

**SIU School of Law**  
LAW-507A: 003/004  
Lawyering Skills I: Legal Research  
Fall 2024/ 1 credit hour/ in-person  
Classroom 102  
Wednesday 3:00-4:00 p.m.

**Instructor and Contact Information:**

*Instructor name:* Kelly Collinsworth

*E-mail address:* [Kelly.collinsworth@siu.edu](mailto:Kelly.collinsworth@siu.edu)

*Office hours:* I have an open-door policy. You may also book an appointment using my bookings link. [Book a meeting with me](#)

*Office location:* Room 240

*Office phone:* 618-453-8511

*Teaching Assistants:* Kathryn Pettersen, [kathryn.pettersen@siu.edu](mailto:kathryn.pettersen@siu.edu) /Cecelia Jiardina, [cecelia.jiardina@siu.edu](mailto:cecelia.jiardina@siu.edu)

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to the legal authorities that exist in the United States, the relationships between them, their relative weight or power, where they are published or otherwise accessible, and how they are organized. It also introduces students to the process of legal research and research strategy, familiarizing students with current tools and methods.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- In a matter that requires legal research, identify the research questions that need to be answered.
- Identify ambiguities in the language, standards, elements, or factors of a provided resource (such as a statute, contract, or judicial opinion).
- Identify efficient legal research strategies (including appropriate search terms) that are likely to uncover other legal sources to assist in the interpretation of a provided resource (such as a statute, contract, or judicial opinion).
- Given a collection of legal sources, identify the roles and characteristics of the sources, including their authoritative weight.
- Given a collection of legal sources, identify other sources, search terms, or research strategies that might be used to update sources or find additional sources.
- Cite the authorities selected to answer legal research questions using correct citation format.
- Be introduced to the portions of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct that concern legal research.
- Recognize the importance and practice the following components of professionalism: timeliness; honesty; quality, appearance and thoroughness of work product; compliance with ethical responsibilities; compliance with local court rules; independent thought and work; and courtesy to the court, opposing counsel, and all persons involved in the legal process.

**Course Materials:**

- ✓ Legal Research Demystified: A Step-by-Step Approach, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.
- ✓ Access to Core Knowledge for Lawyers. Class Code: 324-089-9608
- ✓ Harvard Law Association, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, 21<sup>st</sup> edition. (hereinafter referred to as The Bluebook).
- ✓ Westlaw & Lexis (account registration information should have been emailed to you.)
- ✓ A laptop for class.
- ✓ Other materials as posted on D2L or handed out in class.

## Class Policies:

**Student courtesy policy:** The classroom is a shared space where consideration and compassion for others are not negotiable.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected. You are allowed **up to two absences for any reason**, without penalty. Those exceeding the maximum number of absences will be subject to the ramifications described in the Law School's attendance policy. *See* School of Law Rules III.5 (f)-(g).

### An excerpt from SIU Law's Attendance Policy is below:

Regular Attendance. In accordance with ABA Standard 308(a), the right to take exams, as well as the privilege of continuing as a student at the School of Law, is conditioned on regular attendance and satisfactory completion of coursework. . .[A] student enrolled in a first-year course may not accumulate class hour absences in excess of twice the credit hours in any particular course during the term. . . . *The attendance requirement is not subject to modification by a professor, nor may a professor excuse an absence.* If the absences allowed under this provision have been exhausted, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may grant leave and relief from the regular attendance requirement in extraordinary circumstances. . . . The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will not grant leave from the rules requiring regular attendance unless the request shows extraordinary circumstances or an unavoidable circumstance. If leave is not granted, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will discuss with the student options for withdrawing from a course and retaking in a future semester. [amended 4/19/11; 11/18/22; 5/13/24] (emphasis added).

### Policy for Missed or Late Work & Class Preparation

Due dates for every assignment are provided on the course syllabus and course schedule (and posted in D2L). Law is all about deadlines. Missing deadlines, being unprepared for class, or missing meetings can have dire consequences for your clients and for you (malpractice, loss of respect from the court, discipline from the bar association.) **Late work will not be accepted unless prior approval is given.** That approval will only be granted in extreme circumstances that are clearly beyond your control. *Preparation* for class means reading the assigned readings, completing exercises on Core Knowledge for Lawyers, & reviewing all information required for that week.

**Law School Honor Code and University Code of Conduct. Both the Honor Code and the Code of Conduct apply and are in effect in this class.** Read both documents carefully and make sure you comply with both at all times. ***Submitting plagiarized work or any other form of work not your own***, regardless of a student's purpose or intent, is potentially subject to serious sanctions as are other academic, honor code, and conduct code offenses. Do not consult others on the final work product you turn in. If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code, Code of Conduct or either's application, consult me. The following guidance may also be helpful:

- ✓ What you may do: You may discuss assignments, but not final projects or exams, with other students, which includes discussing issues, research, and analysis. You may consult teaching assistants, librarians, and me for questions about assignments.
- ❖ What you may not do: You may not turn in work that is not your own. You may not collaborate on assignments (unless permitted in class), and you may not read the written work of another student or permit another student to read your written work. The written product must be your own work; you may not copy another student's work and hand it in as your own. You may not seek assistance on any written assignment from anyone except me or a teaching assistant, and teaching assistants are neither obligated nor always permitted to provide assistance. You may not use Artificial Intelligence to produce your written work.

**Additional University & Law School Policies – See D2L under the Syllabus content tab.**

## Grading

Assignments with points	Due Date	Points
• End of Chapter questions for chapters 1 & 2	8.21	22
• End of Chapter questions for chapters 3, 4, & 5	8.28	34
• End of Chapter questions for chapter 6	9.4	16
• <u>Complete Step 1 (research plan) for Virtual Print Exercise</u>		3
• <u>Complete Step 1 (research plan) for Westlaw Common Law Exercise.</u>		18
• End of Chapter questions for chapters 7 & 8	9.11	20
• <u>Complete Step 2 for Virtual Print Exercise</u>		11
• Complete Step 2 for Westlaw Common law exercise		14
• End of Chapter questions for chapter 9	9.18	12
• <u>Complete Step 3 &amp; 4 for Virtual Print Exercise &amp; Reflections on Findings</u>		15
• Complete Step 3 & 4 of Westlaw Common Law Exercise		23
• <u>Complete Lexis+AI: Effective Prompts for Performing Legal Research</u>		7
• End of Chapter questions for chapters 10, 11, & 12	9.25	16
• Complete Step 5 of Westlaw Common Law Exercise		8
• End of Chapter questions for chapter 13	10.2	12
• <i>Complete Step 8 &amp; “Reflections on Findings” for Westlaw Common Law Exercise</i>		5
• Lexis Common law Research problem	10.13 by 11:59 p.m	120
• End of Chapter questions for chapters 14 & 15	10.16	16
• Complete Step 1, 2 & 3 for Westlaw or Lexis Statutory Exercise		31
• End of Chapter questions for chapters 17 & 20	10.23	12
• Complete Step 4 & 5 for Westlaw or Lexis Statutory Exercise		10
• Complete Step 7 & 10 & Complete “reflections on findings” for Westlaw or Lexis Statutory Exercise	10.28	20
• Research Exam	TBD	200
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>645</b>

Final grades for the course will be in accordance with the School of Law’s required grade distribution. To learn more about this required grade distribution: <https://law.siu.edu/common/documents/rules/sol-rules-grades-and-grading-systems-excerpt.pdf>.

## COURSE SCHEDULE – subject to change. Please check D2L for assignment updates.

ABA standards incorporate out of class work in the calculation of credit hours. Under the ABA standards, **you should expect to spend at least 2,250 minutes for work in and outside of class in this course.**

Week	Class Assignments (due by noon on the class date unless otherwise noted)
<b>Week 1</b> August 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Watch on CKL: <i>Introduction to the world of Legal Research</i> <a href="https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/1951">https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/1951</a></li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 1&amp; 2. Complete Chapter 1 &amp; 2 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Watch on CKL: <i>Introduction to Sources of Law &amp; Binding Authority</i> <a href="https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/1952">https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/1952</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b> August 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Read chapter 3. Complete Chapter 3 End of Chapter questions on CKL:</li> <li>✓ Read chapter 4. Complete Chapter 4 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 5. Complete chapter 5 End of chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Read Client Hypothetical from Virtual Print Exercise on CKL</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b> Sept. 4 (all classes meet together)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 1 (research plan) for Westlaw Common Law Exercise.</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 6. Complete chapter 6 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 4</b> Sept. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 2 for Westlaw Common law exercise</li> <li>✓ Read Introduction to Part III, p. 129-130</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 7. Complete Chapter 7 End of Chapter questions on CKL</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 8. Complete chapter 8 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Watch on CKL: <i>Introduction to Citators</i> <a href="https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/2014">https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/2014</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 5</b> Sept. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 3 &amp; 4 of Westlaw Common Law Exercise</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 9. Complete Chapter 9 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Watch on CKL: <i>The Legal Research Process is not Linear</i> <a href="https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/1953">https://coreknowledgeforlawyers.com/lesson/92/1953</a></li> <li>✓ Complete Lexis+AI: <i>Effective Prompts for Performing Legal Research</i></li> </ul>
<b>Week 6</b> Sept. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 4 &amp; 5 of Westlaw Common Law Exercise</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 10. Complete Chapter 10 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 11. Complete Chapter 11 End of Chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 12. Complete Chapter 12 end of Chapter Questions on CKL</li> </ul>
<b>Week 7</b> Oct. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 8 &amp; “Reflections on Findings” for Westlaw Common Law Exercise</li> <li>✓ Review Chapter 4, only summary of key points.</li> <li>✓ Read chapter 18, section A (types of legislative documents), and Figure 18.9 (summary of legislative process)</li> <li>✓ Review p. 69 (initial Research Steps).</li> <li>✓ Review, p. 78 and summary of key points for chapter 5.</li> <li>✓ Read Introduction to Part IV, p. 211-213.</li> <li>✓ Review chapter 6 summary of key points.</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 13, Complete chapter 13 end of chapter questions on CKL.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 8</b> Midterms (no class)	<b>Complete Lexis Common Law Research problem by October 13 at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Week 9</b> Oct. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 1, 2 &amp; 3 for Westlaw or Lexis Statutory Exercise</li> <li>✓ Read chapter 14, Complete chapter 14 end of chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Read chapter 15. Complete chapter 15 end of chapter questions on CKL.</li> </ul>

Week	Class Assignments (due by noon on the class date unless otherwise noted)
<b>Week 10</b> Oct. 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 4 &amp; 5 for Westlaw or Lexis Statutory Exercise</li> <li>✓ Read Chapter 17. Complete chapter 17 end of chapter questions on CKL.</li> <li>✓ Read chapter 20. Complete chapter 20 end of chapter questions on CKL.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 11</b> Oct. 28 (both classes meet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete Step 7 &amp; 10 &amp; “reflections on findings” for Westlaw or Lexis Statutory Exercise</li> </ul>
<b>Final Graded Research Exam (online) TBD</b>	