COURSE: ADVANCED LEGAL RESEARCH

INSTRUCTOR: ROD BORLASE – Rod@RodBorlase.com – (713) 665-1349. If prospective students need other or additional information, please feel free to email or call me. Students who enroll in this course should email me forthwith so that I may send them initial reading & class preparation assignments.

PREREQUISITES: None beyond curricular offerings in legal research & writing at the school law students attended during their 1st year.

CLASS DAY/TIME: Thursdays from 3:30-5:30p.m. Attendance at the first class meeting is particularly important. (Regular attendance is strongly encouraged throughout the semester, and tardiness is strongly discouraged. ABA & UHLC rules apply.)

TEXTBOOK: MERSKY & DUNN’S FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGAL RESEARCH, 8th ed. New York: Foundation Press, 2002. (Earlier editions inadequate.) Chapters 1-19, 22 & 23 will be thoroughly learned. The following website will be referenced throughout the course: Borlase Law Library & Legal Research Guides www.RodBorlase.com/Guides

CLASS FORMAT: Predominately lecture; however, individual or group recitations, projects or exercises will be assigned from time to time. There will be a final examination and probably a comparatively short mid-term examination. This course will be competitive and have distributed (curved) final grades.

COURSE PURPOSE: This is a practical course about a professional skill that lies at the heart of our profession: How to find the law. Clients don’t like to pay for “research”; hence, Lawyers must be able to research the law quickly, correctly, thoroughly, accurately & inexpensively, and prized lawyers shall. Moreover, employers hire recent graduates for this skill alone. Provided they do what is asked in this course – Do not think of this as a “pud” course. It is not difficult, but THERE IS A HELLUVA LOT OF IT! – this course will outfit students with both book and electronic legal research skills to a high functional level.

This course will enable students to write the English language clearly and succinctly (&, with practice, to speak so too).

GENERAL CONTENT: Thorough understanding of federal & state (Texas) positive law as sources, repositories, recorders & indexers of binding law: Constitutions, Statutes, Regulations & Case law, and extensive review;

and the *Texas Criminal Law Practice Guide*, and specialized treatises focusing on defined legal practice areas, *e.g.*, Bankruptcy;

**Advanced expertise in Westlaw’s and Lexis-Nexis’** query formulation protocol (*Boolean logic*, *Field* or *Segment searching*, *Recursive searching*, electronic citators (*Keycite* & *Shepard’s Citations*) as well as the printed versions of *Shepard’s Citations*, limits and dangers of so-called ‘‘internet legal research.’’