

# Advanced Legal Writing Student Syllabus Fall 2014 Thursday 5:30

Professor Jani Maselli  
Professor Franklin  
Bynum

| Lecture                               | Topic                                                                                    | Class Preparation                                                   | Assignment(s) Due                                               |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Class 1</b><br><b>August 28</b>    | Introduction<br>The Writing Process<br>Assignment                                        | Bring Laptop,<br>Westlaw password,<br>and Bluebook and<br>Greenbook |                                                                 |
| <b>Class 2</b><br><b>September 4</b>  | The Art of Writing and<br>Rewriting.<br>Editing                                          |                                                                     | <b>Essay Due—</b><br><b>Thoughts on</b><br><b>Legal Writing</b> |
| <b>Class 3</b><br><b>September 11</b> | Discussion of Assignment/<br>In class preparation and<br>beginning research              |                                                                     |                                                                 |
| <b>Class 4</b><br><b>September 18</b> | In class editing/writing<br>Statutory interpretation<br><br>Guest Lecturer: Mark Bennett |                                                                     |                                                                 |
| <b>Class 5</b><br><b>September 25</b> | Client interview and Client<br>Letters                                                   | Continue Research                                                   | <b>Memo Due</b>                                                 |
| <b>Class 6</b><br><b>October 2</b>    | In class writing/editing –<br>bring copies of your letter<br>New assignment handed out   |                                                                     | <b>Letter Due</b><br><b>(not graded)</b>                        |
| <b>Class 7</b><br><b>October 9</b>    | Discussion of assignment;<br>In class writing/editing                                    | Research on issue                                                   |                                                                 |
| <b>Class 8</b><br><b>October 16</b>   | Research<br>In class writing assignment                                                  |                                                                     |                                                                 |

|                                     |                                                         |  |                                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Class 9<br/>October 23</b>       | Brief requirements                                      |  | <b>Due Assignment</b>                     |
| <b>Class 10<br/>October 30</b>      | Briefs/statement of facts<br>In class writing           |  |                                           |
| <b>Class 11<br/>November 6</b>      | Issues – spotting, writing, and<br>persuading           |  | <b>Due: Brief Issues</b>                  |
| <b>Class 12<br/>November<br/>13</b> | Persuasive writing                                      |  | <b>Due: Detailed<br/>Outline of Brief</b> |
| <b>Class 13<br/>November<br/>20</b> | <b>Presentation of Briefs –<br/>Mock oral arguments</b> |  | <b>Due: Final brief</b>                   |
|                                     |                                                         |  |                                           |

## Advanced Legal Writing

Professor Jani Maselli  
Professor Franklin Bynum  
Thursday 5:30 to 7:30  
Office Hours: By appointment  
[jjmaselli@aol.com](mailto:jjmaselli@aol.com)  
[fgb@lawfgb.com](mailto:fgb@lawfgb.com)

Jani: 713.256.7726  
Franklin: 917.923.6990

Course Description: ALW is an upper level class intended to help students become more proficient, efficient, and effective at researching, analyzing legal issues, and composing and organizing written documents. It will build on concepts learned in both LARC I and LARC II and will help students to refine and further develop problem solving, factual investigation and drafting skills. Assignments will include (1) writing a brief involving a complex legal issue; (2) drafting an opinion letters, attorney-client agreements and other reflective documents, and court documents, such as pleadings and motions; (3) communicating orally in motion hearings and client meetings.

### **Book – Not required, but recommended**

*Point Made – How to Write Like the Nation's Top Advocates.* By Ross Guberman.  
*The Winning Brief* by Bryan Garner

### **Assignments:**

There will be three graded writing assignments throughout the semester. The final brief will account for 50% of your grade. The other writing assignments will each account for 25% of your final grade.

### *Absences*

You have two absences without penalty. On your third absence, I will lower your final grade by one grade level and refer you to Student Services. Since this class requires we work together as a “firm,” your presence and participation is necessary not just for yourself, but for your colleagues and clients.

### *Assignments Due*

On the date an assignment is due, it is timely if presented printed out, stapled, and to me by 6:00 p.m. of the due date. It is not timely if presented after 6:00 p.m. on the due date. It is not timely if emailed to me on the due date.

If the assignment is presented within 24 hours from its due date and time, a reduction of 20% of the points earned will be deducted. If the paper is presented within one week of the due date, there will be a 50% deduction in points. After one week, the paper will not be accepted and a grade of 0 for that assignment will be assigned.

Real and true emergencies will be taken into consideration.

### *Participation*

This is not a class where you can sit back and take notes, although there will be times when that is required. This will be interactive with your colleagues. We will research together and write separately. We will present our findings to the class. We will edit our colleagues' papers.

### *Goal*

As future attorneys, rarely will your client ever present himself with his issue squarely insular and written as "Question Presented." This class will challenge you with writing effectively for the client when the answer is not always easily discernible or available.