

Lawyering Skills and Strategies

Fall 2026 | Professor Campbell

Welcome to LSS. Welcome to the University of Houston Law Center (“UHLC”) and to our section of Lawyering Skills and Strategies (“LSS”). LSS differs significantly from your other 1L courses, as it is a “skills” course – your other courses primarily concern procedural or substantive law. In a skills course, you will learn practical skills needed to succeed in practice. As such, the readings, assignments, teaching methods, and assessments will likewise differ significantly from your other classes, including the number of materials and activities you will be asked to navigate. Please plan accordingly, as these assignments and deadlines can begin to snowball if you do not stay on top of them.

Legal writing is the foundation of effective lawyering. Whether you ultimately practice in a courtroom, boardroom, government office, or any place in between, your ability to analyze legal problems, communicate clearly, and advocate persuasively will be among your most important professional skills. My goal is to help you build those skills while developing the confidence to navigate law school and the legal profession successfully.

About Me. Before joining the UHLC faculty, I taught legal writing, research, and advocacy at Chapman University and George Mason University. I have worked as a judicial law clerk, practicing attorney, and legal consultant, and my experience spans litigation, transactional practice, employment law, healthcare law, intellectual property, and corporate matters.

At UH Law Center, I teach courses focused on legal writing, analytical reasoning, and bar preparation. I am particularly interested in helping students bridge the gap between learning legal doctrine and communicating legal analysis effectively on exams, in practice, and before courts.

On a personal level, I am a California-native who is relatively new to Texas and am always looking for good food and recreational recommendations. I have three amazing children, and I love to travel and explore. However, what I value most is building relationships that last and helping people feel seen and heard. As such, my door is always open. I will do my best to help each of you develop the skills, habits, and professional judgment necessary for success in law school and beyond.

Course Objectives. In this course, you will learn how lawyers find, analyze, communicate, and apply the law to solve client problems. These skills will serve you throughout law school and into practice. By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

1. Understand and evaluate legal authority, including its hierarchy, precedential value, and role in legal analysis.
2. Identify legal issues, conduct efficient legal research, and synthesize legal rules from multiple sources.
3. Apply legal rules and precedent to analyze and resolve client problems.
4. Communicate legal analysis through clear, concise, well-organized professional writing.

5. Use legal citation, grammar, style, and other conventions of professional legal communication effectively.
6. Exercise sound professional judgment by recognizing the relationship among substantive law, procedure, ethics, and client representation.
7. Use artificial intelligence and other legal technologies responsibly and effectively as tools to enhance—rather than replace—critical reading, analytical reasoning, professional decision-making, and effective legal communication under time constraints.

Textbooks. Please purchase Romantz & Vinson's *Legal Analysis: The Fundamental Skill* (4th ed.) (ISBN 978-1-5310-2778-0) and *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (22d ed.) ISBN 979-8-218-57457-4. I will occasionally provide additional supplemental materials on Canvas, our course management system.

Office Hours. Contact me in person (Room 343D) or via email (ccmeshki@central.uh.edu). I will hold office hours weekly on Tuesdays from 11:00am until 1:00 p.m. and on other days by appointment.

Zoom Link. If/when we elect to meet via Zoom, please use the following Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6894953702?omn=81583305744>

Honor Code. The UHLC Honor Code applies to this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you to comply with the Honor Code and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus. For more information on the UHLC Honor Code, please consult the code itself, [available at this link](#).

Assessment | Late Submissions. This course is designed to help you develop the analytical, research, writing, and professional skills lawyers use in practice. Most assignments are modeled on tasks commonly performed by attorneys and are intended to help you build competence and confidence in applying legal doctrine to real-world problems. In evaluating your work, I will assess not only your legal analysis, but also your use of authority, organization, citation, grammar, and legal style.

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Percentage
Professionalism	10%
Legal Analysis & Research Assessment 1	10%
Legal Analysis & Research Assessment 2	10%
Partner Conference & Graded Memorandum	30%
Professional Development	10%
Final Exam	30%

Professionalism and Professional Development. The professionalism and professional development components of this course are designed to encourage the habits expected of successful law students and

practicing attorneys. Some assignments will be graded for completion. To receive full credit, these assignments must be submitted on time, follow all instructions, and demonstrate meaningful engagement with the assigned task. Simply submitting work by the deadline is not sufficient.

Other assignments will be evaluated using a three-level rubric: Professional, Developing, and Emerging. Professional work reflects strong preparation, thoughtful analysis, and careful execution. Developing work satisfies the assignment's requirements but contains meaningful deficiencies. Emerging work demonstrates only limited progress toward the assignment's objectives and requires substantial additional development.

Late Assignments. This course is graded anonymously. If illness, emergency, or other circumstances prevent you from completing an assignment on time, you should request an extension in writing before the assignment deadline whenever reasonably possible. Absent a prior extension, late submissions will result in a grade reduction.

Attendance | Class Administration. This class will meet in person each Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. To comply with the UHLC attendance policy, no student may miss more than three classes. Students should sign in before the end of each class using the attendance sheet distributed in class. Any student who fails to adhere to the course attendance policy will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs.

Be prepared to discuss the lecture material assigned for each class. I may call on you at random. If you will not be prepared for class, please email me before class to let me know.

Using Generative Artificial Intelligence. Generative artificial intelligence ("AI") is an increasingly common tool in legal practice. In this course, you will learn to use AI thoughtfully, critically, and responsibly as a professional tool—not as a substitute for legal analysis, judgment, or careful reading.

Because developing strong legal skills requires independent practice, the permissible use of AI will vary by assignment. Some assignments may prohibit AI entirely, while others may permit or require its use for specified purposes.

Unless I expressly authorize its use in writing, you may not use AI to complete course assignments. When AI use is permitted, you remain fully responsible for the accuracy, quality, and integrity of all work submitted in your name.

Student Support, Well-Being and Success. Your well-being matters and we want to ensure that you feel welcome, supported, and heard. I will do my best to incorporate practices into our course to promote well-being, including efforts to create a vibrant, welcoming and supportive class community. This will occur through various modalities throughout the semester.

Every student is capable of success. The skills we will learn are those that improve with effort and practice. Some suggestions to improve your success in this course:

1. **Be professional.** Come to class on time, with all materials you need ready to go. Turn in your best work, on time, every time. Participate actively in all class discussions and activities. Remember your classmates are your colleagues; treat them accordingly. All class members should feel respected and included.
2. **Be positive.** Legal writing differs from previous writing. When learning new skills, it is normal to stumble. Embrace your mistakes and learn from them.
3. **Be proactive.** This is a professional environment which means you must take responsibility for your learning. I am here to answer questions, but I cannot always anticipate them. So, if you need help, please ask. And keep asking until you get the answers you seek.
4. **Define success differently.** Choose not to define success by an assignment score or grade. Rather, take note of whether you are improving on skills from assignment to assignment. If you do your best and continue to improve through repetition and diligence, I will deem your efforts successful ones.

If you find yourself needing additional help, please utilize the following helpful UH Resources:

- [Center for Student Advocacy and Community \(CSAC\)](#)
- [Center for Student Empowerment](#)
- [Cougar Closet](#)
- [Cougar Cupboard](#)
- [Cougars in Recovery](#)
- [CoogsCARE](#) (student-assistance resources), with helpful links to numerous student support services, including, e.g., [mental-health resources](#) and [mental-health trainings](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Student Health Center & Campus Pharmacy](#)
- [UH Wellness](#)
- [UHLC Academic Success](#) and [Academic Initiatives](#) (bar preparation)
- [UHLC Health & Wellness](#)
- The Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program (TLAP) also supports law students who are dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and other mental health problems. You can reach TLAP at any time at 1-800-343-8527 or via their website: <https://www.tlaphelps.org/law-students>[Links to an external site.](#)

The Fine Print. Academic Adjustments | Auxiliary Aids. The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment, or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting [this website](#), calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.uh.edu.

We ask also that you contact Samantha Ary, Academic Records Coordinator at the Law Center. Ms. Ary's office is in the Office of Student Services suite. She can be reached by [email](#) or at (713) 743-7466. Requests for accommodation that involve graded assignments should be directed to Ms. Ary as soon as possible to allow adequate time to process the request. She can assist you as you navigate the Dart Center process.

Class Recordings. University policy mandates that an instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action. Also, by being enrolled in the class, you consent to any participation being recorded, if any recording is made. These recordings are permanently deleted at the end of the semester.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct. Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, I am a "responsible employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which I become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources here on [the Title IX website](#).

Syllabus Updates. This syllabus may be modified as needed during the semester. Any changes will be announced in writing via email and Canvas.

Syllabus. We will cover the following topics in class each week. I recommend completing your reading for the week *before* coming to class on Tuesdays. From time to time, reading assignments may change to meet class needs.

PART 1 LEGAL ANALYSIS	
Week 1 August 25/27	Introduction to Legal Analysis Critical Reading Fundamentals of Legal Analysis Communicating Legal Analysis Read <i>Thinking Like a Lawyer: How Lawyers Read Cases and Solve Problems</i> (available on Canvas, under the Supplemental Reading Tab in the Student Resources Module). Demonstrate the connection between strong LSS writing skills and strong exam writing skills. Rule Formulation and Application Read <i>Legal Analysis</i> pp. 19 – 26; then read pp. 21-36. In class, work on Red Light exercise.
Week 2 Sep 1/3	Deep Dive: Rule Formulation and Application Read Ava Reynolds introductory email and relevant case law. In class, work on parts 1 and 2 of the Ava Reynolds exercise. By Thursday, read <i>Legal Analysis</i> pp. 37 - 65. Analogical Reasoning In class, take reading quiz, then complete the Ava Reynolds exercise. For homework, draft an email to the partner analyzing Ava Reynolds' legal problem. You may <i>not</i> use AI to complete this writing task.

Week 3 Sep 8/10	Deep Dive: Analogical Reasoning Writing for Your Audience Edit Ava Reynolds exercise using a detailed rubric provided in class. For homework, rewrite your Ava Reynolds analysis. Thursday, using AI, prepare a shorter analysis appropriate to forward directly to Reynolds. Finish for HW and turn-in by 6pm on September 11th.
Friday, Sep 11 6:00 p.m. Reynolds Rewrite + Client Analysis Due	
Week 4 Sep 15/17	Deep Dive: Deductive Reasoning Read <i>Legal Analysis</i> pp. 67 – 84. In class, take reading quiz, then complete parts 1 and 2 of the Nora Bennett/Robert Glass exercise, first spotting issues and then formulating a rule. Advanced Legal Analysis: Stacked CReACs; Deductive + Analogical Reasoning Read <i>Legal Analysis</i> pp. 26 – 44. Discuss memo structure. Then in class, work on part 3 of the Nora Bennett/Robert Glass exercise, applying the rules we created in class Tuesday to determine whether Glass committed burglary in Texas. For homework, draft an email to the D.A. recommending whether Glass should be charged with burglary. You may <i>not</i> use AI to complete this task.
Week 5 Sep 22/24	Deep Dive: Advanced Legal Analysis In class, edit Nora Bennett/Robert Glass exercise using a detailed provided rubric. For homework, rewrite your Nora Bennett/Robert Glass analysis. Policy Reasoning Read <i>Legal Analysis</i> pp. 101 – 116. In class, take reading quiz, then add a policy argument to the Nora Bennett/Robert Glass habitation argument.
Week 6 Sep 29 – Oct 1	Citation: How do I know whether this citation matters? Reading Citation Like a Lawyer. Students should be able to look at a citation and determine: • court and year, or placement in a particular statutory scheme; • precedential value; • procedural posture; and • jurisdictional significance. Students should also be able to formulate short form citation for cases and statutes. Advanced Citation: How do lawyers build persuasive arguments through citation? Strategic Citation. Students should understand: • why some authorities are cited and others are omitted; • how citation order reflects authority; • how citation supports rule synthesis and application; and • how to ethically use AI-generated citations.
Sunday, Oct 4 6:00 p.m. Complete Bennett/Glass Analysis Due <i>(individual conferences held over the next two weeks to discuss your work on this analysis)</i>	
PART 2 LEGAL RESEARCH	
Week 7 Oct 6/8	Hierarchy of Authority Legal Research Process Read E&E pp. 7 – 27; complete Research Modules 0 and 1. Excerpts from <i>Examples & Explanations: Legal Research</i> (“E&E”) are available in the Resources module on Canvas.

	Legal Research: Secondary Sources Complete Research Modules 2.1 – 2.4. In class, complete research exercise to practice research using a secondary source as a starting point.
Week 8 Oct 13/15 <i>(midterm week)</i>	Legal Research: Secondary Sources Research Modules 2.5 – 2.7. In class, complete research exercise to practice research using a secondary source as a starting point. Legal Research: Statutes Research Module 3. In class, complete research exercise to practice researching statutes.
Week 9 Oct 20/22 <i>(midterm week)</i>	Legal Research: Cases and Citators Research Modules 4.1 – 4.6. In class, complete research exercise to practice researching cases and using a citator. Thursday, No LSS – At home, take the practice Midterm on or before Sunday, Oct 25. (Midterm: 30% of final grade)
Week 10 Oct 27/29	Midterm and Midterm Debrief Graded Memorandum Assignment Distributed on or before Friday, Oct 30. Watch asynchronous lecture on Boolean searching + developing a research plan for the Graded Memorandum Assignment.
PART 3 COMMUNICATING LEGAL ANALYSIS	
Week 11 Nov 3/5	Parts of a Memo (<i>other than the analysis</i>) Question Presented Brief Answer Conclusion The Editing Process: Substantive Edits and Incorporating Legal Style (If time, Partner Presentations)
Week 12 Nov 10/12	Practitioner Panel: The Importance of Details In lieu of class – Professor Brem will be lead instructor (combined with other LSS sections) Partner Presentations or Asynchronous Writing Day Sunday, Nov 15 6:00 p.m. ~ Graded Memorandum Due (Memorandum: 30% of final grade)
Week 13 Nov 17/19	Timed Writing Strategies No LSS ~ November 19 Friday, November 20 ~ Final Exam 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Room TBD (Final Exam: 30% of final grade)
Week 14 Nov 24	No LSS ~ Enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday.