assignment. Writing in incomplete sentences will get you an automatic zero on the assignment. ➤ <u>Homework Assignment</u>: Assignments and Exercises, p. 30, 1, 2, and 4 ➤ <u>In-Class Work</u>: p. 30 Test Yourself (<i>Specker v. Oliver Wendell High School, Morse v. Frederick</i>), practice IRACing with help from instructor and classmates – various first year law school torts, criminal law, and contract law cases as chosen by your instructor. ➤ <u>Grammatical Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> ➤ <u>Citation Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> <p>Homework Assignments Due: Beginning of first class of the second week of the mod.</p>
Two	<p>Finding and Analyzing Case Law</p> <p>Concentrating on: <u>Facts</u> <u>Issue</u> Rule Analysis Conclusion</p> <p>Review of Basic Grammar and Punctuation Requirements in a Legal Writing Context</p> <p>Review of Proper Citation</p>	<p><u>Chapter 3 – Finding and Analyzing Case law Homework Review pp. 31 – 64, Read pp. 64 – 73</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Homework Assignment</u>: Questions for Review, p. 74, 1-10. The more you are able to write in your own words, the better your grade will be for this assignment. Writing in incomplete sentences will get you an automatic zero on the assignment. ➤ <u>Homework Assignment</u>: Assignments and Exercises, p. 74, 1-4 ➤ <u>In-Class Work</u>: p. 74 Test Yourself (<i>Specker v. Oliver Wendell High School, Morse v. Frederick</i>), practice IRACing with help from instructor and classmates – various first year law school torts, criminal law, and contract law cases as chosen by your instructor.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Grammatical Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> ➤ <u>Citation Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> <p>Homework Assignments Due: Beginning of the first class, third week of the mod</p>
Three	<p>Case Briefing</p> <p>Concentrating on: Facts Issue Rule <u>Analysis</u> <u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>Review proper legal citation methods: Cases and Codes</p> <p>Grammar and Clear Writing Review</p>	<p><u>Chapter 4 – How to Brief a Case, Read pp. 76 – 100 (We will be spending two weeks on Chapter 4)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Homework Assignment:</u> Questions for Review, p. 101, 1-6. The more you are able to write in your own words, the better your grade will be for this assignment. Writing in incomplete sentences will get you an automatic zero on the assignment. ➤ <u>Homework Assignment:</u> Research Exercises 2, Analysis Assignment 6 ➤ <u>In-Class Work:</u> p. 101 Test Yourself (<i>Morse v. Frederick</i>), practice IRACing with help from instructor and classmates – various first year law school torts, criminal law, and contract law cases as chosen by your instructor. ➤ <u>Grammatical Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> ➤ <u>Citation Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> <p>Homework Assignments Due: Beginning of the first class, fourth week of the mod</p> <p>Please Note: Begin writing a draft of your brief for p. 102, # 3 Analysis Assignments, <i>Minnesota v. Dickerson</i> (final draft due beginning of first class, fifth week of the mod)</p>

<p>Four</p>	<p>Case Briefing and Legal Writing Skills</p> <p>Concentrating on: Facts Issue Rule <u>Analysis</u> <u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>Review locating secondary sources</p> <p>Grammar and Clear Writing Review</p>	<p><u>Chapter 4 – How to Brief a Case (Second Week on this Chapter)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Homework Assignment:</u> p. 102, Analysis Assignments 4 and 5 ➤ <u>Homework Assignment:</u> Continue writing your brief for p. 102, 3, <i>Minnesota v. Dickerson</i> (final draft due beginning of first class, fifth week of the mod) ➤ <u>In-Class Work:</u> Practice IRACing with help from instructor and classmates – various first year law school torts, criminal law, and contract law cases as chosen by your instructor. ➤ <u>Grammatical Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> ➤ <u>Citation Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> <p>Assignments Due: Beginning of first class of the fifth week of the mod.</p>
<p>Five</p>	<p>Statutory Analysis and Application</p> <p>Concentrating on: Facts Issue <u>Rule</u> Analysis Conclusion</p>	<p><u>Chapter 6: Statutory and Constitutional Analysis, Read pp. 142 - 163</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Homework Assignment:</u> Questions for Review, p. 163, 1-5. The more you are able to write in your own words, the better your grade will be for this assignment. Writing in incomplete sentences will get you an automatic zero on the assignment. ➤ <u>Homework Assignment:</u> Assignments and Exercises, p. 164-166, 1-5 ➤ <u>Grammatical Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> ➤ <u>Citation Drills as assigned in class at the discretion of the instructor</u> <p>Assignments DUE: End of class, last class of the mod.</p>
<p>Six</p>	<p>Synthesizing Case Law and Statutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Homework Assignment -- Handout: Synthesizing Cases and Statutes</u>

	Concentrating on: <u>Facts</u> <u>Issue</u> <u>Rule</u> <u>Analysis</u> <u>Conclusion</u>	Assignment: DUE last day of class Review, critique, compare all briefs.
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*ASSIGNMENTS TURNED IN LATE **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**. You will have an opportunity to have one rough draft reviewed by your instructor if you get it to the instructor **BEFORE THE DAY IT IS DUE**. Cases to brief may be subject to change. 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.