

**Lawyering Skills I: Objective Analysis, Writing, and Research**  
**Professor David E. Sorkin (Section H)**  
**Fall 2005**

**SYLLABUS**

**Overview**

This course provides an introduction to objective legal analysis. You will learn precedential, rule-based, policy-based, and factual reasoning, and will learn to perform basic legal research using case law, statutes, administrative regulations, court rules, and secondary materials.

You will learn and apply the skills of legal analysis, research, and writing by preparing a series of objective legal memoranda and other exercises. The first legal memorandum is a “closed” assignment, to be completed using a packet of research material that will be provided to you. For the remaining memorandum assignments, you will complete the necessary research on your own in the law library. You will also be required to complete several supplemental exercises, focusing primarily on legal research and citation.

Class will meet on most Monday and Wednesdays at 2:00. The website for this course is located at [www.lawyeringskills.com](http://www.lawyeringskills.com).

**Instructor**

David E. Sorkin, Associate Professor of Law  
Office: Room 738  
Telephone: (312) 987-2387  
E-mail: [7sorkin@jmls.edu](mailto:7sorkin@jmls.edu)  
Office hours: Thursdays 4:00-5:45 pm, and by appointment

**Textbooks**

**Required texts:** There are five required textbooks for the course. Be sure to obtain the correct editions.

- Helene S. Shapo et al., *Writing and Analysis in the Law* (rev. 4th ed., Foundation Press 2003) (ISBN 1-58778-541-2, list \$52.00)
- Christina L. Kunz et al., *The Process of Legal Research* (6th ed., Aspen L. & Bus. 2004) (ISBN 0-7355-3666-X, list \$55.00)
- Mark E. Wojcik, *Illinois Legal Research* (Carolina Academic Press 2003) (ISBN 0-89089-339-X, list \$22.50)
- Association of Legal Writing Directors & Darby Dickerson, *ALWD Citation Manual* (2d ed., Aspen L. & Bus. 2003) (ISBN 0-7355-3640-6, list \$24.95)
- Tracy L. McGaugh et al., *Interactive Citation Workbook for ALWD Citation Manual* (2005 ed., LexisNexis 2005) (ISBN 0-8205-6378-1, list \$28.00)

**Recommended texts:** Students may also find some of these supplemental texts useful: Bryan A. Garner, *The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style*; Richard C. Wydick, *Plain English for Lawyers*; Bryan A. Garner, *A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage*; and *Black's Law Dictionary*.

## Course Policies

**Attendance:** Attendance at and preparation for each class meeting is required and expected. You must be present when attendance is taken (often at the beginning of class) to receive credit for attending a particular class. You will not receive credit for the course if you are absent from more than 25% of the scheduled class meetings. Students will be held responsible for all material covered or handed out in class and all announcements made during class, whether or not an absence is excused.

**Grading:** The course grade will be determined based upon three written memorandum assignments, although students also must complete several supplemental exercises in order to pass the course. At the end of the semester I will calculate course grades based upon the memorandum grades, weighed at 25%, 35%, and 40%, respectively. I try to give students a general idea of how well they performed on each assignment, but do not provide specific data about rankings and ranges in order to protect students' privacy and discourage competition.

**Late policy:** The graded memorandum assignments (and the draft of the first memorandum assignment) must be submitted promptly at the beginning of class on the due date. Any request for an extension of time must be supported by valid reasons and should be submitted as early as possible. **Late papers will be penalized by a deduction of one full letter grade for each 24 hours or portion thereof that a paper is late.** Any penalty for late submission of the draft of the first memorandum assignment will be deducted from the grade for the final draft of that assignment. Late penalties will be waived or reduced only for good cause (not including computer or copier problems) submitted in writing or via e-mail, with appropriate documentation. Graded papers will normally be handed back two weeks after the due date, and papers therefore will not be accepted after that time. **If you do not submit a graded assignment within two weeks after the due date, you will not be able to pass the course.** Ungraded assignments (other than the draft of the first memorandum assignment) may be submitted at any time up to the last class meeting without penalty, but it is strongly recommended that you submit them according to schedule.

**Plagiarism and collaboration:** When you submit an assignment in this course, you are representing that it is your own work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. You may discuss the research and citation exercises with other students in the class and work together in completing these exercises, as long as each student participates in each part of the assignment—in other words, you may not simply divide the problems among members of a group and then copy the answers. On the memorandum assignments, you may discuss research and organizational strategies with other students, but you may not collaborate in the writing process. You may seek help on any assignment from the instructor, the law school library staff, and the Writing Resource Center, but not from other sources. If you have any questions about this policy, ask for clarification from the instructor.

**Online research:** The research component of this course focuses primarily on conventional methods of legal research. Students may use Lexis, Westlaw, and other specialized online databases for assignments in this course only to the extent authorized by the instructor.

**Tutorial conferences:** I normally will be available to assist students on a walk-in basis during my office hours. At certain times during the semester, however, I will ask you to make an appointment for an individual tutorial conference. These conferences are intended to provide you with individual feedback on your writing assignments to supplement my written comments, to give you an opportunity to receive help with specific writing and analytical problems, and to help you learn what you can do to improve your performance on future assignments.

## **Semester Schedule**

### **Week 1 (August 22 & 24):**

- Read chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 3-64) in *Writing and Analysis in the Law*.
- Memorandum Assignment 1 will be posted on the course website by August 22. (A draft is due on September 12, and the final version is due on October 5.)

### **Week 2 (August 29 & 31):**

- Read chapters 4 through 7 and appendices C and D (pp. 89-161, 515-527) in *Writing and Analysis in the Law*.
- Prepare a brief of the first case in the research materials accompanying Memorandum Assignment 1. Also, prepare an outline of the issues in the assignment. Be prepared to discuss these items in class; they need not be turned in.

### **Week 3 (September 5 & 7):**

- Class will not meet on September 5 (Labor Day).
- Read chapters 8 through 11 and appendix A (pp. 163-252, 457-470) in *Writing and Analysis in the Law*.

### **Week 4 (September 12 & 14):**

- **A draft of Memorandum Assignment 1 is due on Monday, September 12.**
- Class will not meet on September 12 and 14; library tours will be scheduled to take place this week.
- Research Exercise 1 will be posted by September 12.

### **Week 5 (September 19 & 21):**

- Read chapters 1, 7, and 11 (pp. 3-16, 125-148, 177-194) in *Illinois Legal Research*.
- Read chapters 1 through 5 (pp. 3-90) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read appendix B-2 (pp. 493-511) in *Writing and Analysis in the Law*.
- Read part 1 (pp. 1-10) in the *ALWD Citation Manual*.

- Read chapters 1 through 3 (pp. 1-23) in *Interactive Citation Workbook*. The citation exercises in these chapters are designed to help you understand this material; they need not be turned in.
- The draft memorandum assignment will be returned with comments on September 21; students should sign up for a tutorial conference to discuss the assignment.

**Week 6 (September 26 & 28):**

- Read chapters 6 through 8 (pp. 91-120) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapters 4 and 5 (pp. 25-41) in *Interactive Citation Workbook*, consulting the *ALWD Citation Manual* as necessary. Exercise 5 is recommended but need not be turned in.
- Class will meet in a computer classroom (room 1100 or other location TBA) on September 28.

**Week 7 (October 3 & 5):**

- **Memorandum Assignment 1 is due on October 5.**
- Memorandum Assignment 2 and Research Exercise 2 will be posted by October 3.
- Class will not meet on October 5.

**Week 8 (October 10 & 12):**

- Class will not meet on October 10.
- Read chapter 9 (pp. 123-170) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapter 3 (pp. 37-76) in *Illinois Legal Research*.

**Week 9 (October 17 & 19):**

- Research Exercise 1 is due at the beginning of class on October 17.
- Read chapter 10 (pp. 171-185) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapter 6 (pp. 111-124) in *Illinois Legal Research*.

**Week 10 (October 24 & 26):**

- Read chapter 3 (pp. 65-88) in *Writing and Analysis in the Law*.
- Read chapter 11 (pp. 189-224) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapter 4 (pp. 77-94) in *Illinois Legal Research*.
- Read chapters 6 through 8 (pp. 43-59) in *Interactive Citation Workbook*. Citation Exercises 6 through 8 are recommended but need not be turned in.
- Class will meet in a computer classroom (room 1100 or other location TBA) on October 26.

**Week 11 (October 31 & November 2):**

- **Memorandum Assignment 2 is due at the beginning of class on October 31.**
- Memorandum Assignment 3 and the Statutory Construction Exercise will be posted by October 31.
- Read chapter 12 (pp. 253-273) in *Writing and Analysis in the Law*.
- Read chapter 18 (pp. 367-377) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapters 9 and 12 through 14 (pp. 61-67, 91-117) in *Interactive Citation Workbook*. Complete ICW Citation Exercise 9 online at <http://icw.lexisnexis.com/>. Exercises 12 through 14 are recommended but need not be turned in.

**Week 12 (November 7 & 9):**

- Research Exercise 2 and ICW Citation Exercise 9 are due at the beginning of class on November 7.
- Read chapter 12 (pp. 225-263) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapter 15 (pp. 119-129) in *Interactive Citation Workbook*. Exercise 15 is recommended but need not be turned in.

**Week 13 (November 14 & 16):**

- Read chapters 13 through 17 (pp. 266-363) in *The Process of Legal Research*.
- Read chapters 5, 8, and 10 (pp. 95-109, 149-158, 169-175) in *Illinois Legal Research*.
- Read chapter 17 (pp. 139-143) in *Interactive Citation Workbook*. Complete ICW Citation Exercise 17 online at <http://icw.lexisnexis.com/>.

**Week 14 (November 21 & 23):**

- The Statutory Construction Exercise and ICW Citation Exercise 17 are due on or before November 23.
- The last class meeting will take place on November 23; class will not meet on November 28.
- **Memorandum Assignment 3 is due at 12:00 noon on Monday, November 28.** Submit the assignment at the Records Office.