

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Syllabi

Course Syllabi

1-2015

LEG 187T.01: Legal Research and Writing I

Teresa Ann Thompson

University of Montana - Missoula, teresa.thompson@mso.umt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Thompson, Teresa Ann, "LEG 187T.01: Legal Research and Writing I" (2015). *Syllabi*. 3092.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/3092>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

MISSOULA COLLEGE - UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

SYLLABUS FOR LEG 187T, Legal Research I

Credits awarded upon successful completion: 2

Prerequisite: LEG 186T

Instructor Name, E-Mail Address, and Office Hours: Teresa (Terry) Thompson,
teresa.thompson@mso.umt.edu, Office Hours: immediately before or after class.

Revised Spring 2015

Course Description: Continued instruction to legal research with emphasis on understanding the varying sources of legal authority and accessing that authority through on-line resources.

Course Objectives: Students will be able to; (1) demonstrate proficiency identifying the various administrative branches of federal and state government and the roles they play within our legal system; (2) recognize the impact of administrative rules and regulations and associate them with their jurisdictions and administrative agencies; (3) research administrative decisions; (4) understand and utilize free on-line legal research resources; (5) employ finding tools and hybrid sources of authority in an on-line environment; (6) verify and validate research findings and analyze them in legal writing assignments; (7) utilize proper legal citation form, grammar, and style.

Instructional Methods: Lecture; interactive topic discussion; in class projects; case and treatise reading and analysis.

Methods of Valuation: Students will be graded in two general areas: attendance and participation, writing assignments.

Student Performance Assessment Methods and Grading Procedures: Attendance/Class Participation: 30%; quizzes/writing assignments: 70%.

Sample Course Practical Assignments to Develop Paralegal Competencies: Students will develop legal research and analysis skills through in-class, hands-on assignments; Instructor will lead the students through in-class assignments that require the students to utilize various on-line research tools. Students will perform in-class and homework assignments relating to the state and federal legal system, various administrative agencies, courts, constitutions, statutes, and annotations. Instructor will provide in-class, hands-on instruction. Written assignments will reinforce in-class learning experiences, help students to recognize the importance of the tools, and cement an ability to recall their location, function, and value for future research projects.

Outline of Subject Areas:

- a. INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTERIZED LEGAL RESEARCH – 10 HOURS
 - a. Organization of computerized information -lecture 1 hour; on-line – 1 hour;
 - b. Search formulation and use of search restrictions - lecture 1 hour; on-line – 1 hour;
 - c. Free on-line resources and Lois Law - lecture 1 hour; on-line – 1 hour;
 - d. Administrative law - lecture 1 hour; on-line 1 hour;
 - e. Rules of Practice in varying jurisdictions – lecture 1 hour; on-line 1 hour;
- II. COMPUTERIZED LEGAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS – 12 HOURS
 - a. Determining which law governs and refining research strategy - lecture 1 hour; - on-line 1 hour

- b. The research process and techniques for record keeping – lecture 1 hour; on-line research 1 hour
- c. Case briefing and analysis - lecture 1 hour; on-line research 1 hour;
- d. Synthesizing cases and authorities - lecture 1 hour; on-line research 1 hour;
- e. Outlining and organizing authority - lecture 1 hour; on-line research 1 hour;

III. INTRODUCTION TO THE LEGAL WRITING PROCESS – 8 HOURS

- a. Establishing writing goals and determining audience – lecture 1 hour; team work 1 hour;
- b. Drafting an outline – lecture 1 hour; written assignment 1 hour;
- c. Paragraphs and sentences - lecture 1 hour; written assignment 1 hour;
- d. Writing Basics – lecture 1 hour; draft a thesis paragraph 1 hour
- e. Citation to authority - 1 hour; citation exercises 1 hour;
- f. Basics of letter writing – 1 hour; written assignment 1 hour.

Grade Scale:

A: 93 – 100%

B: 92 – 85%

C: 84 – 77%

D: 76 – 70%

F: 69% and below

Required Text: *The Legal Research and Writing Handbook*, ISBN 978-0-7355-0789-0, 6th edition, and companion **Legal Research and Writing Workbook**, authors: Andrea Yelin and Hope Samborn.

Assignments: Due dates for assignments will be given at the time the assignment is given. Assignments are due on the date provided. Late assignments will be given no credit. If a student cannot meet a deadline/due date, contact the instructor immediately for further instruction. Do not wait until the due date to seek an extension of time for assignment completion, as one will not be given. This policy can be amended at the discretion of the instructor upon proof of adequate justification.

Attendance is required. If you must be absent from class, please notify the instructor at least 48 hours before the class. If there is an emergency and/or sudden illness, then contact the instructor and provide details. Simply leaving an e-mail message does not satisfy this requirement.

ALWAYS KEEP A COPY OF YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Disability Accommodation Statement: If any student requires special consideration for any reason, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor to discuss the matter prior to any situation that might give rise to the special consideration requested.

Academic Misconduct Statement: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University.

Computers are provided for on-line research; refrain from using your computer or any additional device to access the internet for other purposes during class.

Cell phones must be turned off during class.

Instructor reserves the right to revise this syllabus.