

Syllabus
Lawyering Skills II: Legal Research Spring 2026
Law 507B – Sections 3, 4, & 5

Contact Information

Professor Candle Wester

Office: 175A Law Library

Email: candle.wester@siu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 or by appointment

Course Management Page:

All information, materials, assignments, and quizzes for this course will be posted on the course page for Spring 2026 Lawyering Skills II: Legal Research (LAW-507B) for sections 3, 4, and 5 on D2L. Get into the habit of checking the course management page and your email daily. We often post important announcements on the course management page and use the page to send out emails to students.

Course Description

This course will build a foundation of research skills that students will use throughout their legal career. You will be introduced to the process of legal research and research strategy, becoming familiar with current tools and methods. Students will gain experience using online research databases to find statutory and case law, as well as using secondary sources for background information and to find and put into context primary law.

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:

- Select the authorities that best address the problems assigned
- Locate and interpret federal and state administration regulations
- Trace the legislative history of a statute
- Identify practice aids and other resources to prepare for summer legal work

Course Materials

- *Sources of American Law: An Introduction to Legal Research*, Beau B. Steenken & Tina M. Brooks, 8th ed., available for free on CALI
<https://www.cali.org/books/sources-american-law-introduction-legal-research>

- *Principles of Legal Research*, Olson, Kent C. & Kirschenfeld, Aaron S., 4th ed., available for free on West Academic/Barbri
<https://subscription.westacademic.com/Book/Detail/28956>
- Westlaw, Lexis, and CALI
 - CALI authorization code: SOUILLstu193
- A laptop for class

Additional readings will be posted on D2L.

Class Policies

Student Courtesy Policy

The classroom is a shared space where consideration and compassion for others are not negotiable. During lecture, you are expected to remain quiet (unless asking or answering a question) and avoid disrupting your classmates' learning. Continued disruptions may result in expulsion from the classroom, which will count as an absence.

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].

Policy for Missed or Late Work & Class Preparation

Due dates for every assignment and quiz are provided on the Course Management Page. 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 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 CALI lessons, and assignments.

Email Policy

You can expect that emails will be answered within one business day.

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 quizzes, with other students. This includes discussing issues, research, and analysis. You may consult teaching assistants, librarians, or your research professor 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). 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 your research professor or a teaching assistant, and teaching assistants are neither obligated nor always permitted to provide assistance. **You may not use Artificial Intelligence to complete any assignment, quiz, CALI lessons, and/or any other assigned work.**

Course Workload

Students should:

- Complete all assigned assignments by the due date

- Complete assigned readings before class
- Come to class prepared to discuss the material and to ask questions about anything that is confusing
- Spend time going over the material covered in class and reworking all in-class problems to ensure you are able to find the material using the various research databases without help
- Ask for help if they need it!

Grading

You earn points toward your grade in Lawyering Skills Research as follows:

- CALI lessons: 10 points each
- Lexis/Westlaw trainings: 50 points
- Quizzes: 100 points each
- Research Plan: 100 points
- Emerging Technology Research: 200 points
- Final Assignment: 300 points

In order to access each CALI lesson, please click the links provided below in the Class Schedule; this enables your professor to see your progress. Lexis/Westlaw trainings will primarily be conducted through Lexis Learn and Westlaw On-Demand; you will receive more information later in the semester. These lessons will be graded based on completion. You will receive full points for any reasonable effort.

At the end of the semester, the points you earned in each category will be added to arrive at your raw score. If you earn at least 80% of the available points, you will receive a grade of Satisfactory.

Class Schedule

This class only runs for the first twelve weeks of the semester. Additionally, there are some weeks where we are not meeting; instead, you will complete online lessons asynchronously. Please complete CALI lessons and reading before class that week.

- Week 1: January 16 – Course Intro; Research Plan; Secondary Sources Review
 - Read the syllabus
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 2
 - Quiz #1
 - Available January 16 at 11:30 am
 - Due January 19 by/before 11:59 pm

- Week 2: January 23 – Statute & Case Research Review
 - CALI Lesson
 - [Decision Point: State or Federal?](#)
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 11
 - Quiz #2
 - Available January 23 at 11:30 am
 - Due January 26 by/before 11:59 pm

- Week 3: January 30 - Practice Materials & Forms, Staying Updated
 - Research Plan assignment
 - Due January 30 by/before 11:59 pm
 - CALI Lesson
 - [Illinois Legal Research: Secondary](#)
 - [Current Awareness & Alerting Services](#)
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 14

- Week 4: February 2 – February 6 – AI & Emerging Legal Technology - Asynchronous class: No in-person meeting
 - CALI Lessons
 - [Evaluating Web Sites](#)
 - [Non Legal Resources](#)
 - Read
 - *Mata v. Avianca, Inc.*
 - “Adopting Emerging Technology Responsibly” by Merisa K. Bowers
 - Quiz #3
 - Available February 6 at 11:30 am
 - Due February 9 by/before 11:59 pm

- Week 5: February 13 – State & Federal Regulations
 - CALI Lesson
 - [Researching Federal Administrative Regulations](#)
 - [Agency Decisions and Orders](#)
 - [Introduction and Sources of Authority for Administrative Law](#)
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 8
 - *Sources of American Law*, Chapter 5 (pg 105-124)
 - Quiz #4
 - Available February 16 at 11:30 am
 - Due February 16 by/before 11:59 pm

- Week 6: February 20 – State & Federal Legislative History
 - CALI Lessons
 - [Reading Legislative History](#)
 - [Illinois Legal Research: Primary](#)
 - Read
 - *Sources of American Law*, Chapter 3.8 (pg 62-70)
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 6
 - Quiz #5
 - Available February 20 at 11:30 am
 - Due February 23 by/before 11:59 pm

- Week 7 (February 23 – February 27) – Lexis Learn & Westlaw On-Demand Modules - Asynchronous class: No in-person meeting
 - Lexis/Westlaw training
 - Information forthcoming
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 9
 - Emerging Technology Research assignment
 - Due February 27 by/before 11:59pm

- Week 8 (March 2 – March 6)
 - Midterms: No class

- Week 9 (March 9 – March 13)
 - Spring Break: No class

- Week 10: March 20 - Court Rules, Dockets, Misc
 - CALI Lessons
 - [Government Documents](#)
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 13

- Week 11 (March 23 – March 27) - FCIL/Tribal Law/Non-legal info - Asynchronous class: No in-person meeting
 - CALI Lesson
 - [Introduction to Foreign Legal Research](#)
 - [United Nations Research](#)
 - Read
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 17
 - *Principles of Legal Research*, Chapter 18

- Week 12: April 3 - Free & Low Cost Resources – Last Class
 - CALI Lesson
 - [Cost of Legal Research](#)
 - Final Assignment
 - Due April 15 by/before 11:59pm

Syllabus Attachment

SIU SIMMONS LAW SCHOOL – Spring 2026

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. 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, <https://salukicare.siu.edu/>. Associate Dean Shelia Simon 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>