

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School  
Lawyering Skills I: Legal Writing – Section 2  
Fall 2025

**Instructor Information:**

Instructor: Kaitlyn Poirier

Email: kaitlyn.poirier@siu.edu

Office: Room 250

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Tuesdays from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, and by appointment.

**Teaching Assistant Information:**

Olivia Miller – olivia.m.miller@siu.edu

AJ Valor – angel.valor@siu.edu

Jenna Zumbahlen – jenna.zumbahlen@siu.edu

**Class Sessions:**

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00 to 10:00 AM in Room 108. You will take a break from Legal Writing to do Legal Research and midterms from September 29 to October 17. We will be back in action on October 20.

**Course Description:**

This course will provide you with a strong foundation for drafting non-persuasive legal documents. You will also develop new lawyering skills, such as interviewing a client, interacting with supervisors, and correctly citing legal authority in documents.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course, you should learn how to:

1. draft office memos, request for information letters, client letters, and professional emails;
2. identify pertinent facts when presented with a case file;
3. analyze statutes and case law to determine the applicable rule of law;
4. effectively organize your legal writing;
5. edit legal writing;
6. correctly cite to statutes and cases;
7. conduct client interviews;
8. interact professionally with supervisors; and
9. engage with other students using active listening, empathy, allyship, and respect.

## Required Texts and Materials:

1. Legal Writing by Neumann, Simon, and Painter-Thorne (5th ed.)
2. The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (21st or 22nd ed.)
3. Plain English for Lawyers by Wydick and Sloan (7th ed.)
4. Mastering the Bluebook Interactive Exercises subscription (\$26.10 for 1 year)

To access Mastering the Bluebook Interactive Exercises go to: <https://masteringthebluebook.com/getmbie>. Complete the form (make sure to select IL for your state and Southern Illinois Univ. School of Law for your institution). On the payment page, enter SIULAW25 in the Access Code field. This will give you the discounted price. Continue through the payment page and create your account.

## Attendance:

The law school's policy regarding attendance applies to this course. In short, you are allowed to miss only **FOUR** classes during this course. If you miss more than four classes, you will be withdrawn from the course or receive the lowest possible grade. The only exception to this rule is if the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs excuses your absence for extraordinary circumstances (such as military service, jury duty, death of an immediate family member, etc.).

## Grading:

You will be required to complete several assignments in this course. At the end of the semester, I will add the points you earned for these assignments together with our participation grade (more on that below). This will determine your final grade for the course.

I will provide you with grading criteria for each assignment as it is assigned. If you have any questions about how I will grade assignments, please ask me.

Here are the assignments you will be doing this semester:

1. **Writing Assignments** - You will be assigned assignments to improve your writing skills throughout the semester.
2. **Email communications with supervisor** - In this course, you will be assigned the role of a legal intern at Hart & Ferris, LLC. During the semester, you will need to communicate with your supervisor at the firm via email.
3. **Outline for Memo # 1** - Your supervisor will ask you to write a memo analyzing a legal issue in your case. First you need to prepare an outline.
4. **Draft Memo # 1** - You will receive all of the law and facts you need to draft this memo. No outside research is permitted.
5. **Final Memo # 1** - This is the final version of Memo # 1.

6. **Client Interview** - You will need to interview a client so that you can figure out his or her legal issues.
7. **Outline for Memo # 2** - Because you did such a great job on your first memo, your supervisor will ask you to write another memo on a new legal issue. First you need to prepare an outline.
8. **Draft for Memo # 2** – For this memo, you will need to conduct your own research to find applicable law and utilize it in your memo.
9. **Final Memo # 2** - This is the final version of Memo # 2.
10. **Request for Information Letter** – You need to craft a letter requesting information from people or entities involved in a legal dispute.
11. **Client Letter** - Time to analyze a legal issue and relay your thoughts to a client.
12. **Mastering the Bluebook Interactive Exercises** – Complete online exercises that will help you learn to cite cases and statutes properly.
13. **Scavenger Hunt** - During the semester, you will learn how to conduct Legal Research online and in print. You will do a scavenger hunt to show off your Legal Research skills.
14. **Bluebook Exam** - There will be an in-class Bluebook exam during the semester. The exam will be open book, but you will need to be familiar with the Bluebook to finish in time.

### **Participation Grade and Netflix Pass:**

As mentioned above, I will consider participation when determining your final grade in this course. I expect that you come to class ready to participate: read any material that I have assigned for that day's class, complete any assignments, and be prepared to contribute to that day's discussion. You can contribute to the discussion by volunteering to answer a question, making an observation, or respectfully debating with me and/or your classmates. I might also call on you with no advance notice, so be prepared.

I recognize that there might be days that you do not want to participate in that day's discussion. Maybe you did not have time to read the materials or stayed up too late watching Netflix. No judgment. It happens. **ONCE** per semester, you can opt out of that day's discussion. Either send me an email or write a note and place it on my lectern before class saying you are opting out. I will not call on you that day. Use this power wisely—you only get one free day!

For your participation grade, I also take into account your professionalism. In other words, I will consider whether you behave with integrity and if you act respectfully towards your colleagues and myself.

### **Deadlines:**

All lawyers operate on deadlines, whether they are set by your supervisor, your client, the court, or yourself. Therefore, in preparation for your future legal career, you will operate on deadlines in this course.

This course has “hard deadlines,” meaning that you must complete your assignments on time. If you miss a deadline (even by one minute), you are required to send me your completed assignment and a Motion for Leave to File Out of Time explaining why I should excuse the late submittal. Just like federal judges, I will only grant your Motion if you demonstrate “good cause” for me doing so—and I get to determine what constitutes good cause. Given the additional time and effort it will take to draft a Motion for Leave to File Out of Time, and the risk that I may still deny the Motion and refuse to accept your assignment, I would make sure to meet all course deadlines.

If you know in advance that you will not be able to complete an assignment on time for a legitimate reason (you are having surgery, have required military duty, etc.) file a motion asking for an extension of the deadline as soon as possible. If you demonstrate good cause, I may give you extra time to complete the assignment.

### **Ban on Plagiarism, Collaboration, and Generative AI:**

Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else’s work, ideas, or words and passing them off as your own without crediting the source. Plagiarism is not permitted in this course.

You are not allowed to collaborate on assignments unless I give you permission to do so. This means you may not obtain written material or communicate about the substance of the assignment with others (including your fellow students). You are also not allowed to use generative AI (ChatGPT, Grammarly, etc.).

If you have plagiarized, collaborated, or used generative AI while working on an assignment, you will receive **zero** points for that assignment, **and I will take away 10% of the total points you earned in the class at the end of the semester.** I will also follow the procedures outlined in the school’s Honor Code. If you are found in violation of the Honor Code, you can face serious penalties, including expulsion. Long story short, **DON’T DO IT.** If you have any questions about this policy, just ask me.

### **Digital Devices Policy:**

To encourage comprehensive listening and avoid digital distractions, digital devices (laptops, tablets, phones, etc.) will not be allowed in the class unless an in-class activity requires one. You must leave your digital devices in your bags unless such an activity is taking place. I will let you know when you can use them.

I understand that some students might find this policy inconvenient and annoying (I will explain why I adopted this policy on our first day of class). But in exchange, I will provide skeletal outlines in advance of each class that will be posted on D2L. You can print those out and take notes on them, in a note pad, or on a random sheet of paper. **Students needing accommodations relating to this policy should send me an email ASAP.**

### Class Recordings:

This class is automatically recorded every day. If you would like one or more of these recordings, send me an email. If you attended that class, I will send you the recording. If you did not attend the class, you need to explain in the email why you were absent. I will send you the recording if you were absent for a legitimate reason (you were sick, participated in a school-related activity, family emergency, etc.).

### Class Schedule and Assignments until October 17:

Date	Class Number	Class Topic(s)	Homework Assignments
8/18	1	Intro to Legal Writing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapters 2 and 3 by <b>August 20</b></li><li>2. Request Microsoft Office from Saluki Tech by <b>August 20</b> and download to computer</li><li>3. Respond to supervisor by <b>August 20</b></li></ol>
8/20	2	Rules of Law	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 4 by <b>August 22</b></li></ol>
8/22	3	Intro to Statutes and Rules of Law in Statutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 5 by <b>August 25</b></li><li>2. Complete the Rules of Law in Statutes Assignment by <b>August 25</b></li></ol>
8/25	4	Intro to Cases and Rules of Law in Cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complete the Rules of Law in Cases Assignment by <b>August 27</b></li><li>2. Respond to supervisor by <b>August 27</b></li></ol>
8/27	5	Analysis/ Application	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 17.2 and 17.3 by <b>August 29</b></li><li>2. Complete the Applying Law to Facts Assignment by <b>August 29</b></li></ol>
8/29	6	IRAC/CREAC/ CRAC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 19 by <b>September 3</b></li><li>2. Complete the IRAC/CREAC/CRAC Assignment by <b>September 3</b></li><li>3. Respond to supervisor by <b>September 3</b></li></ol>

9/1	No Class – Labor Day (make-up class on Writing Processes available on D2L)		
9/3	7	Structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapters 14 and 16 by <b>September 5</b></li> <li>2. Complete the Structure Assignment by <b>September 5</b></li> </ol>
9/5	8	The Office Memo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 10.2 by <b>September 8</b></li> <li>2. Draft Memo #1 Outline due by <b>September 10</b></li> </ol>
9/8	9	Intro to Authorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapters 23.1 and 23.2 by <b>September 10</b></li> <li>2. Respond to supervisor by <b>September 10</b></li> </ol>
9/10	10	Intro to Legal Citations, Citing to the Case File, and Bluebooking Reported Cases Part 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on Draft Memo #1</li> </ol>
9/12	11	Bluebooking Reported Cases Part 2 and Public Domain Format	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on Draft Memo #1</li> <li>2. Read Legal Writing Chapter 23.3 by <b>September 15</b></li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9/14 at 11:59 PM – Draft Memo #1 Due</b></p>			
9/15	12	Quotations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 22.2 by <b>September 17</b></li> <li>2. Read Plain English for Lawyers pages 7-20 and 31-36 by <b>September 17</b></li> <li>3. Complete the Quotations Assignment by <b>September 17</b></li> </ol>

9/17	13	Writing Concisely and Being Objective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-read Draft Memo #1 by <b>September 19</b></li> <li>2. Complete the Writing Concisely Assignment by <b>September 22</b></li> <li>3. Complete the Being Objective Assignment by <b>September 22</b></li> </ol>
9/19	14	Group Feedback on Draft Memo # 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on incorporating any applicable group feedback into Final Memo # 1</li> </ol>
9/22	15	Short Case Citations, Citation Signals, and Citation Sentences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Legal Writing Chapter 12.7 by <b>September 24</b></li> <li>2. Respond to supervisor by <b>September 24</b></li> </ol>
9/24	16	Editing and Proofreading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete the Editing and Proofreading Assignment by <b>September 26</b></li> <li>3. Complete your Editing Checklist by <b>September 26</b></li> </ol>
9/26	17	Peer Editing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on Final Memo # 1</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9/28 at 11:59 PM – Final Memo #1 Due</b></p>			
9/29	Legal Research Class		
10/1	Legal Research Class		
10/3	Legal Research Class		

10/6	No Class – Midterms
10/8	No Class – Midterms
10/10	No Class – Midterms
10/13	Legal Research Class
10/15	Legal Research Class
10/17	Legal Research Class

\* All assignments must be submitted before class begins on the due date except as otherwise noted.

\*\* I reserve the right to change the homework assignments, deadlines, and required reading at any time for any reason.



## **SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT**

### **SIU SIMMONS LAW SCHOOL – Fall 2025**

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** We ask that you become familiar with **Emergency Preparedness @ SIU**. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, on the Emergency Preparedness @ SIU website, and through text and email alerts. To register for alerts, visit <http://emergency.siu.edu/>.

**DISABILITY POLICY.** SIU Carbondale is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible experience for all students with disabilities. The Office of Access and Accommodations, formerly Disability Support Services, coordinates the implementation of accommodations. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but have not yet obtained approval, please contact OAA immediately at 618-453-5738 or [disabilityservices.siu.edu](http://disabilityservices.siu.edu). You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to ensure accommodations are in place when needed. Accommodations and services are determined through an interactive process with students and may involve consideration of specific course design and learning objectives in consultation with faculty. Please send approved accommodations to your faculty through the DSS online portal.

**SALUKI CARES and COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS).** The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students, and their families, SIU will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For Information on Saluki Cares: (618) 453-2461, or [siucares@siu.edu](mailto:siucares@siu.edu), <https://salukicare.siu.edu/>. Associate Dean Shelia Simon [ssimon@siu.edu](mailto:ssimon@siu.edu) or (618) 536-8321 is available at the Simmons Law School to help students access university resources. Additionally, counseling services are available through CAPS ([\*Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\) | Student Health Services | SIU\*](#)). A counselor is at the law school every Wednesday from noon until 4:30pm in Room 268 for drop-in appointments.

**SAFETY AWARENESS FACTS AND EDUCATION** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://safe.siu.edu>

# Syllabus Attachment

Fall 2025

MISSION STATEMENT FOR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

*SIU embraces a unique tradition of access and opportunity, inclusive excellence, innovation in research and creativity, and outstanding teaching focused on nurturing student success. As a nationally ranked public research university and regional economic catalyst, we create and exchange knowledge to shape future leaders, improve our communities, and transform lives.*

## IMPORTANT DATES:

Semester Classes Begin: .....08/18/2025  
Last day to add full-term course (without Dean's signature): .....08/24/2025  
Last day to withdraw from the University with a full refund: .....08/29/2025  
Last day to drop a full-term course for a credit/refund: .....08/31/2025  
Last day to drop a full-term course (W grade, no refund):.....10/26/2025  
Final examinations: .....12/08/2025–12/12/2025

Note: Please verify the above dates with the Registrar calendar and find more detailed information on deadlines at <http://registrar.siu.edu/calendars>. For add/drop dates that apply to shorter-than-full-term courses, please look at the Schedule of Classes search results at <http://registrar.siu.edu/schedclass/index.php>

## FALL SEMESTER HOLIDAYS:

Labor Day 09/01/2025  
Fall Break 10/10/2025  
Veterans Day 11/11/2025  
Thanksgiving Break 11/22/2025 - 11/30/2025

**DIVERSITY:** Southern Illinois University Carbondale's goal is to provide a welcoming campus where all of our students, faculty and staff can study and work in a respectful, positive environment free from racism and intimidation. For more information visit: <http://diversity.siu.edu>. Additional [informational flyer](#).

**OFFICE FOR ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS:** SIU Carbondale is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible experience for all students with disabilities. Office for Access and Accommodations coordinates the implementation of accommodations. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but have not yet obtained approval please contact OAA immediately at (618) 453-5738 or <https://access.siu.edu>. You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to ensure accommodations are in place when needed. Accommodations and services are determined through an interactive process with students and may involve consideration of specific course design and learning objectives in consultation with faculty.

**MILITARY COMMUNITY:** There are complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student, and military and veteran related developments can complicate academic life. If you are a member of the military community and in need of accommodations please visit Veterans Services at <http://veterans.siu.edu/>.

**STUDENT MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER:** The Student Multicultural Resource Center serves as a catalyst for inclusion, diversity and innovation. As the Center continues its work, we are here to ensure that you think, grow and succeed. We encourage you to stop by the Center, located in the Student Services Building Room 140, to see the resources available and discover ways you can get involved on the campus. Visit us at <https://smrc.siu.edu/>.

**SALUKI CARES:** The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students and their families, SIUC will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For information on Saluki Cares: Call (618) 453-2461, email [siucares@siu.edu](mailto:siucares@siu.edu), or <http://salukicare.siu.edu/>.

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**PREGNANCY:** Title IX makes it clear that students who are pregnant or have a related condition may contact the Title IX Coordinator to request accommodations or to report any allegations of discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator may be contacted at: Nick Wortman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 0135 Woody Hall, 900 S. Normal Avenue, Mail Code 6520, Carbondale, IL 62901, (618) 453-6667, [equity@siu.edu](mailto:equity@siu.edu).

**SIU COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS):** Mental health counseling services are available by calling [CAPS](#) at (618) 453-5371. CAPS offers confidential same-day services and ongoing counseling. For after hours crisis care, students are encouraged to call 988, 911, or present to their nearest emergency room.

**WITHDRAWAL POLICY (Undergraduate Only):** Students who officially register for a session must officially withdraw from that registration in a timely manner to avoid being charged as well as receiving a failing grade for those classes. An official withdrawal must be initiated by the student, or on behalf of the student through the academic unit, and be processed by the Registrar's office. For the proper procedures to follow when dropping courses and when withdrawing from SIUC visit: <https://registrar.siu.edu/students/withdraw.php>.

**SIUC'S EARLY WARNING INTERVENTION PROGRAM (EWIP):** Students enrolled in courses participating in SIUC's Early Warning Intervention Program might be contacted by University staff during a semester. More information can be found at the University Core Curriculum's Overview webpage: <https://corecurriculum.siu.edu/for-faculty/>.

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## CATALOGS:

[catalog.siu.edu](http://catalog.siu.edu)  
[gradcatalog.siu.edu](http://gradcatalog.siu.edu) - Graduate policies often vary from Undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, please refer to the graduate catalog.

## CENTER FOR LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

Tutoring: <https://clss.siu.edu/>  
Math Labs: <http://math.siu.edu/courses/course-help.php>

**WRITING CENTER:** <http://write.siu.edu/>

**PLAGIARISM:** See the Student Conduct Code: <http://srr.siu.edu/student-conduct-code/>

**INCOMPLETE POLICY (Undergraduate Only):** <http://registrar.siu.edu/grades/incomplete.php>

**REPEAT POLICY:** <http://registrar.siu.edu/students/repeatclasses.php>

**MORRIS LIBRARY HOURS:** <https://libcal.lib.siu.edu/hours/>

**ADVISEMENT:** <http://advisement.siu.edu/>

**SIU ONLINE:** <https://online.siu.edu/>