

Southern Illinois University School of Law

Senior Writing Requirement

[excerpted from School of Law rules for AY 2017–18]

ARTICLE IV - SPECIAL RULES REGARDING CURRICULUM

...

5. Senior Writing Requirement

- (a) Purpose. The purpose of the Senior Writing Requirement is to further refine students' skills in legal research, legal writing, and legal analysis in a course that requires substantial legal research and an advanced legal writing project involving significant, sophisticated legal analysis and legal research.
- (b) Satisfaction. The Senior Writing Requirement may be satisfied in any one of the following ways:
 - (i) Senior Writing Seminar. Satisfactory completion of a designated Senior Writing Seminar which requires the production of a paper or papers totaling a minimum of 7500 words in length, which must involve substantial research and analysis of one or more complex legal issues. The seminar shall include significant writing instruction. Faculty supervision of the student writing shall include individual formative and summative assessments, which should include at least one opportunity for students to have an individual conference with the instructor to discuss their work product and then rewrite that work product. [amended 5/1/17]
 - (ii) Designated Elective Course. Satisfactory completion of an elective course of at least 3 credit hours offered at the School of Law designated, as provided in (c) below, as meeting the Senior Writing Requirement. [amended 4/19/11]
 - (iii) Law Journal/Journal of Legal Medicine. Satisfactory completion of two semesters (or in the case of a student graduating in December, one semester) as a member of the Law Journal Board of Editors or the Journal of Legal Medicine Commentaries Board of Editors may be used to fulfill the senior writing requirement. Satisfactory completion will be contingent on certification by the Faculty Advisors of the respective Boards that the student has met the research and writing standards set forth under Rule IV.5(a). [moved and amended former IV.2(d), 4/19/11]
 - (iv) Advanced Appellate Moot Court. Satisfactory completion of at least five

hours of Advanced Appellate Moot Court. Satisfactory completion will be contingent on certification by the Appellate Moot Court Board Faculty Advisor that the student has met the research and writing standard set forth under Rule IV.5(a). [amended 5/2005; 12/5/07]

- (c) Course Designation. Upon the written request of a faculty member, the Associate Dean may designate an elective course (of at least 3 credit hours) as meeting the Senior Writing Requirement. Such a designation requires a determination by the Associate Dean on an annual basis that the course involves significant writing instruction and assignment(s) that meet the standards for paper length and assessment as set out in Rule IV.5(b) . Examples of courses that may be so designated include, but are not limited to, advanced appellate advocacy, statutory or regulatory drafting, and transactional drafting. [amended 4/19/11; 5/1/17]

- (d) Miscellaneous
 - (i) All Senior Writing Seminars and elective courses designated under this rule as meeting the Senior Writing Requirement shall meet on a regular basis to focus on either the substantive law or the specific skills to be taught or both, with the opportunity to forgo up to four weeks of class meetings for intensive research, writing, and individual conferences on writing projects. Writing shall be a focal point of what is taught. The writing experience shall be substantial in nature and shall be essentially the independent work of one student. The Associate Dean shall annually review whether Senior Writing Seminars comply with the requirements set forth in these rules. [amended 4/19/11; 5/1/17]

 - (ii) The maximum enrollment in a Senior Writing Seminar or in an elective course designated as meeting the Senior Writing Requirement shall be set by the faculty member in consultation with the Associate Dean, taking into account the nature of the substantive material and skills taught, as well as overall staffing needs. In no event shall the maximum enrollment be set at less than 12. In instances where enrollment is limited, priority will be given to senior law students. In all instances where enrollment exceeds 12, the provisions of Rule III.1(b) shall apply. Except in extraordinary circumstances recognized by the administration, no Senior Writing seminar will proceed if fewer than six students enroll in the seminar. [amended 5/2004; 4/19/11]

 - (iii) Any student who has completed at least 31 semester hours and received a passing grade in both Lawyering Skills I and Lawyering Skills II (or their equivalent, in the case of transfer students) may register for a Senior Writing Seminar, provided that (a) no person may take more than one Senior Writing Seminar each semester; (b) no person may take more than three Senior Writing Seminars during law school; and (c) enrollment

priority in all Senior Writing Seminars shall be as follows (1) third-year students who have not fulfilled the Senior Writing Requirement; (2) second-year students who have not fulfilled the Senior Writing Requirement; (3) persons taking a second Senior Writing Seminar; and (4) persons taking a third Senior Writing Seminar. [amended 1/2006; 4/19/11; 5/1/17]

- (iv) A student may, with the permission of the faculty member, take a Senior Writing Seminar or elective course designated as meeting the Senior Writing Requirement for academic credit alone and not for purposes of satisfying the Senior Writing Requirement, but only if that would not entail denying another student enrollment in the course if such other student is enrolling in the course for the purpose of satisfying the Senior Writing Requirement.