

**Western State College of Law
Honors Writing
Fall 2020**

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Course Overview

Honors writing is an upper-level writing course that builds on the core writing curriculum you have already received. It is meant to challenge you with advanced study in logical and creative thinking, intricate analysis, and sophisticated source synthesis. By the end of the semester, you will produce a paper of publishable quality that is worthy of submission to either a law review or legal writing competition.

Course Objectives

This course has four student learning objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop an original thesis.
2. Students will demonstrate a proficiency in legal research to support their thesis.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to prepare a cogent and thorough outline of research and analysis supporting their thesis.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to produce a well-written and well-reasoned paper of publishable quality.

Course Requirements

- **Required Text:**
 - *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, 20th ed.
- **Recommended Texts:**
 - *Scholarly Writing for Law Students*, Elizabeth Fajans & Mary Falk (2017, 5th ed.)
 - *Academic Legal Writing*, Eugene Volokh (2016, 5th ed.)(Both texts are on Reserve in the Library.)

Attendance and Participation

Much of what you will learn in this class is derived from both class instruction and class discussion. Directions will be given during each class session for your paper. In addition, class discussions will enable students to share their projects and learn from one another in a collaborative and supportive environment. Thus, it is important not to miss class and actively participate during each class session.

Class will have two components – a synchronous or live component conducted via Zoom and an asynchronous component managed through Westlaw’s TWEN learning system. Using this hybrid approach allows for the fullest learning experience. Please register for the TWEN course associated with this course. Also, please follow the Zoom guidelines listed below.

TWEN Course

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Zoom Guidelines

- Find a dedicated quiet space to attend Zoom sessions, to minimize the chances that you will be disrupted during the session.
- Arrive to class early and dressed as you would to attend an in-person class.
- Your camera must be turned on for the duration of the class. If desired, you can use the background settings in Zoom to create an artificial background that blocks the view of your space while still allowing you to be seen on camera.
- Come prepared, as you would for an in-person class. Participation in Zoom classes is as important as it is during an in-person class session.
- Do not multitask – stay focused on the class discussion – do not wander in and out of the Zoom session.
- If you have to miss a Zoom session, or arrive late or leave early, notify the professor in advance, as you would for an in-person class.
- If you have connectivity issues, whether it be long-term or short-term, that impact your ability to participate (e.g., if you are limited to dial-in without video), notify your professor so other accommodations can be explored.
- Do not post screenshots or recordings of any Zoom classes on social media. Such actions would constitute a violation of the Student Honor Code. If you need access to a recording of the Zoom session, please contact your professor.

Time Requirements for Class Participation

In addition to attending and participating in class each week, much of the work you will do over the course of the semester to produce your final paper will be outside the classroom. ABA Standard 310(b)(1) requires that students spend at least two hours of outside study time for every course credit hour. This means that you must devote at least four (4) hours each week, on average, outside of the classroom, to this course. Throughout the semester, you will be devoting at a minimum four (4) hours weekly, to this course.

Formatting Requirements

For all assignments, including the final paper, please comply with the following formatting requirements:

- Typewritten, double-spaced, Times New Roman or Verdana, 12-point font.
- One-inch margins for the top, bottom, left, and right margins
- Page numbers at the bottom center of each page
- Citations must follow *The Bluebook* (20th ed.)

Assignments and Grades

- 50%
 - In-Class Exercise Participation (15 pts.)
 - Reflective Journaling (10 pts.)
 - Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography (15 pts.)
 - Paper Presentation (10 pts.)
- 20%
 - First Draft of Paper (20 pts.)
- 30%
 - Final Draft of Paper (30 pts.)

Western State College of Law Programmatic Learning Outcomes

Western State College of Law's curriculum is designed so that every student achieves a level of competency prior to graduation in each of the eight Programmatic Learning Outcomes listed below:

(1) Doctrinal Knowledge

Students will demonstrate knowledge of substantive and procedural law in the core curriculum subjects, including Contracts, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Torts, Real Property, Business Association, Evidence, Civil Procedures, Constitutional Law, Estates, Community Property, Remedies, and Professional Responsibility.

(2) Practice Skills

Students will demonstrate the development of other law practice skills. Each student's chosen outcomes within this category will be varied based on the student's particular interests, coursework and work experiences. They may include, but are not limited to, the following topics: oral presentation and advocacy; interviewing; counseling; client service and business development; negotiations, mediation, arbitration, or other alternate dispute resolution methods; advanced legal research and writing (excluding purely academic papers and the first four units earned in introductory first-year legal research and writing class); applied legal writing such as drafting

contracts, pleadings, other legal instruments; law practice management or the use of technology in law practice; cultural competency; collaboration or project management; financial analysis, such as accounting, budgeting project management, and valuation; cost benefit analysis in administrative agencies; use of technology, data analyses, or predictive coding; business strategy and behavior; pre-trial preparation, fact investigation, such as discovery, e-discovery, motion practice, assessing evidence, or utilizing experts; trial practice; professional civility and applied ethics; a law clinic that includes a classroom component; or a legal externship that includes a classroom component.

(3) Legal Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the factual and legal issues implicated by a fact pattern and to appropriately use cases (including identifying the salient features of an appropriate precedent case, identifying legally significant similarities or differences between the precedent case and a fact pattern and explaining why those are legally significant) and rules (including the ability to connect legally significant facts in a fact pattern to the rule) to predict how a court would decide the issue. Students will also demonstrate the ability to identify and evaluate the public policies of a precedent case or rule and be able to evaluate how public policy can impact the application of a rule to the legal issue.

(4) Legal Research

Students will demonstrate the ability to locate relevant legal authority using a variety of book and electronic resources, and to properly cite to such legal authority.

(5) Communication

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate both orally and in writing in a manner appropriate to a particular task to effectively convey the author or speaker's ideas. This includes audience sensitivity in written and oral communication (the ability to adopt a tone, style and level of detail appropriate to the needs, knowledge and expertise of the audience); and written communication basic proficiency (the ability to use the conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction and usage appropriate to the task and sufficient to convey effectively the author's ideas).

(6) Advocacy of Legal Argument

Students will demonstrate the ability, in both oral and written formats, to evaluate the legal, economic and social strengths and weaknesses of a case and use case and statutory authority as well as public policy to persuade others. Making policy-based arguments includes the ability to identify and evaluate the public policies of a precedent case or rule and their implications and be able to assert such appropriate arguments to support a particular application or distinction of a precedent case to a legal controversy or a particular resolution of the application of a rule to the legal controversy.

(7) Client Sensitivity and Cultural Competency

Students will demonstrate an awareness of clients' needs and goals, including a sensitivity to clients' background and circumstances (including, but not limited to, socio-economic, gender, race, ethnicity, educational, disability and/or religious background(s)), the ability to make decisions that reflect an appropriate focus on those needs and goals, and awareness that cultural issues may affect the relevance of facts and application of the law.

(8) Legal Ethics

Students will demonstrate the ability to identify ethical issues in law practice contexts and make appropriate decisions to resolve such issues.

Disability Services Statement

Western State College of Law provides accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. The Disabilities Services Office assists qualified students with disabilities in acquiring reasonable and appropriate accommodations and in supporting equal access to services, programs, and activities at Western State College of Law.

To seek reasonable accommodations, a student must contact Senior Assistant Dean Donna Espinoza, Student Services Director and Disabilities Services Coordinator, whose office is in the Students Services suite #111. Dean Espinoza's phone number and email address are: (714) 459-1117; despinoza@wsulaw.edu. When seeking accommodations, a student should notify Dean Espinoza of her or his specific limitations and, if known, her or his specific requested accommodations. Students who seek accommodations will be asked to supply medical documentation of the need for accommodation. Classroom accommodations are not retroactive but are effective only upon the student sharing approved accommodations with the instructor or professor. Therefore, students are encouraged to request accommodations as early as feasible with Dean Espinoza to allow for time to gather necessary documentation. If you have a concern or complaint in this regard, please notify Dean Espinoza; or please notify Dean Allen Easley at aasley@wsulaw.edu or (714) 459-1168. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the College of Law's "Policy against Discrimination and Harassment."

Week	Date	Course Topics / Readings / Assignments
01	Aug. 21 st	<p>Topics: Introduction to the Course; Overview of class; Expectations; Logistics; Picking a topic – what constitutes a legal argument?</p> <p>ULWR: Reflective Journaling - How confident am I in my writing skills?</p>
02	Aug. 28 th	<p>Topics: Paper Topic Sources (e.g. Competition /Circuit Splits); Preemption</p> <p>Research Session: Searching case law, law reviews & other research-level legal analytical articles.</p>
03	Sept. 4 th	<p>Topics: Library Research: Beyond Cases, Statutes, and Law Reviews; Experts & Surveys & Interviews</p> <p>Research Session: Searching non-law primary and secondary resources</p>
04	Sept. 11 th	<p>Topics: Collaborative Session</p> <p>ULWR: Paper Proposal Due</p>
05	Sept. 18 th	<p>Topics: No class. Work on research and topic research.</p> <p>ULWR: Individual Progress Meetings with Sarah</p>
06	Sept. 25 th	<p>Topics: Collaborative Session</p>

07	Oct. 2 nd	<p>Topics: Structure of Effective Papers; Outlining / Organizing; Writing Strategies</p> <p>ULWR: Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography Due</p>
08	Oct. 9 th	<p>Topics: Citations; Footnoting</p>
09	Oct. 16 th	<p>Topics: Editing; Revising; Audience consideration</p> <p>ULWR: Return of Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography</p>
10	Oct. 23 rd	<p>Topics: No class. Work on first draft</p> <p>ULWR: Individual Progress Meetings with Sarah</p>
11	Oct. 30 th	<p>Topics: Transferability of Skills – Approaching & Organizing</p> <p>ULWR: First Draft of Paper Due</p>
12	Nov. 6 th	<p>Topics: Transferability of Skills – Various Legal Documents</p>
13	Nov. 13 th	<p>Topics: Paper Presentations</p> <p>ULWR: Return of First Draft of Paper</p>
14	Nov. 20 th	<p>Topics: Paper Presentations</p> <p>ULWR: Reflective Journaling - How confident am I in my writing skills now that I've had a semester of Honors Writing.</p>

--	Dec. 4th	ULWR: Final Paper Due by 4pm submitted via email to Sarah Eggleston at seggleston@wsulaw.edu .
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