

Lawyering Skills: Legal Writing II Spring semester, 2026

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Course Meeting Information:
Monday and Wednesday 9:00 a.m.
Room 251 (I'm working on changing that, so stay tuned)

Office hours

I'm here at the office – stop by – no appointments needed. If you would rather pin down a time, let's do it that way.

Course Description, Overview & Learning Outcomes

Welcome to LW part II! This semester we'll shift from objective assessments to persuasive arguments – yessss! You will build on skills learned in the fall and apply them to new statutory and case law. You'll get to advocate for your client in negotiations and in fake court settings, and you'll get to write persuasive legal documents.

Assigned Materials

- Required Texts
 - R. Neumann, Jr., S. Simon, S. Painter-Thorne, *Legal Writing*, 5th Ed.
 - *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (21st Edition)
- Required Technology
 - Please check information on D2L prior to purchasing. Mastering the Bluebook Interactive Exercises Subscription [Mastering The Bluebook Interactive Exercises 2024-25 Edition : Login](#)
 - D2L page for assignments, announcements, and more

Grading:

Request or response to discovery request – fast and easy	5 points
Jury instructions – fast and easy	5 points
Mastering the Bluebook – complete all modules on time	5 points
Memo supporting or opposing trial motion	25 points
Trial motion argument	5 points
Appellate brief	50 points
Appellate argument	5 points

Assignments

There will be a variety of assignments during the semester: reading assignments, in-class group and individual assignments, citation exercises, and a written memorandum and brief. All written assignments must be submitted on D2L as a Microsoft word document on the due date.

Assignment Due Dates & Late Policy

Just as in the court, due dates and times are firm and are strictly enforced. All assignments are to be turned in by the time listed in the syllabus or the assignment. Extensions will be given only for extreme circumstances that are beyond your control. If you are absent on a day of an in-class assignment, you are still responsible for that assignment but can request an extension.

If any assignment is late without an approved extension, three points will be deducted for that assignment at the moment it is late. If the assignment is submitted handed in more than an hour past the deadline, three additional points will be deducted and then another three for each twenty four hours thereafter.

Attendance

Students may have no more than a maximum of four absences (partial or total) for any reason. For each absence over four, I will deduct three tenths of a point from your final grade on a 4.0 scale. 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, including but not limited to: (1) military service; (2) representing the law school at a moot court, mock trial, law review, or official function; (3) jury duty; (4) religious observances; (5) the birth of a child; (6) the death of an immediate family member to include grandparents; (7) major non-elective surgery or a prolonged hospital stay; or (8) to comply with federal or state anti-discrimination laws, other applicable laws, or SIU policies.

Recording Policy

All classes will be recorded and posted on D2L. The quality of the recordings is low, so if you are going to be absent, have a friend take notes for you.

All other recordings of the class are prohibited and a violation of the school's honor code.

General Guidelines & Collaboration Policy

You must do your own work on the assignments. Do not copy anyone's answers, use any artificial intelligence, or share your work with others. Copying answers or ideas violates the Honor Code. These can be tricky questions, so if you have any doubts, ask me. Here are a few guidelines:

A. Plagiarism – huge danger

Plagiarism is using another's work and submitting that work as your own. This includes copying work by other students, using language and ideas from other sources without citation, including artificial intelligence, treatises and cases.

B. Dishonest Citation – just about as bad

Dishonest citation includes citing a source that does not support the proposition asserted. It also includes altering or omitting language in a quotation without indicating the alteration or omission. If you quote, you must quote exactly or indicate alterations and omissions. Quoting a commercial summary or research aid as if it is the underlying source is also dishonest citation.

C. "Talk" collaboration – this one can be ok in some circumstances

You may talk with our teaching assistants and me about assignments, and it is also permissible to discuss ideas or questions about assignments with other students. In-class group work will involve lots of talking with your colleagues. But don't write together, edit each other's work, or read any work before that assignment has been turned in or before your work has been turned in.

D2L & MBIE

Assignments, announcements, and other notices will be posted on the D2L platform. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the information posted on D2L. All assignments will be posted on D2L. Citation assignments will not be posted on D2L. Instead, all check the syllabus and go to the MBIE platform for those assignments.

Schedule

Anticipate that this schedule will be revised over the course of the semester, with updates to be posted on D2L. In particular there will be some shifting of times to accommodate research classes and working with the two other writing classes working on the same materials that we will be using.

week	topics and readings	assignments due
Week One	1/12: The Shift to Persuasive Writing Readings: LW Chapter 27 1/14: A New Case: Interviewing the Client Readings: LW Chapter 15	1/16 MBIE 9, 10, 11
Week Two	1/19: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No class, go out and be inspired! 1/21: Entry of Appearance and Discovery	1/27 MBIE 12, 13, 14
Week Three	1/26: Motions Readings: LW Chapters 28-31 1/28: More on motion memos Readings: LW Chapters 32-33	1/30 MBIE 15, 16, 17
Week Four	2/2: Pretrial Proceedings: Drafting Motions 2/4: Motion Memorandum Readings: LW Chapters 28-30	2/6 MBIE 18, 19, 20
Week Five	2/9- 2-12 individual conferences on motion memo drafts	2/13: MBIE 21, 22, 23 2/13 Motion memos due at 4pm
Week Six	2/16: Introduction to oral arguments on motions 2/18: Motion Argument Practice	2/20 MBIE 24, 25, 26
Week Seven	2/23- 2/26: Motion Arguments 2/27: People v Penope – the trial!	2/25 MBIE 27, 28, 29
Week Eight	MIDTERM WEEK—NO CLASS	
Week Nine	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS	3/15 MBIE 30, 31, 32
Week Ten	3/16: The Appellate Process Readings: LW Chapters 34-36 3/18: Parts of the Brief Readings: LW Chapters 37-38	3/20 MBIE 33, 34, 35
Week Eleven	3/23: Appellate arguments Readings: LW Chapter 39 3/25: Q & A on brief-writing challenges	

Week Twelve	3/30-4/2 individual conferences on drafts	4/3 Appellate brief due At 4pm
Week Thirteen	Oral argument practice rounds	
Week Fourteen	Oral arguments	4/19 Brief Due
Week Fifteen	Oral arguments	