Lawyering Skills and Strategies II (Sections B2 & C2)  
Spring 2019

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Course Objectives

In *Lawyering Skills and Strategies II*, you will continue to develop the essential lawyering skills you learned last semester: identifying and analyzing legal issues; conducting legal research; and writing real-world legal documents. Specifically, you will draft a pre-trial motion, a contract, and a motion for summary judgment. You will also learn the particulars of Texas citation. The ultimate purpose of this class is to teach you how to use the doctrinal law you are learning in a real-world setting. Your efforts in this class will enable you to become a better law student and prepare you for work outside the Law Center, either in a clinic setting, a judicial internship, or a clerkship.

On or before the first day of class, I will publish a proposed syllabus. I may modify the syllabus as the semester progresses, to achieve course objectives.

Required Course Materials

You will need the following textbooks for this course:

- *A Lawyer Writes: A Practical Guide to Legal Analysis* (2d ed. 2013), written by Christine Coughlin, Joan Malmud Rocklin, & Sandy Patrick [“Coughlin”];
- *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (20th ed. 2015), published by the Harvard Law Review Association [“Bluebook”];
- *The Greenbook, Texas Rules of Form* (14th ed.);
- *Interactive Citation Workbook for The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (2018 ed.), written by Tracy McGaugh Norton & Christine Hurt [“ICW”]; and

Renting the Coughlin and ICW textbooks is fine. I recommend that you purchase the Bluebook, Greenbook, and Manual on Usage & Style, however, as you will use these resources throughout your career.

Two additional resources that are optional for your purchase and use are:

- *The Elements of Style: Simplified and Illustrated for Busy People*, William Strunk, Jr. & Virginia Campbell, available on Amazon; and
- *Core Grammar for Lawyers*, available at [www.coregrammarforlawyers.com](http://www.coregrammarforlawyers.com)

Attendance

*Attendance is mandatory.* Attendance will be taken during each class session and individual conference. It is your obligation to ensure that you are counted as present. In accordance with the University of Houston Law Center’s attendance policy, you may miss no more than *three*
scheduled class sessions during the semester. Thus, on your fourth absence, I will send you to Dean Tennessee (the Associate Dean for Student Services) where the matter of dismissal will be taken under advisement. I reserve the right to count you as absent if (1) you are not in the classroom ten minutes after the class or conference has begun, or (2) you fail to consult with a tutor in the Legal Writing Center after I have instructed you to do so.

### Office Hours
If you have any questions about the course, please ask me. I will have office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and by appointment. My office is located in the Lawyering Skills and Strategies Suite in Room 15-H. Any changes to my regularly scheduled office hours will be announced via e-mail and posted on my office door.

### Class Preparedness and Participation
You are expected to complete the assigned readings before coming to class and all assigned ungraded exercises by the deadline in the instructions for that exercise. I reserve the right to lower your course grade up to a maximum of two grade levels if you habitually fail to prepare for class, participate actively in class, or perform satisfactorily on quizzes. I also reserve the right to lower your course grade up to a maximum of two grade levels if you fail to submit all of your ungraded exercises before the last day of classes.

### Computer Use and Other Disruptions
The use of laptop computers in class is a privilege, not a right. You may be asked to close your laptops and give your full attention during many class sessions. Please have pen and paper available for notetaking during these times. The use of a computer or any other communication device in class for activities or purposes unrelated to the course causes a significant distraction for other students and severely disrupts the ability of students to participate fully in class. Therefore, improper use of a computer during class (including, but not limited to, composing, sending, or reading e-mails; instant messaging; searching or browsing the Internet; playing games; and/or viewing movies) may result in dismissal from the class session and/or a reduction in your final grade.

Unless you are instructed otherwise, please turn off all cell phones and similar devices.

### Course Recording Policy
Students are not permitted to record a class themselves by any means without my prior express authorization because I do not want students to feel inhibited in asking questions or in participating in in-class exercises. If a student receives my express authorization to record a class, the student is not allowed to distribute such a recording to any other person or use the recording for any purpose other than the student’s own education without my express authorization.

### Legal Writing Center
An excellent resource for free individual tutoring is the Legal Writing Center, which is located near the circulation desk in the library. The Center is staffed with several outstanding third-year law students who can help you with legal writing, legal research, citation, and style and usage. I may recommend that you visit the Center for additional assistance.
Online Legal Research Training

Online legal research is an important component of this course. You will continue to use your passwords for LexisNexis and Westlaw, so please keep them handy.

Course Webpage

We will be using the same course webpage maintained by The West Education Network (TWEN). On the TWEN site, you will find a copy of the course description and syllabus, additional readings, handouts, and exercises covered in class. You will also use the “Assignment Dropbox” to submit your graded assignments and some of your ungraded assignments. You will use the “Sign-Up Sheets” page to schedule an individual conference with me this semester.

Please check the course webpage regularly because I will assume that you are aware of the material I post on it.

Graded Assignments

The following assignments will be graded and constitute the baseline for your grade for this course, subject to adjustments identified in this Course Information Sheet:

- Contract Drafting Assignment (10%)
- Pre-trial Motion (15%)
- Citation Exam (20%)
- Motion for Summary Judgment (50%)
- Professionalism (ungraded assignments, class participation) (5%)

One of the skills you need to master is how to budget and manage your time. If your Pre-Trial Motion is more than fifteen minutes late, I may deduct 1 point for each hour (or part of the hour) that the assignment is late. If your Motion for Summary Judgment is more than fifteen minutes late, I may deduct 2.5 points for each hour (or part of the hour) that the assignment is late.

If you are unable to complete a graded assignment by the due date, you must contact me before the due date to seek an extension. I will consider extensions for emergencies only. Be advised: computer problems, including printer problems, do not constitute emergencies.

Please note that the Law Center uses an anonymous-grading system to ensure fairness in grading. You will be assigned an exam number this semester to use instead of your name for graded assignments. Your name should not appear anywhere on your graded assignments, and you should not share your exam number with me before the release of final grades.

Mandatory First Year Grade Distribution

In addition to the mandatory grading curve, this course is also subject to the mandatory First Year Grade Distribution:

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>0–10%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>5–15%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>15–25%</td>
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</table>
B  25–35%
B-  15–25%
C+  5–15%
C (or below) 0–10%

### Mandatory Curve

This course is subject to a mandatory grading curve. The average grade in each section must be between 2.8 and 3.2.

### Formatting Requirements

All exercises and assignments you submit must conform to these specifications:

- Use Times New Roman, 12-point type, on white letter-size (8 ½” x 11”) paper.
- Double space each assignment, except for headings.
- Use one-inch margins on all sides.
- Place page numbers in the bottom center of each page, starting on the second page.
- Print on only one side of the paper.
- Adhere to all other requirements stated in assignment instruction sheets.

### Honor Code

The Honor Code applies to this class. Students are responsible for knowing its provisions and complying with them.

The UHLC Honor Code is found at [http://www.law.uh.edu/student/HONOR-CODE-AND-PROCEDURES.pdf](http://www.law.uh.edu/student/HONOR-CODE-AND-PROCEDURES.pdf)? Questions regarding how the Honor Code’s provisions apply to specific activities may be directed to me.

### Accessibility and Accommodations

UHLC is committed to ensuring that all students enjoy equal access and full participation.

If you anticipate or experience barriers based on a disability (including any chronic or temporary medical or mental health condition), feel free to reach out to me so that we can discuss options. If you require any support services, you may contact Samantha Ary, Academic Records Coordinator. Ms. Ary is located in room 44A TU-II in the Office of Student Services suite, and she can be reached at sary@central.uh.edu or 713-743-7466. Requests for accommodation that involve graded assignments must be directed to Ms. Ary and should be made as soon as possible to allow adequate time to document and process the request.

If you observe religious or cultural holidays that coincide with any LSS classes, please let me know two weeks in advance.

### If You Need Help

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS ([www.uh.edu/caps](http://www.uh.edu/caps)) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No
appointment is necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html