LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING FOR LL.M. STUDENTS
Associate Dean Nancy Oliver - Fall Semester 2015

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the LL.M. program at the University of Cincinnati College of Law! I know you will have an enjoyable and challenging experience as you learn about the US legal system and US law.

In this course, you will study and practice the written communication skills you will need both in law school and in your practice as a lawyer. The course meets in room 306 on Wednesdays from 10:05 to 11:30 am and Fridays from 10:40 to 12:05 pm. You will also be asked to hold individual meetings with your professor to go over writing assignments.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After you complete this course, you will be able to:

a. research, evaluate, and analyze legal materials;
b. write a predictive memorandum of law;
c. write a persuasive legal document; and
d. understand the concepts of professionalism related to these skills.

III. TEXTS


*The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (Columbia Law Review Ass’n et al. eds., 20th ed. 2015). Instead of purchasing this book, students have the option of borrowing a copy of it at the library circulation desk when needed. However, be aware that you will need to leave enough time to use the book as other library patrons may be using it when you wish to check it out.

Please bring your textbooks to class if you had a reading assignment in them.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING

The skills you will learn in this class are very important to your development as a lawyer. You will need to know the material from this class to progress in your professional development. Your professor will be your partner in helping you develop these skills. In order to develop a strong foundation in lawyering skills, you are expected to attend and participate in class. You will receive a schedule showing class dates, topics, readings, and due dates of your assignments. If you must miss a class, please let your professor know in advance and obtain notes and handouts from a colleague.

You will have two major assignments this semester. These will both require you to write a legal document – a legal memo and a legal brief. Together, these assignments will be worth 75% of
your grade for this course.

You will also complete additional assignments that might be about research, writing, other skills, and citations. These additional exercises, along with class attendance and class participation, will be worth 25% of your grade. These will be assigned in class along with relevant due dates.

This course is graded on the modified pass/fail scale of High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, and Fail.

V. OFFICE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

My office is Room 200C, and my office phone number is 556-0065. My e-mail address is olivern@uc.edu. You are welcome to stop by my office or schedule appointments with Cheryl DelVecchio who can be reached at 556-0063 or delveccd@uc.edu. Office hours will be posted near due dates for the major assignments.

I will communicate with you by e-mail to convey schedule and assignment changes and to provide other information of general interest to the class. Please register for my TWEN website so that you will receive all pertinent information. Check your e-mail regularly.

VI. COURSE POLICIES

Important policies about this course are located on the TWEN website. You are responsible for complying with the course policies.

VII. ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE FIRST WEEK

August 26: Read Thornton chapters 3 and 4

August 28: Read Thornton chapters 5 and 14

Also, prepare a writing self-assessment in accordance with the instructions below. Email your self-assessment to Dean Oliver by the end of the day on Friday, August 28.

Directions for the Writing Self-Assessment

Prepare a writing self-assessment. To do this, spend a few moments reflecting on your writing skills and experiences. In two pages or less, describe your writing experiences including experiences you had while in college and working. Also describe your major strengths and weaknesses related to writing.

Do not spend more than 45 minutes on this assignment. Please type your response. Double space your writing and use 12 point font. Email your self-assessment to Dean Oliver by the end of the day on Friday, August 28.