LEGAL WRITING

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE: Legal Writing for Paralegals

INSTRUCTOR: Christopher B. Ellison, Esq.
310-882-6239
chrisellison_esq@hotmail.com

REQUIRED RESOURCES: Basic Legal Writing for Paralegals, 2nd Edition
Hope Viner Sanborn and Andrea B. Yelin

Bluebook: Uniform System of Citation
http://www.legalbluebook.com/

COURSE TERM AND DATE: Spring 2014

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to instruct students in the understanding and preparation of legal documents related to a law practice. Students will be taken step by step through the methodology of commonly used legal documents. This course will familiarize students with the language and format of legal documents through the use of sample forms and through practical application of classroom discussion to the drafting of documents.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATION METHODS: After taking this course, the student will be able to:
1. Understand the characteristics and structure of legal writing, common errors made in legal writing, and the importance of detailed writing.
2. Create basic legal documents of correspondence, transactions, and memorandums, including the use of correct citation format.

These outcomes will be measured through evaluation of various legal writings, some of which will require legal analysis.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS: A combination of lecture and discussion with exercises and assignments to insure comprehension.
ASSIGNMENTS / REQUIREMENTS /
COMPONENTS OF THE FINAL GRADE:

1) Class participation is critical to the development of concepts and ideas.

2) Students will be required to complete three (3) practical writing assignments during the semester. Each assignment will be worth twenty (20) percent of your grade. The Final Examination will be worth twenty (20) percent of your grade. The other twenty (20) percent will be made up of in-class assignments and take home assignments.

GRADING SYSTEM:

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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>90 to 100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>80 to 89</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>70 to 79</td>
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<td>60 to 69</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
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CLASS SCHEDULE

Class 1, Text Chapters 1-2, 6
Introduction to Legal Writing
Review of the Legal System, Research Techniques and Resources and Case Briefing
Assignment: Case Briefs

Class 2, Text Chapter 6 and the Appendix
Citation and Case Briefing
In-Class Citation Exercise

Class 3, Text Chapters 7-9
Overview of Legal Memoranda, Drafting Facts Statements, Conclusions and Issues
Due: Case Briefs, Review Case Briefs
Assignment: Case Briefs and Facts, Issues and Conclusions I and Citation Exercises

Class 4, Text Chapters 8-9
Review Facts, Issues and Conclusions
Due: Facts I and case briefs
Assignment: Facts I rewrite

Class 5, Text Chapters 10-11
Discussion and Analysis of Legal Problems In Written Memoranda
organization, synthesis, application of law to facts, conclusion, IRAC
Due: Facts I rewrite, case briefs
Assignment: Facts 2 burglary, issues and conclusion

Class 6, Text Chapters 12 and Review of Other Chapters
Outlining and Organization
Due: Facts 2 and issues and conclusion
Assignment: Closed Memo Outline and Burglary Discussion

Class 7, Chapters 13 and Review of Other Chapters
Synthesis, Persuasive Writing and Review of Facts II
Due: Burglary Discussion and Closed Memo Outline
Assignment: Closed Memo 1st Draft and Burglary Facts 2 Rewrite

Class 8
Discuss Facts II, burglary discussions and outlines, synthesis
Due: Burglary Facts 2 rewrite
Assignment: Burglary Discussion Rewrite and 1st Draft Closed Memo

Class 9
Synthesis, Organization, Outlining and Persuasive Writing
Due: Closed Memo 1st Draft and Burglary Discussion Rewrite  
Assignment: Final Memo (Outline due at class 10)

Class 10  
Review Closed Memos and Burglary Discussion Rewrites  
Due: Outline for Final Memo  
Assignment: Rewrite Closed Memo

Class 11, Text Chapters 12 and 14  
Discuss Outlines, Organization and In-House Client Documents  
Due: Closed Memo Rewrite  
Assignment: Final and deposition abstract and meeting summary

Class 12, Review and Chapter 15  
Discuss Closed Memo rewrite. Letter Writing  
Due: 1st Draft of Final and deposition abstract and meeting summary  
Assignment: Final and Letter Writing Exercises

Class 13 Text Chapter 3-5  
Writing Fundamentals, Grammar, Clarity, Sentence Structure, Paragraphs, Active Voice, and  
Review 1st Drafts of Finals  
Assignment: Final and grammar project

Class 14, Text Chapter 15  
Fundamentals continued. Review of Letter Writing  
Due: Final Rewrite  
Assignment: Letter Writing Assignment

Class 15  
In-Class Final  
Due: Letter Writing  
Final