

## INTRODUCTION TO LAWYERING SKILLS/CIVIL PROCEDURE I

LAW 612A—429

**Instructors:** Jack Lynch, Renee Nacrelli

**Teaching assistants:** Kelly Arnold and Brittany Herritt

**Course description:** This course integrates instruction in legal analysis, research and writing with the substantive law of Civil Procedure in order to give beginning law students an opportunity to combine skills and doctrine the way lawyers must in the practice of law. Students will learn the law of civil procedure through case analysis and rule interpretation, print and online research and legal 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 (office memo); citation form; and professional norms and ethics.

**Course meeting times:** Mondays at 6:15, Tuesdays (when required) at 7:45, Wednesdays at 6:15.

**Course materials—First, materials that students will have to buy:**

Richard K. Neumann, Jr., Ellie Margolis and Kathryn Stanchi, *Legal Reasoning and Legal Writing* (8<sup>th</sup> ed. 2017) (referred to on syllabus as Neumann)

Amy E. Sloan, Steven D. Schwinn, and John D. Edwards, *Basic Legal Research Workbook*, (5<sup>th</sup> ed. 2020) (workbook on the syllabus).

Blue Book, *A Uniform System of Citation*, (21<sup>st</sup> ed. 2020) (Bluebook).

**Materials the Law School will furnish in electronic form:**

Amy E. Sloan, *Researching the Law* (3d ed. 2020)

Dionne E. Anthon, *The Bluebook Uncovered* (2020 edition)

**Student learning outcomes:**

To serve as a rudimentary introduction to the crafts of legal analysis, research and writing—skills which a few students already possess, but which for most (especially the professor) require a lifetime of trial and error to master. We will begin with how to read a case and to memorialize such reading (i.e., briefing). You will do that to some degree in other courses as well, but we will address it from the perspective of the use we will expect you to make of the cases and other legal authorities you read: to use as support of the written legal analyses upon which your grades will largely be based. Throughout the semester, classes will focus on what differentiates legal writing from other academic and professional writing. Classes will also focus on effective writing techniques including, but not limited to: direct language, short sentences, careful choice of words, and paragraphs that express a single thought. Grading of written work will reflect the degree to which students have or develop such skills. This class will also expose students to the variety of ways in which they may access the vast literature of the law. We expect students to complete on time written exercises that will test their familiarity with research tools as well as to complete reading assignment that will enable them to participate in class discussions about legal research problems.

**Grades:**

The final grade will be based on the following: Closed memo, 25%, research and citation exercises, 20%, pleading exercise, 5%, open memo, 50%.

**Course expectations:**

ABA standards call for 2 hours of work outside class for each hour per week in class. Owing to the distinctive nature of legal research and writing, students may find that they need to spend substantially more time than that on work outside of class. It is a requirement of this course that students complete a course evaluation. The evaluation will be available later in the semester and is entirely anonymous.

**Attendance:**

Students who miss more than 5 class meetings may be required to withdraw from the class with a grade of FA. Although class sessions will be recorded on Panopto, only “attendance” on the original class session counts as attendance for this purpose.

**Course website:**

This course uses a TWEN site for posting assignments and other course materials. You are responsible for enrolling on this site as instructed during orientation. You will also need Lexis, Westlaw and Bloomberg passwords.

**Computers:**

What can I say???

**Academic integrity:**

Students are obligated to refrain from acts that they know or, under the circumstances have reason to know will impair the academic integrity of the University and/or School of Law. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, inappropriate communication or collaboration on written work, misrepresentation about any academic matter, including attendance, and impeding the Honor Code process. The School of Law Honor Code and information about the process is available at [http://law.ubalt.edu/academics/policiesandprocedures/honor\\_code/](http://law.ubalt.edu/academics/policiesandprocedures/honor_code/).

**Title IX Sexual Misconduct and Nondiscrimination Policy:**

The University of Baltimore’s Sexual Misconduct and Nondiscrimination policy is compliant with Federal laws prohibiting discrimination. Title IX requires that faculty, student employees and staff members report to the university any known, learned or rumored incidents of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking on the basis of sex, dating/intimate partner violence or sexual exploitation and/or related experiences or incidents. Policies and procedures related to Title IX and UBs nondiscrimination policies can be found at <http://www.ubalt.edu/titleix>.

**Disability policy:**

If you are a student with a documented disability who requires an accommodation for academic programs, exams, or access to the University’s facilities, please contact Keri Hickey, Director of Student Support in the Office of Academic Affairs, at [khickey@ubalt.edu](mailto:khickey@ubalt.edu).

The following are the assignments for the first three weeks of classes. This limited information is made available at this time because some of the materials for the semester are not yet available. The complete syllabus will be made available as soon as possible. The list of materials students will have to buy is complete at this time.

Date	Topic	Reading
8-24	Introduction	Neumann, pp. 3-7.
8-26	The legal system; Brief advice memo	TWEN Legal Research Material: Pre-research group of civics activities C. CALI—Where Does Law Come From and D. Decision Point—State or Federal; Module 1: Sloan, Researching the Law, Chs. 1 and 5.
8-31	Legal writing	Neumann, pp. 39-56.
9-1	Lexis and Westlaw	The second ILS class this week is one conducted by Lexis and Westlaw on those two online research platforms.
9-7	Labor Day	
9-9	What is a case and what do we do with it?	Neumann, pp. 23-30; Sloan, Researching the Law, pp. 79-84; TWEN module 2, b., ii, CALI—Anatomy of a case; iii, Westlaw—Anatomy of a case.





The second ILS class meets Tuesday this week for a class conducted by  
Lexis and Westlaw on use of those online research tools.

9-7 Labor day

9-9