

INTRODUCTION TO LAWYERING SKILLS
LAW 612 & 612A — Section 339A
Fall 2020

Instructors: Professor Matthew Sipe (msipe@ubalt.edu), Room 1010
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00 to 4:30 pm, or by appointment

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Teaching Assistants (ILS): Annemarie Duerr (annemarie.duerr@ubalt.edu),
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Law Scholar (Civil Procedure): Michael Blanchard
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Class times: Mondays & Wednesdays, 1:30pm – 4:15pm, online.
We will occasionally meet Thursdays, 10:30am – 11:45 am, online, as well; do not schedule other activities during this block.

TWEN: <https://lawschool.westlaw.com/twen/course/290024/join/KBFXK82C6K4PHTSEKVDQ>

Welcome to Civil Procedure I / ILS!

In this course, you will learn the first half of civil procedure and build the foundation for basic lawyering skills and professional values. This syllabus covers the materials, assignments, and assessments for the ILS portion of the course—a separate syllabus covers the equivalent information for Civil Procedure I. Please read both syllabi carefully, as you need to know what the course requires in order to maximize your success in it.

Course Description

This combination course integrates rigorous instruction in legal analysis, research, and writing with the substantive law of civil procedure to give beginning law students an opportunity to combine skills and doctrine—as practicing lawyers do. It focuses on the process and procedures of a civil lawsuit, from filing a complaint through final appeal. It introduces the structure and operation of the state and federal court systems in the United States, concentrating on federal courts. Topics include pleadings, pre-trial motions, the discovery process, jury trial, judgments, relief, post-judgment motions, and appeals. Students will learn civil procedure through statutory interpretation, case analysis, rule synthesis, and legal research and writing projects. Legal analysis, research, and writing skills will be developed through course-work that includes critical case reading, analysis, and briefing; common law principles and processes; factual analogy and distinction; rule synthesis and application; objective / predictive writing; citation; and professional norms.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

1. Accurately identify, explain and apply civil procedure rules;
2. Read and analyze cases by identifying the rule, holding, and determinative facts;
3. Identify the elements of a rule and apply rules to facts;
4. Research and properly cite legal authorities, such as cases, statutes and secondary sources;
5. Write predictive memoranda on legal issues, taking into account the weight and value of different authorities; and
6. Build legal writing and grammar skills.

Course Materials

These texts are required for ILS. You must have assigned materials at the ready during class.

- CHRISTINE NERO COUGHLIN ET AL., *A LAWYER WRITES: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO LEGAL ANALYSIS* (3d ed.), ISBN: #9781531008765
- *THE BLUEBOOK: A UNIFORM SYSTEM OF CITATION* (21st ed.), ISBN: #9780578666150
- *AMY E. SLOAN, *RESEARCHING THE LAW: FINDING WHAT YOU NEED WHEN YOU NEED IT* (2d ed. 2017) (“RTL”), ISBN: # 9781454886495
- *DIONNE E. ANTHON, *THE BLUEBOOK UNCOVERED: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO MASTERING LEGAL CITATION* (2d ed. 2020), <http://dionneanthon.com/bbu/bbu21.html>
- *CORE GRAMMAR FOR LAWYERS (4th ed.) (“CGL”), <https://coregrammarforlawyers.com/>

*A copy of *Researching the Law*, online access to *The Bluebook Uncovered*, and a code for *Core Grammar* will be provided to you—you **do not** need to purchase these materials separately. Please email lawlibref@ubalt.edu if you have any issues accessing these materials.

Civil Procedure materials are listed on the Civil Procedure syllabus.

Supplemental Aids

None of these texts are required, but if you are looking for additional learning materials and resources, they are of high quality:

- DIANA HACKER & NANCY SOMMERS, *A POCKET STYLE MANUAL* (6th ed.)
- TERRILL POLLMAN, JUDITH STINSON, ELIZABETH STINSON, *LEGAL WRITING: EXAMPLES AND EXPLANATIONS*
- TERRI LECLERQ, *GUIDE TO LEGAL WRITING STYLE*
- Please note that the Writing Center can also help you with many of the basics: http://law.ubalt.edu/academics/academic-support/legal_writing_center/

Teaching Assistants

Annemarie Duerr and Kylie Tejera are the Teaching Assistants for this course. They will be responsible for teaching some of our normally scheduled class sessions; those class sessions are a mandatory component of the course. I sincerely request that you treat Annemarie and Kylie with the utmost level of professionalism and respect throughout the course.

Grades

You will receive one grade for ILS and one grade for Civil Procedure I. The ILS grade will be composed of: (1) memorandum assignments (70%); (2) research and citation modules (25%); (3) core grammar exercises (5%); and (4) professionalism (adjustments).

Collaboration with other students—as well as consulting family, friends, or anyone other than the instructors—is not permitted on any of these assignments, unless otherwise stated explicitly.

- Memorandum Assignments (70%)
 - Please note: all memoranda must be submitted via TWEN by their respective deadlines. Late papers **will not be accepted** unless you have a documented emergency.
 - Draft of the closed memorandum (10%) – October 4th by 11:00 pm
 - Final closed memorandum (20%) – October 25th by 11:00 pm
 - Final open memorandum (40%) – December 2nd by 11:00 pm

- Research and Citation Modules (25%)
 - Civics Module – Complete **before** our first class (August 23rd by 11:00 pm)
 - Module 1 – August 31st through September 6th
 - Module 2 – October 5th through 11th
 - Module 3 – October 26th through November 1st
 - Module 4 – November 2nd through 8th

- Core Grammar Exercises (5%)
 - Please note: these exercises are graded for completion. That is, you must **either test out of or pass each lesson** by their respective deadlines in order to receive full credit. You are welcome to complete them earlier than the due dates to get ahead.
 - CGL Pretest – August 23rd by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises A, 1-2 (Sentence Structure) – August 30th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises A, 3-4 (Sentence Structure) – September 6th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises B, 1-2 (Quotations) – September 13th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises B, 3-4 (Quotations) – September 20th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises D, 1-2 (Verbs and Agreement) – September 27th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises D, 3-4 (Verbs and Agreement) – October 11th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises C, 1-2 (Organizing Complex Ideas) – October 18th by 11:00 pm
 - Exercises C, 3-4 (Organizing Complex Ideas) – November 1st by 11:00 pm

- Professionalism
 - The caliber of your professionalism may help or hurt your grade by up to one step (e.g., B+ to A-, or B- to C+). Professionalism means being on time and prepared to participate. “On time” means you are settled in and ready to engage when class begins. “Prepared” means you have read the work assigned, completed the relevant exercises, brought any requested drafts or materials, and looked up any words or terms in the readings that you did not understand. These will all help you to develop the skills of a successful lawyer.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS FOR ILS

The class assignments listed below are subject to change as the course progresses, in order to maximize student learning. But I will notify you in advance of any such changes, via TWEN, email, or in class.

Week 0: Before Our First Class

REMINDERS:

- (1) Complete the “Civics Module” on the Library’s TWEN page. This should take you about 70 minutes.
- (2) Register for Core Grammar for Lawyers (“CGL”) and complete the Pretest by **Sunday, August 23rd at 11:00 pm**. Make sure to set aside about 90 minutes to do this. You will only be graded for completion, not performance. The Pretest gives you the chance to **test out** of some parts of CGL; it tailors the software to your individual skill level. So, don’t rush through it, as you will have more work to do later on as a result. At the same time, do not feel pressure to necessarily ace the Pretest—it includes material you very well may not have learned before. Just do your personal best.

Week 1

Monday, August 24: Introduction, How Attorneys Communicate, Sources and Systems of Law

- *A Lawyer Writes*: xix-xx (Introduction), 3-31 (Chapters 1 & 2)
- Chapter 1 explains what an Office Memorandum is. This semester, you will be learning how to write an office memorandum and the many steps it takes to do so successfully.
- Chapter 2 introduces the sources and systems of law. Where do the various sources of law come from? What is their weight? Does one trump another? How can you tell?

Wednesday, August 26: Identifying Rules

- *A Lawyer Writes*: 61-72 (Chapter 4)
- How do you read and break apart a rule?

REMINDERS:

- (1) Complete CGL Exercises A, 1-2 (Sentence Structure) by **Sunday, August 30th at 11:00 pm.**
- (2) Enroll in the TWEN site and complete the “Student Information Sheet” assignment. Turn in (as a PDF file) via TWEN.

Week 2

August 31 to September 6: Library Module 1

- This module takes the place of our in-class ILS sessions and readings for the week. It should take you a little less than 10 hours to complete—pace yourself accordingly. Complete all assignments by **Sunday, September 6th at 11:00 pm.**
- Annemarie and Kylie will lead an **optional** help session for this module on Wednesday, September 2nd during our normal ILS time slot (3:00-4:15pm).

REMINDERS:

- (1) Complete CGL Exercises A, 3-4 (Sentence Structure) by **Sunday, September 6th at 11:00 pm.**
- (2) By our next class session, you should have read and carefully considered all of the cases for the Closed Memo—see the assignment for Monday below.