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**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW  
LEGAL RESEARCH, WRITING, AND ANALYSIS**

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**LRWA I – Introduction to Legal Research, Writing, and Analysis  
Syllabus**

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**I. COURSE INFORMATION**

<p><b>INSTRUCTOR</b> Suzette Rodriguez Hurley Truland Building, Room 224 703.993.9679 shurley2@gmu.edu</p>	<p><b>OFFICE HOURS</b> Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., or by appointment.</p>
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**Required Texts (LRWA I and II):**

- Richard K. Neumann, Jr., Legal Reasoning and Legal Writing (Aspen Law & Business, 6th ed. 2009).
- Amy E. Sloan, Basic Legal Research (Wolters Kluwer Law & Business, 4th ed. 2009).
- Harvard Law Review, The Bluebook: Uniform System of Citation (Harvard Law Review Association, 18th ed. 2005) (“The Bluebook”). You may choose the book or the online version.
- Richard C. Wydick, Plain English for Lawyers (Carolina Academic Press, 5th ed. 2005).

**Recommended Texts:**

- Alan L. Dworsky, User’s Guide to The Bluebook (William S. Hein Publishing 2006).

- Tracy L. McGaugh, et al., Interactive Citation Workbook for The Bluebook (Lexis Publishing 2008) (“ICW”).

## II. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Legal Research, Writing, and Analysis (LRWA) Program. You will take Introduction to Legal Research, Writing, and Analysis (LRWA I) in the fall semester. You will take Trial Level Writing (LRWA II) in the spring. LRWA I is a two-credit course, and LRWA II is a three-credit course.

LRWA classes are legal skills classes. The LRWA program introduces you to the fundamental tools of the legal profession by focusing on legal analysis, objective and persuasive legal writing skills, book-based and computerized research, oral advocacy, and legal citation. As a result, LRWA I will be very different from your other law school courses.

In LRWA I, you will be asked to read for class and complete a vigorous schedule of various writing and research assignments. We will engage in group exercises in class. Most weeks, you will attend a group lecture and then meet with a third or fourth-year student who is assigned to you as your “Writing Fellow.” A class meeting schedule, with reading assignments, is attached.

Because LRWA is a professional skills class, you should conduct yourself as a professional in all dealings with your Instructor, the Writing Fellows, the library staff, and your classmates. You should complete the reading assignments and come to class prepared to discuss the material and to complete in-class exercises.

In class, we may discuss different approaches to writing and editing employed by fellow students and practitioners. As a result, any assignment on which you work may be anonymously distributed or used during class for critique and discussion.

## III. PLAGIARISM

The LRWA Rules explain the requirements for attributing sources. In short, whenever you reproduce the wording of a case or a secondary source, you must attribute the source and use proper quotation form. Significantly, changing one or two words in a sentence, but retaining the general idea or information conveyed by the source, does not eliminate the need to provide quotation marks and an attribution. Often, a sophisticated, effective, and preferred technique is to paraphrase a court’s holding or a secondary source (instead of incorporating a large block quotation) and to provide the proper attribution. In sum, if you copy the ideas of another person, whether verbatim or in general terms, you must provide attribution. It is not unusual to be concerned or confused about proper attribution or quotation form. It is best to err on the side of caution and provide attribution if there is any question. If you have any questions about attribution at any time, please talk with one of the Writing Fellows or your Instructor.

#### **IV. ICW WORKBOOK EXERCISES**

The Bluebook is a uniform citation system used by the legal community. The ICW Workbook exercises are designed to help you master the system, on which you will be tested in the second semester. You will complete the ICW workbook exercises independently during the first and second semesters. You are encouraged to review the Bluebook and the ICW exercises at your own pace; however, a recommended schedule for the first semester has been included in the Class Meeting Schedule, Reading Assignments and Project Overview. Exercises for the first five chapters of the ICW will be due for submission in the first semester by November 20, 2009.

You do not need to purchase a copy of the ICW Workbook to complete this course, but it is highly recommended that you do so. The User's Guide to the Bluebook is also recommended because some students like to use it for the open book Bluebook test in the second semester.

All students will complete the ICW Workbook exercises online at <http://lawschool.lexis.com/icw> (available free of charge). Please follow the online instructions for completing the exercises. Each chapter takes approximately one-half hour to one hour to complete.

When you finish the exercises online, you should email the results to your Writing Fellow as the "instructor" for Bluebook exercises. It is recommended that you also email a copy of the results to yourself. Also, you may choose to print out the results for your records and for use on the Bluebook test next semester. Please do not email the results to Suzzette Rodriguez Hurley.

#### **V. ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**

Projects must be submitted as directed by the syllabus (see Project Overview section attached).

Where the syllabus calls for "electronic submission," please go to <http://www.law.gmu.edu/academics/lrwa> and follow the directions. Insert your blind grading number twice to identify the source of the file and the subject of the file.

#### **VI. USE OF LAPTOPS DURING CLASS**

Students may use laptops (and similar devices) in class for note taking and other uses related to class work. During some classes, you will be instructed to close your laptops. Laptops (and similar devices) may not be used for non-class related activities, including, but not limited to, surfing the Internet, blogging, instant messaging, social networking, sending or receiving e-mails, or playing games. Anyone found improperly using a laptop (or similar device) will be warned. Any student found improperly using a laptop (or

similar device) after warning will not be permitted to bring his/her laptop (or similar device) to class.<sup>1</sup>

**NOTE regarding the recording of class lectures:** As a general rule, recording of class lectures is not permitted.

## VII. LRWA RULES

It is important that you know and follow the rules for the LRWA program which you will find posted on TWEN. In addition, there are specific rules for students in the LRWA I class, which are included below. Generally, in the LRWA program all written work must be your own. You should not discuss your work for this class (research, writing, or analysis) with your fellow students unless otherwise instructed by your Writing Fellow or Instructor.

### **Introduction to Legal Research, Writing and Analysis Supplemental Rule**

The LRWA Rules are supplemented for LRWA I with the following:

#### **Supplemental Rule 1, Headings and Signature for Projects**

When submitting a memorandum of law, or any portion of a memorandum of law, to your Writing Fellow, the memorandum will have the following heading and spacing on the first page:

To: [Insert Name of Assignment's "Senior Partner"]  
[Insert Name of Writing Fellow]

From: [Insert Your Blind Grading Number]

Date: [Insert Date Assignment Submitted]

Re: [Insert the Re as Indicated on the Assignment].

For all memoranda, your blind grading number, not your name, is your signature.

Projects 1, 6, and 8 are not memoranda (or portions of memoranda) and do not require a blind grading number. Please use your name when submitting these projects and Project 2.

## VIII. GRADING

Except for Pass/Fail assignments, LRWA assignments are graded on a scale of 1 to 6, with 6 being the highest grade a student can achieve. More information about the scale is

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<sup>1</sup> Language for this section taken primarily from a syllabus prepared by Laurie A. Lewis, Clinical Assistant Professor at the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law.

posted on TWEN. Your assigned Writing Fellow will provide the grades and feedback on your work. You are graded within and against the group of students assigned to your Writing Fellow.

For graded assignments, when your Writing Fellow returns papers, the Writing Fellow will provide you with the high, low and median grades for the group of students assigned to that Writing Fellow. Writing Fellows provide detailed comments on your work, identifying mistakes and areas for improvement. However, because of the number of students and the amount of work involved in this course, Writing Fellows cannot - nor are they expected to - identify every error made by students.

For Pass/Fail assignments, if the assignment demonstrates a lack of effort on the part of the student, or if the student fails to follow direction or instruction provided in group lecture or in break out session, the student will receive a failing grade. Incomplete products demonstrate a lack of effort on the part of the student.

Your final grade for the semester will be comprised of the following allocations:

Class Participation*	05%
Pass/Fail Projects**	10%
Project 3	05%
Project 4	10%
Project 5	05%
Project 7	20%
Project 9	15%
Project 10	30%
*Class Participation will be evaluated using a variety of factors that include, but are not limited to, large group discussion, break-out session participation, interaction with the Instructor, interaction with other students, interaction with the librarians, and interaction with your Writing Fellow.	
** Pass/Fail Projects include Projects 1, 2, 6, 8, ICW Workbook Exercises, and Library Exercises Distributed by Christine Ciambella.	

Details for each project as well as Class Discussion Problems will be posted on TWEN. As noted in the LRWA Rules, an “F” grade will be issued to any student who fails to submit at least 50% of the written course work.

**IX. CLASS MEETING SCHEDULE, READING ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECT OVERVIEW**

[Attached]

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**LRWA I – Introduction to Legal Research, Writing, and Analysis  
Class Meeting Schedule, Reading Assignments and Project Overview**

	<b>Class Meetings &amp; Other Dates</b>	<b>Class Topics &amp; Assignments</b>	<b>In Preparation for Class</b>	<b>Assignment Due [Weight of Assignment]</b> <i>Anticipated Return Date</i>
1	<b>Friday, August 21</b>	<p><b>Writing &amp; Analysis:</b> Overview of office memo; Finding the elements of /analyzing a statute or common law</p> <p><b>Project 1:</b> Analyze/identify elements of closed memo statutory criminal law problem; identify facts that potentially impact elements</p>	<p><u>Neumann</u>: Chapters 5, 7, 9, 13 (exclude exercises); Appendix C (review sample memos)</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem – Week One</p>	
2	<b>Friday, August 28</b>	<p><b>Writing &amp; Analysis:</b> IRAC (or IRuPAC) of an element; How to retrieve cases electronically</p> <p><b>Project 2:</b> Use IRAC for one element of the closed memo problem</p>	<p><u>Neumann</u>: Chapter 10 (exclude exercises)</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem – Week Two</p> <p><u>Wydick</u>: Chapters 1, 2</p>	<p><b>Project 1</b> [Pass/Fail] 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Friday, September 4</i></p>
3	<b>Friday, September 4</b>	<p><b>Analysis:</b> Rule development; Synthesis</p>	<p><u>Neumann</u>: Chapter 12 (exclude exercises)</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem– Week Three</p>	<p><b>Project 2</b> [Pass/Fail] 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Friday, September 11</i></p>

	<b>Class Meetings &amp; Other Dates</b>	<b>Class Topics &amp; Assignments</b>	<b>In Preparation for Class</b>	<b>Assignment Due [Weight of Assignment] <i>Anticipated Return Date</i></b>
		<b>Project 3:</b> IRAC the same element as in Project 2, but develop the rule using synthesis	<u>Wydick</u> : Chapters 3, 4	
4	<b>Friday, September 11</b>	<b>Analysis:</b> Synthesis continued; Introduction to the Bluebook	<u>Wydick</u> : Chapters 5-7  <u>Sloan</u> : Chapter 1, Section D  Class Discussion Problem – Week Four	<b>Project 3 [5%]</b> <b>Due Monday, Sept. 14</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Monday, September 21</i>
5	<b>Friday, September 18</b>	<b>Writing &amp; Analysis:</b> Question Presented and Brief Answer; Facts; Conclusion  <b>Project 4:</b> IRAC the remaining elements, use synthesis	<u>Neumann</u> : Chapter 14 (exclude exercises)  <u>Wydick</u> : Chapters 8, 9	ICW exercises for Chapters 1, 2 (suggested due date)
6	<b>Week of Monday, September 21</b>	<b>Research:</b> Introduction to Legal Research  <i>Instead of Friday class, sign up on TWEN for training sessions on Lexis and Westlaw</i>  <b>Project 5:</b> Draft the Question Presented, Brief Answer, and Facts sections  <b>Research Exercise:</b> CALI Lesson on Lexis and Westlaw	<u>Sloan</u> : Chapters 1, Sections A, B; Chapter 10, Sections A, B, D, E, F  Handouts on Lexis and Westlaw (posted on TWEN)	<b>Project 4 [10 %]</b> <b>Due Sunday, Sept. 27</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Friday, October 9</i>

	<b>Class Meetings &amp; Other Dates</b>	<b>Class Topics &amp; Assignments</b>	<b>In Preparation for Class</b>	<b>Assignment Due [Weight of Assignment]</b> <i>Anticipated Return Date</i>
7	Friday, October 2	<b>Research:</b> Secondary Sources Print exercise on secondary sources.	<u>Sloan</u> : Chapter 3 (skip pages 36-40, 47-49, and 51-59); Chapter 11	<b>Project 5</b> [5%] <b>Due Sunday, October 4</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Tuesday, October 13</i>  ICW Exercises for Chapters 3, 4 (suggested due date)
<b>Project 6: (related to Open Memo)</b> Secondary source list for the Open Memo  <b>Project 8: (related to Open Memo)</b> Case List for the Open Memo Project				
8	Friday, October 9	<b>Research:</b> Cases & Digests Print exercise on cases and digests.	<u>Neumann</u> : Chapter 11 (exclude exercises)  <u>Sloan</u> : Chapters 2, 4	<b>Project 6</b> [Pass/Fail] <b>Due Sunday, October 11</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Friday, October 16</i>
<b>Research Exercise:</b> Research Cases and Digests Exercise  <b>Project 7:</b> Closed Memo – Final				

	<b>Class Meetings &amp; Other Dates</b>	<b>Class Topics &amp; Assignments</b>	<b>In Preparation for Class</b>	<b>Assignment Due [Weight of Assignment] <i>Anticipated Return Date</i></b>
9	<b>Friday, October 16</b>	<b>Writing &amp; Analysis:</b> The Open Memo Project	No reading assignment for this week	<b>Project 8</b> [Pass/Fail] 10:00 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Tuesday, October 20</i>  <b>CALI Lesson</b> [Pass/Fail] <b>Due Thursday, Oct. 15 by 10 p.m. in WF mailbox (see instructions on TWEN – Projects)</b>  <b>Project 7</b> [20%] <b>Due Monday, Oct. 19</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Wednesday, October 28</i>
10	<b>Friday, October 23</b>	<b>Research, Writing &amp; Analysis:</b> Question and answer session related to cases, analysis, and research for Open Memo.  Sign up for individual meetings with your Writing Fellow for the week of October 26.  Work on Draft of Open Memo. <hr/> <b>Project 9:</b> Draft of Open Memo	No reading assignment for this week	<b>Research: Secondary Sources Exercise &amp; Research: Cases and Digests Exercise</b> [Pass/Fail] Due by Midnight
11	<b>Friday, October 30</b>	<b>Research:</b> Shepard's & KeyCite	<u>Sloan</u> : Chapter 5, Sections A, B, C, E, F	<b>Project 9</b> [15%] <b>Due Monday, Nov. 2</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission

	<b>Class Meetings &amp; Other Dates</b>	<b>Class Topics &amp; Assignments</b>	<b>In Preparation for Class</b>	<b>Assignment Due [Weight of Assignment] <i>Anticipated Return Date</i></b>
		Continue working on draft of Open Memo.  Writing Fellows will meet with each student week of October 27 to review the Closed Memo project.		<i>Monday, November 9</i>
12	<b>Friday, November 6</b>	<b>Writing &amp; Analysis:</b> Common problems with memos and solutions; how to prepare the final; checklists.  No breakout session.	Supplemental Reading posted on TWEN	ICW exercises for Chapter 5 (suggested due date)
13	<b>Week of Monday, November 9</b>	No class meetings or break out sessions. Meet individually with Writing Fellows during the week to review Draft of Open Memo.  <b>Project 10:</b> Open Memo – Final	No reading assignment for this week	
14	<b>Friday, November 20</b>	<b>Writing:</b> Bluebooking; Editing; Grammar; Polishing the Final Product.  No breakout session.	No reading assignment for this week	<b>ICW Chapters 1-5</b> <b>*mandatory due date</b>
15	<b>Friday, November 27</b>	Holiday	Have a nice Thanksgiving	<b>Project 10</b> [30%] <b>Due Monday, Nov. 30</b> 10 a.m. by electronic submission <i>Beginning of Spring Semester</i>