INSTRUCTOR:
Professor Douglas Lind
Room 175A
453-8713
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CLASS MEETINGS:
Fridays, 10:00–10:50 A.M.; Room 202

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Building on the research techniques presented in Law 503A and 504A (Lawyering Skills I and II), this course focuses on the effective and efficient use of both legal and non-legal research tools available to assist in the practice of law. Students will receive advanced training in Westlaw, LexisNexis, and other commercial and free online research systems and resources.

Prerequisites: Law 503A & 504A (Lawyering Skills I and II). Although this course is S/U, grading will be based on a variety of assessment methods, including research assignments, a comparative analysis of online legal research sites, the last assignment, and course participation.

ATTENDANCE:
The law school attendance policy is followed. Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled class meetings and is signified by signing the attendance sheet. The absence of a signature on an attendance sheet is conclusive evidence of absence. There is a maximum of two unexcused absences; students with more than two will face sanctions, including grade penalties and/or withdrawal from the course.

REQUIREMENTS:
Students must register for and should regularly check the course’s TWEN page for general announcements, reading assignments, and other course-related information or resources.

READINGS:
There is no assigned text. Readings will be assigned on a periodic basis. Students are responsible for checking their e-mail accounts and the course TWEN page (under “Resources”) for reading assignments.
GRADING:

Assignments (3): 300 pts  Last Assignment: 500 pts

Assignments: Students will complete three (3) graded assignments covering commercial resources, government information, and legal & non-legal information on the Internet that will be posted and submitted via TWEN. Assignments will consist of questions for which students will be asked to locate specified documents or information. Each assignment will be a maximum of 100 points.

Last Assignment: The last assignment will be available via TWEN on April 11. Although you will have a week to complete the exam, it should not take that long. We are giving you additional time so that you do not need to feel rushed as you answer the questions. To complete the last assignment, you will need to use and evaluate a variety of sources that we discussed throughout the semester.

Comparative Analysis of online legal research sites: Students will be expected to use the evaluative skills learned in class to compare the strengths and weaknesses of online legal research sites. This requirement will be incorporated into the three (3) assignments and last assignment.

Penalty for Late Assignments: A 10 point penalty will be assessed when an assignment is submitted after it is due.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.
Course Schedule

January 17
- Course Introduction
- Review of Legal Sources

January 24
- Introduction to Specialized Proprietary Online Systems
  - FastCase
  - IICLE Smart Books

January 31
- Westlaw: Advanced and Cost Effective Searching

February 7
- Lexis Nexis: Advanced and Cost Effective Searching, Marantha Beatty-Brown, Lexis Nexis Representative

February 14
- More Specialized Proprietary Online Systems:
  - BNA
  - Online Indexes
  - HeinOnline
- Assignment # 1: Commercial Resources
  - Due: Wednesday, February 19 by 11:00 pm

February 21
- Review Assignment # 1
- Government Information on the Internet: State & Local

February 28
- Government Information on the Internet: Federal

March 7
- Government Information on the Internet: Federal Continued
- Assignment # 2: Government Information
  - Due: Wednesday, March 12 by 11:00 pm
Course Schedule

March 14
NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

March 21
- Review Assignment # 2
- Introduction to Internet Legal Research
  - Evaluating Websites

March 28
- Legal & Non-legal Information on the Internet
  - Statistics
  - Public Policy Centers and Think Tanks
  - Blogs
  - People Locating Resources

April 4
- Law Practice Realities
- Assignment # 3: Legal & Non-legal Information on the Internet
  - Due: Wednesday, April 9 by 11:00 pm

April 11
- Review Assignment # 3
- Course Review
- Last Assignment is distributed via TWEN

April 18
- No Class
- Last Assignment due by 4:00 pm