Fall 2004

LEG 186T.01: Introduction to Legal Research

Colleen M. Dowdall

University of Montana - Missoula

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

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

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/4371

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.
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA–MISSOULA
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

COURSE SYLLABUS

LEG 186T INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL RESEARCH

Fall Semester 2004

FACULTY:  Colleen M. Dowdall, Esq.
Office Number – 258-4779  Office Fax No. - 258-3797
Office email - cdowdall@co.missoula.mt.us
Home Number - 549-2095  Home Fax no. - 728-5249
Home email - cdow532@aol.com

PREREQUISITE:  Acceptance into program or consent of department head

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An introduction to the legal system and legal authorities, both hardcopy sources and research using a computer. All available sources will be explored as well the interrelationship between sources.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the role of the paralegal in Legal Research.
2. Determine the value of various authorities and how they interrelate. Utilize primary and secondary authority under appropriate circumstances.
3. Use hard copy digests and on-line resources to research case law.
4. Read and analyze cases to determine issues, holdings, facts, legal reasoning, and disposition.
5. Create accurate, word-processed case briefs according to IRAC or other appropriate formats.
6. Shepardize cases for validation and research.
7. Perform constitutional and statutory research. Identify how the legislative process affects legal research.
8. Utilize secondary authority to understand, analyze, and tie together primary authority and to find additional primary authority to support a legal issue.

GRADING AND POLICIES:
Grading Scale:  
A - 93-100%  
B - 87-92%  
C - 80-86%  
D - 75-79%  
F - Below 75%

Weight of grading:  
Homework assignments 10%  
Midterm Exam - 20%  
Case Briefing - 25%  
Final Exam - 40%  
Attendance - 5%

Attendance Policy:  
Attendance is not mandatory but will count towards 5% of your grade. Each day of class will be assigned a numerical value that will result in a calculation of 5% of your grade.

Make-up Tests  
Make up tests will be allowed if I have been notified prior to the test that you are unable to take the test due to illness or emergency. Notification may be by email, in person or phone message. Make-ups will be completed by the end of the week in which the test was scheduled.

Due Dates:  
Homework assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date and must be typed. A late assignment will have 7 points deducted from the score. Rough drafts are due to be turned in on the date indicated.

Disabilities:  
If you need special assistance due to a disability contact me personally after class or by phone or email by the end of the 2nd week of class.

Plagiarism Warning

“Plagiarism is the representing of another’s work as one’s own. It is a particularly intolerable offense in the academic community and is strictly forbidden. Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion.”

The University of Montana, 1999-2000 Catalogue, Page i8. Also see Student Conduct Code.

You may work with other students on the library exercises and in researching the writing assignments. The actual writing on the written assignments must be your own. When working with other students, be sure to understand the resources and process used to get the answer.

REQUIRED TEXT:  
The Legal Research and Writing Handbook, Second Edition by Andrea Yelin and Hope Viner Samborn  
ALWD Citation Manual, Second Edition by Darby Dickerson, Association of Legal Writing Directors