

Lawyering Skills and Strategies for Foreign L.L.M. Students

Fall 2017 ~ Professor Morath

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Thursday from 1-2 p.m.,
and by appointment.

Research Assistant: to be decided

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Course Objectives. Welcome to the University of Houston Law Center and the study of law in the United States. In this course, the curriculum will begin with instruction in the case method study of law employed by U.S. law schools, including case briefing and recitation; the importance of outlining as a method of exam preparation, and actual exam writing skills. We will then shift our focus to the U.S. legal system and the skills U.S. lawyers employ in day-to-day practice: Identifying and analyzing legal issues; conducting legal research; and writing client documents. The curriculum is problem-based, using fact-pattern simulations based on real-world legal issues.

Grade Calculation. The ultimate purpose of this class is to teach you how to use the doctrinal law you are learning in a U.S. practice setting. Your grades will be based on writing assignments, research assignments, and a final exam. Specifically, I will calculate your grade as follows:

Class Participation	10%
Research and Citation Exercises	30%
Final Writing Exercise	40%
Final Exam	20%

Class participation will be based on your timely and meaningful completion of various ungraded interim research and writing assignments, as well as completion of all citation, research, and in-class writing assignments.

As to graded assignments, I will grade this course anonymously, and the Law Center mandates that the course be graded on a 2.8 to 3.2 curve. You must turn in all assignments on time. If you are ill or otherwise unable to turn in a graded assignment on time, please notify me via e-mail prior to the time the assignment is due to seek an accommodation. If your assignment is late, and you have not received a prior extension from me, I reserve the right to reduce your grade on the assignment for each hour the assignment is late. If the assignment is more than a day late, I reserve the right to issue a failing grade on the assignment.

Class Web Course. I will maintain a course website for this course. You will receive log-in credentials for the website on the first class day.

You will be held responsible for all material and messages posted by me on the course website, so when you log-in for the first time, please register an email address that you will check frequently. I will send all class related e-mails to whatever e-mail address you register with the class web course.

Textbooks.

- Terrill Pollman et al., *Examples and Explanations: Legal Writing* (2d ed. 2014)
 - (ISBN 9781454833963).
- Amy E. Sloan, *Basic Legal Research: Tools and Strategies* (6th ed. 2015)
 - (ISBN 9781454850403).

You may purchase these books separately if you can find them cheaper – I provide the individual ISBN for each book above. But the publisher is offering a bundled price for the two books together that *may be cheaper*. If purchased as a bundle (i.e., the two books bundled together), the ISBN is 9781454869603, and the total price for both books is \$109.

In addition to these two books, please pick up a packet of Supplemental Readings, available in the LSS office suite on or after August 3, 2017. I will provide this packet to you free of charge.

We will also cover the basics of legal citation. You will therefore need to purchase *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (20th ed. 2015)

Honor Code. The UHLC Honor Code applies to this class. It is set forth in its entirety in the Student Handbook. You are responsible for knowing the provisions of the UHLC Honor Code, and for full compliance with all of the UHLC Honor Code provisions. Failure to do so will result in referral to the UHLC Honor Court, and may result in you failing this class. If you have questions about whether a certain activity constitutes a breach of the UHLC Honor Code, please ask me.

Class Time. The first two weeks of class we will meet Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Starting August 21, we will meet on Monday and Wednesday from 9:00-10:30 a.m. Our class room is BLB 213

Attendance Policy. Finally, UHLC attendance policy dictates that you may miss no more than five scheduled classes. The Law Center considers mandatory outside-of-class activities as scheduled classes. I reserve the right to count you as absent if you 1) are not in the classroom or other specified location at the time class is scheduled to begin, 2) are unprepared for class, or 3) fail to put forth a good faith effort on an in-class assignment.

Proposed Course Outline. On or before the first class day, I will distribute a proposed course outline. I may, of course, modify it as the semester progresses, to achieve course objectives. The Supplemental Reading Packet referenced in the proposed course schedule will be available in the LSS office suite, also on or before the first class day.