**SYLLABUS & READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

Legal Analysis and Writing I

Summer 2020

Dean Cynthia Lewis

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Class: Friday, May 29, 2020 – 9:00 – 10:20 AM; thereafter Mondays, 9:00 AM – 10:20 AM on Microsoft Teams
Class TA: Maggie Broughton, maggie.broughton@vermontlaw.edu

Dean Lewis’ Executive Assistant: Stephanie Chiarella, schiarella@vermontlaw.edu
Teams Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-5 pm and by appointment. Sign-ups available on TWEN.

**INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

Good, clear legal writing and analysis is the key to success in your law school classes and as an attorney. In this class, you will learn and practice the fundamentals of good legal writing and analysis.

I will assess how you are meeting these goals through five assignments, in addition to several in-class exercises. The class begins with a case brief so that you can practice your case reading skills. Next, you will work on a two part editing assignment where you will implement “Plain English” legal writing skills. After that, I will introduce you to the complicated (but beautiful!) world of legal citations and you will complete a basic citation exercise. Finally, you will research and draft an objective legal memo on your own. For this final assignment, I will critique your first draft of the final memo and meet individually with you before you hand in the final draft. Although our conference on the final assignment is your only required individual meeting with me, I will provide prompt written feedback on all of your work, and you may meet with me one-on-one on any assignment by coming to office hours or scheduling an appointment with me. Although I will answer questions on pending assignments, I am not able to review your work in progress before the due date.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of substantive legal doctrine in an office memo;

2. Apply legal research, writing, proofreading, analysis and citation skills to hypothetical fact patterns;

3. Employ critical reading techniques to extract relevant facts, law, and policy from cases and other materials; and

4. Implement written feedback into subsequent work.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

1. Richard Wydick & Amy Sloan, *Plain English for Lawyers* (6th ed. 2019).
2. Harvard Law Review et al., *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (20th ed. 2015).
3. Materials Posted on TWEN

**GRADING**

Your final grade for this class will be “High Pass” (100-93), “Pass” (92-75), “Low Pass” (74-60), or “Fail” (below 60). To help you assess where you are, I will give you traditional grades on each of your assignments. I will calculate your final grade based on the following formula:

**5%** Case Brief (Assignment 1)

**5%** Editing Poorly Worded Sentences (Assignment 2)

**10%** Editing a Legal Memo (Assignment 3)

**10%** Citation Exercise (Assignment 4)

**60%** Objective Legal Memo (two drafts) (Assignment 5)

**10%** Class participation and professionalism (including attendance, timeliness, successful and timely completion of in-class exercises, preparation for class, contribution to class discussions, and preparation for conference)

**METHOD OF SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS**

Unless otherwise notified, students must submit their assignments on TWEN in Microsoft Word. Assignments are due on the day and time listed on the Assignment Schedule. You may not miss my class or any other class to turn in an assignment on time. Please note that upon successful upload of your assignment to TWEN, you will receive an automatically generated confirmation email from TWEN. If you have not received that email, you have not successfully uploaded your assignment to TWEN. That email will include a copy of what you submitted. Please check it to verify the attachment is correct and readable. If your assignment is “corrupted” or otherwise unreadable, I will consider it not turned in. If you are having trouble with TWEN, you may, as a last resort, email your assignment to me before the deadline at clewis@vermontlaw.edu. When you read this, please email me to let me know; the subject of your email should be “Syllabus.” The first one to do so will receive a prize. You should plan ahead when turning in assignments because computer malfunction is not an acceptable reason for submission of a late assignment.

**TIMELY SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are responsible for submitting assignments at the proper time and place. Any student who fails to submit an assignment on time without prior permission from me will receive a penalty of one-half grade per day late. I will give extensions only for documented personal or family emergency. Any assignment more than 3 days late will receive a failing grade.

**GUIDELINES FOR COURSE WORK**

First, you must adhere to the citation form required by *A Uniform System of Citation* (20th ed.) ("The Bluebook"). All written assignments must be formatted for 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper and double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. The typeface should be Times New Roman, 12-point font. All pages (including the first page) should be numbered, with the page number located in the center of the bottom of each page. Unless otherwise specified, your assignment must be in Microsoft Word. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will affect your grade.

Second, the Vermont Law School Honor Code governs your work and conduct in this class. Whenever you use the words or ideas of another writer, as you will inevitably do in legal writing, you must acknowledge the original source using a citation. If you use the exact words of another person, use quotation marks and cite the source. Cite the source even if you put another person's ideas in your own words. This rule covers cases, statutes, and secondary sources and applies to every sentence. Citing a source once in a paragraph when the source is mentioned or referred to in every sentence is unacceptable. Never copy from any written material without acknowledging the source.

This class requires active and responsible class participation. Consequently, you have an obligation both to yourself and to your classmates to come prepared to class and to arrive promptly for all scheduled classes and conferences. There are many opportunities to work cooperatively and collaboratively with classmates during the semester. Unless otherwise specified, however, the writing assignments must be your own work product. You may not receive assistance on your writing from anyone other than me or our class TA without prior approval.

**EMAIL**

The main way that I will communicate with you is through your VLS email account. I expect you to check your VLS email at least daily. I also expect that any email to me will be professionally written. I will post a supplemental reading on professional emails for your reference.

**AMENDMENTS TO SYLLABUS AND COURSE SCHEDULE**

During the semester, I may occasionally make changes to the Reading and Assignment Schedule to accommodate the pace of class discussions or to provide additional discussion/reading on troublesome areas. Any changes will be made in writing at least one week before the scheduled class time.

**LEGAL ANALSIS AND WRITING I – AJD**

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**Assignment Schedule**

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| **DATE**  | **ASSIGNMENT**  | page5image2102976**AGENDA** page5image29708416 |
| Class 1Friday, May 29  | Register for TWEN site; Read pg. 3-6 in Wydick & Sloan, *Plain English for Lawyers*, 6th edition; Complete Grammar Diagnostic (distributed via email) and bring answers to class.  | Course introduction and overview; Discuss the # 1 Goal of Good Legal Writing and Plain English Writing Tips; Distribute Assignment 1  |
| Class 2Monday, June 1  | Read Syllabus & Assignment Schedule; Assignment 1 (Case Brief) due by 8:00 am on TWEN  | Discuss IRAC and the Office Memo; In-Class IRAC Exercise; Distribute Assignments 2 and 3  |
| Class 3Monday, June 8 | Read: *Making Your Writing Out of Cite,* available on TWEN; Assignment 2 (Editing Sentences) due by 8:00 am on TWEN; Bring Bluebook to class  | Discuss citations; Distribute and Discuss Assignment 4  |
| Class 4Monday, June 15 | page5image29714176Read: Quick Proofreading Tips for Busy Attorneys, available on TWEN; Assignment 3 (Editing Memo) due by 8:00 am on TWEN  | Discuss Proofreading and Polish; Research Tips  |
| page5image29715712Class 5Monday, June 22  | page5image29716288Assignment 4 (Citations) due by 8:00 AM on TWEN  | Grammar Wednesday!  |

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| Monday, June 29  | Rest. Relax. Rejuvenate. | NO CLASS – SUMMER BREAK  |
| Class 6Monday, July 6  |  | Continue to discuss IRAC; Discuss Rule Synthesis; Distribute and Discuss Assignment 5  |
| Class 7Monday, July 13  | Review and be familiar with at least one authority you plan to use in your memo  | Research Check in on Assignment 5  |
| Class 8Monday, July 20  | First Draft of Assignment 5 (Objective Memo) due by 8:00 AM on TWEN; Review corrected draft and prepare an agenda for conference (Drafts will be returned by 8 pm the night before your scheduled conference)  | **NO CLASS** Individual Conferences,(Exact Time and Date TBD)  |
| Class 9Monday, July 27  | page6image29746176Final Draft of Assignment 5 (Objective Memo) due by 8:00 AM on TWEN;  | Exam Writing Exercise; Course Review and Course Evaluations  |