
ANTONIN SCALIA LAW SCHOOL
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

LRW: Legal Research and Writing (JM only)

FALL 2021 Syllabus and Class Rules

LAW 071 001 (2 credits)

Wednesdays 6:05 pm to 8:05 pm

Professor Information

Professor: Jessica Caramanica
 (703) 407-3579
 jcaraman@gmu.edu
 Office hours: By Appointment Only

Textbooks

Required Texts:

- Laurel Currie Oates et al., The Legal Writing Handbook: Analysis, Research, and Writing (8th ed. 2021) (“LWH”)
- The Bluebook
- <https://coregrammarforlawyers.com> (“CGL”).

TWEN

Courses to Add:

- LRW Legal Research & Writing (071 001 - Juris Master section)

Introduction to the Course

Welcome to LRW. This semester, you will learn the fundamentals of legal research, writing, analysis, and citation. This syllabus includes a rigorous schedule of assignments to develop and practice these skills. Please review the syllabus and plan ahead to allocate sufficient time for the assignments. Also, closely review the LRW Rules because you will be bound by them. If you have any questions about the LRW Rules, please raise them with the Professor.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn the basics of legal research and writing and use these skills in a series of written projects culminating in an open research memorandum. Students will learn to research and understand statutes and case law and write predictive memoranda discussing various legal topics in connection with certain fact patterns. Students will develop an understanding of how and why legal writing differs from other forms of writing.

Course Format

Most weeks in LRW, you will attend an online lecture including class discussion and in-class exercises. Your participation in class discussion will directly affect your course grade. You will also meet with the Professor individually from time to time to discuss projects.

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Research Curriculum

There may be two (or possibly more) research weeks during the semester. Law librarians will lead the lecture on research weeks, and you will be required to complete in-class exercises (discussed in the following section).

Grading and Assignments

In accordance with the law school's grading policy, LRW is not graded on a curve. Your final grade will be based on your performance on course assignments, as well as your level of class participation and professionalism. For major writing projects, your professor will provide comments on your work, identifying mistakes and areas for improvement. The professor cannot—nor is she expected to—identify every error. **Ultimately, you are responsible for the quality of your work.**

Major writing assignments are scored on six-point grading scale, in quarter-point increments, with a 6.00 being the highest score a student can achieve. Such assignments will be graded anonymously, meaning the Professor will not know the identity of the author until after the assignment is graded. A Grading Guide generally describing the scale is available under the Rules and Course Information tab on the LRW-JM Main Page on TWEN.

Other projects are graded on a pass/fail basis or an expanded pass/fail basis. Expanded pass/fail grades include high pass, pass, low pass, and fail.

The following is a summary of the assignments and their relative weights:

Assignment	Grading	Weight	Due
Project 1: BT <i>pt 1</i>	Expanded P/F	5%	9/15 before 6pm
Project 2: BT <i>pt 2</i>	Expanded P/F	5%	9/22 before 6 pm
Project 3: Danny Rose	Expanded P/F	5%	9/29 before 6 pm
Project 4: Closed Memo <i>pt 1</i>	Expanded P/F	5%	10/20 before 6 pm
Project 5: Closed Memo <i>Final</i>	0-6	20%	10/27 before 6pm
Project 6: Open Memo <i>pt 1</i>	Expanded P/F	5%	11/3 before 6pm
Project 7: Open Memo <i>pt 2</i>	Expanded P/F	5%	11/10 before 6 pm
Project 8: Open Memo <i>Final</i>	0-6	35%	12/1 before 11:59 pm
Research Exercise(s)/Quizzes	P/F	5%	Various
Core Grammar for Lawyers Post Test (80% min score)	P/F	10%	9/10 before 6 pm

**Any other assignments will count toward participation and professionalism.*

Projects 1 –8: For Projects 1 through 8, an assignment memorandum with project instructions will be posted on TWEN or distributed in class.

Research Exercises: On the days designated in the Course Calendar, Research Exercises will be completed in class under the guidance of law librarians. Each exercise will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis, and you will receive a “pass” if you successfully complete the exercise in class. If you are absent for an in-class exercise, you must complete the exercise within two weeks of the missed class and submit it to the Research Assignment Dropbox on the LRW-JM Main Page on TWEN.

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CoreGrammarForLawyers: You must complete the pre-test by Wednesday, September 1, 2021. Complete all sections of the course and take the post-test. You must complete the course and post-test by 6 pm, Wednesday, September 15, 2021. A post test grade of at least 80% is required for the full pass credit grade of 10%. Failure to achieve at least an 80% on the post test by the deadline will result in a failing grade. You may take the post-test as many times as it takes to get the minimum 80% grade.

Quizzes: Quizzes on course material may occur throughout the semester. Missed quizzes may not be made up; however, your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Participation and Professionalism: Your level of participation and professionalism will affect your final grade: your course grade may be adjusted up or down one step (e.g., from B to B- or from B to B+) based on your professionalism and class participation throughout the semester. You should complete the reading and weekly writing assignments, and come to class prepared to complete in-class exercises. Likewise, you should come to individual meetings prepared to lead the discussion on your assignments. You should conduct yourself as a professional in all your dealings with professors, librarians, and classmates. For example, emails to the Professor requesting information available in the syllabus or elsewhere on TWEN are unprofessional and will harm your grade. Similarly, improper use of technology in class will result in a downward grade adjustment.

Technology in Class

Students should come prepared to all class sessions with a laptop (or other wifi ready device for writing), pen (or pencil), and paper. Devices may be used at the discretion of the Professor or Research Librarian, and when allowed, devices may be used only for class-related purposes.

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Course Calendar
Class Meeting Schedule and Assignments

Date	Topic	Read Before Class	Assignment
8/25 Week 1	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Course Requirements</p> <p>How to Brief a Case</p> <p>Intro. To Office Memo</p>	<p><u>LWH</u>: Ch. 1 & 2; pp 111-20.</p> <p><u>Costanza v. Seinfeld</u></p>	<p>Bring in answers to questionnaire.</p> <p>Take the Core Grammar for Lawyers (CGL) pre-test (due 9/1).</p> <p>Optional: CALI video: <u>How to Brief a Case</u></p>
9/1 Week 2	<p>Outlining a Legal Rule</p> <p>Intro. to Legal Research</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem #1</p> <p>Intro. To IRAC</p>	<p><u>LWH</u>: Chapter 3 and 4; Chapter 13.</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem #1</p>	<p>CGL coursework</p> <p>Optional: CALI video: <u>Stating Facts: Objective and Persuasive Approaches</u></p>
9/8 Week 3	<p>Class Discussion Problem #2</p> <p>Roadmap Paragraphs</p> <p>IRAC (“R”) - Rule Synthesis and Case Illustrations</p> <p>Intro. To Banana Peel Exercise</p>	<p><u>LWH</u>: Ch. 5-7; Ch. 12.</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem #2</p> <p>Project 1 Assignment Memo</p>	<p>CGL Post Test – (80% minimum score) – due Fri. 9/10 before 11:59pm</p> <p>CDP cases—outline all cases by facts/holding /rule/rationale</p> <p>Optional: CALI video: <u>Issue Statements for Memos and Briefs</u></p>
9/15 Week 4	<p>IRAC (“R”) - Rule Synthesis and Case Illustrations continued</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem #3</p>	<p><u>LWH</u>: Ch. 15.</p> <p>Class Discussion Problem #3</p> <p>Take a look at Project 2 Assignment Memo</p>	<p>P1 due Wed. 9/15 before 6pm on TWEN.</p> <p>CDP cases—Brief and outline <u>Villa Park</u> and <u>David</u>.</p> <p>Bring Banana Peel handout and synthesize rule using all supporting cases.</p>

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Date	Topic	Read Before Class	Assignment
9/22 Week 5	IRAC: Application (“A”) and Conclusion (“C”) <p>Intro. To Citations</p>	<u>LWH</u> : Ch. 14, review Ch. 13 and 15. <p>Take a look at Project 3 Assignment Memo</p>	P2 due Wed. 9/22 before 6pm on TWEN
9/29 Week 6	Citations <p>Class Discussion Problem #4</p>	<u>LWH</u> : Ch. 8-10; Review Ch. 3-6 <p>Class Discussion Problem #4</p>	P3 due Wed. 9/29 before 6pm on TWEN <p>CALI video: Learning Legal Analysis Through Its Components: Issue, Rule, Application, Conclusion? IRAC</p>
10/6 Week 7	Class Discussion Problem #4 continued <p>Discuss Project 3</p> <p>Intro. to Project 4/Closed Memo Series</p>	<u>LWH</u> : Ch 17; Review Ch 14-16 <p>Take a look at Project 4 Assignment Memo</p>	Register for Anonymous Grading Numbers
10/13 Week 8	Review (if time) <p>Individual Meetings (Project 3 comments and Project 4)</p> <p>In-class work on Project 4.</p>	<u>LWH</u> : Read Ch. 18; Review Ch 15 and 17.	
10/20 Week 9	Intro to Research, pt. 1	<u>LWH</u> : Review Chs. 3-6, and 8-10. <p>Take a look at Project 5 Assignment Memo.</p>	P4 due Wed. 10/20 before 6pm on TWEN. <p>Research Exercise, due via email TBD</p>

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Date	Topic	Read Before Class	Assignment
10/27 Week 10	Intro to Research, pt. 2	Take a look at Project 6 Assignment Memo.	P5 due Wed. 10/27 before 6pm on TWEN. Research Exercise, due via email TBD
11/3 Week 11	Individual Meetings (Project 6) In-class work on Project 7.	Review and bring Project 7 materials to class. Be prepared to begin draft of Project 7 in class.	P6 due Wed. 11/3 before 6pm on TWEN.
11/10 Week 12	Individual Meetings (Project 7) In-class work on Project 8.	Review and bring Project 8 materials to class. Be prepared to begin draft of Project 8 in class.	P7 due Wed. 11/10 before 6pm on TWEN.
11/17 Week 13	Discuss Project 8 Review Exam Essay Writing	Review and bring Project 8 materials to class.	P8 due Mon. 12/1 before 11:59pm on TWEN.

LRW Rules

Scope of the Rules

These Rules apply to all students and assignments in LRW I: Introduction to Legal Research, Writing, and Analysis (“Course”).

Rule 1. Course Attendance, Participation, and Minimum Requirement

1.1 Course Attendance. The Professor will take attendance in every class. In addition, each student is responsible for maintaining his or her own attendance record. Pursuant to Academic Regulation 4-1, any student missing more than 20% of the class sessions will not receive credit for the Course. A single class session includes **both** group lecture and any small group session following group lecture; **missing either will therefore count as an absence from a class session.** Any mandatory individual writing conferences count as one-half of a class session. A student who is not present for more than 75% of the class session is deemed to be absent from that class session.

Excessive Absences. A student who believes that he or she may miss more than 20% of the class sessions should immediately notify Shaun Sutherell, Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives and Christine Malone, Assistant Dean, Student Academic Affairs.

1.2 TWEN Postings and Email. Students must check TWEN regularly for updates to the Course syllabus or assignments. Students must also check their student email account each day.

1.3 Class Participation and Professionalism. Students must interact with the Professor, library staff, and fellow students in a professional manner. Professionalism requires that students be prepared for and engaged in class.

1.4 Minimum Requirement. Any student who receives a “0” on 50% or more of the required coursework as determined by weighted percentage will receive an “F” for the Course. Satisfying the minimum requirement does not, however, guarantee a passing grade.

Rule 2. Individual Work and Sources of Assistance with Assignments

2.1 Restrictions on Assistance, Discussion, and Collaboration. Except as expressly provided below, students may not seek, receive, or provide assistance on any assignment. Outside of class, students may not discuss the substantive content of Course assignments, nor may students review each other’s written work for this Course during the semester. Because later assignments build on earlier assignments, this prohibition applies to drafts as well as final or graded assignments.

2.2 Permitted Assistance. Students may seek assistance with Course assignments from the Professor, law librarians, and the Writing Center.

2.3 Permitted Classroom Discussion, Collaboration, and Peer Review. Students are permitted to

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engage in collaborative discussion and exercises when specifically directed by their Professor. The Professor may distribute student work in class or post student work for instructional purposes, including critique and analysis. Students may also be asked to exchange work in class for peer review exercises. Students should discuss fellow students' work in a professional and respectful manner.

- 2.4 **Consequence(s) of Violation(s).** Students who violate these rules may receive a "0" for the assignment(s) involved, an "F" for the final grade in the Course, a referral to the Honor Committee, or any combination of these penalties.

Rule 3. Plagiarism

3.1 **Plagiarism.** A student must provide proper attribution when using the words or ideas of another person. Students must use quotation marks when using another writer's exact wording or when only slightly altering another writer's wording. Carelessness or lack of intent does not excuse plagiarism.

- 3.2 **Consequence(s) of Violation(s).** Students who violate this rule may receive a "0" for the assignment(s) involved, an "F" for the final grade in the Course, a referral to the Honor Committee, or any combination of these penalties.

Rule 4. Submission of Projects and Assignments

4.1 **Due Dates and Times.** Projects, exercises, and other assignments are due as provided in the Course Calendar, syllabus, and assignment memoranda. **Late submissions will receive a "0."**

4.2 **Project Submission.** Students must follow the submission instructions outlined in the assignment memorandum or provided by the Professor.

4.3 **Electronic Submissions.** All projects that require electronic submission must be submitted via TWEN. Students should access their Professor's Page on TWEN and click "Assignments & Quizzes" on the navigation pane. Before electronically submitting, students should ensure that they have attached the correct document. Resubmissions will not be allowed.

Because there may be a time delay on TWEN during periods of high demand, students should begin to submit the project at least fifteen minutes before the deadline to ensure timely submission. The clock on the TWEN submission page will determine the time of the submission. **Students assume the risk of a late submission by waiting to submit a project until the final minutes before a deadline.**

Upon electronic submission, the student will receive a confirmation email that contains the date and time of submission and an attachment with a copy of the document submitted. Students must retain a copy of the confirmation email, and **students must view the attachment to be sure that the project successfully uploaded to TWEN.** These materials will be required if the student has any submission issue or question regarding timely submission of any project.

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In the unlikely event that TWEN does not accept a submission, a student may email the project to the Professor at jcaraman@gmu.edu. The time and date of receipt of the email will determine the timeliness of the submission. In the event of an email submission, the Professor may consult with Westlaw to determine when submissions were attempted via TWEN, and any email submission may be rejected if the student did not first attempt submission via TWEN.

- 4.4 **Hard Copies.** Projects requiring hard-copy submission must be placed in the Professor's mailbox in Hazel Hall. Students must follow the instructions regarding hard-copy submissions and must submit **exactly** the same product that was submitted on TWEN. Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to penalties, including deductions, referral to the Honor Committee, or both.
- 4.5 **Deadline Extensions.** Only the Professor may grant an extension of an assignment deadline. Extensions will be granted rarely and only for circumstances entirely beyond the control of the student. Students seeking an extension must (1) inform the Professor of the emergency before the due date and time for the assignment if possible, (2) provide a written request to the Professor as soon as practicable, and (3) provide documentation. Extensions will not be granted for computer malfunctions, internet service disruptions, or other technological issues.

Rule 5. Format

5.1 **Formatting Requirements.** Unless specifically directed otherwise, all assignments must be:

- In Word format, when submitted electronically through TWEN;
- Formatted on 8-1/2" x 11" unruled white paper with 1-inch margins;
- Typed, using black Times New Roman 12-point font (including footnotes and page numbers);
- Left aligned, with indentation to indicate the beginning of a paragraph;
- Page-numbered, with only the typed page number, which should be centered at the bottom of the page;
- Double-spaced, with no extra spacing between paragraphs or sections *except* (1) extra space must be added to avoid stranding a heading at the bottom of a page, and (2) footnotes, block quotations, multi-line section headings, and the "To" and "Re" lines in the main heading must be single-spaced;
- In compliance with the page limit, if stated;
- Stapled in the upper left-hand corner, when submitted in hard copy;
- For office memoranda or portions of office memoranda, in compliance with LRW Rule 6;
- For anonymous-graded assignments, "signed" with the student's BGN only, unless otherwise directed by the Professor. Use of an incorrect BGN or one's name anywhere in the file name or the document is a format violation.

5.2 **Special Formatting Instructions.** Special formatting instructions, different from or in addition to those specified above, may apply to a Course assignment. Whenever students are expected to follow special formatting rules, students will be informed of such expectations in writing.

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5.3 Penalties for Non-Compliance. Formatting will be part of the grade for each project. Failure to comply with any formatting rule on an assignment graded on the 0 to 6 scale will result in a deduction from the final grade for the assignment of one-third (0.33) point per violation, not to exceed a cumulative one-point deduction on any given project.

Rule 6. Memorandum Heading and Signature for Projects

Office memoranda and portions of office memoranda must have the following heading:

MEMORANDUM

To: [INSERT Name of Professor]

From: [INSERT Anonymous Grading Number or Name, as appropriate]

Date: [INSERT Assignment Due Date]

Re: [INSERT Subject]

[INSERT body of memorandum]

Rule 7. Document Retention

7.1 Retention Requirements. Students must retain one ungraded copy of every assignment submitted and the graded copy returned from their Professor until all grades for the Course are available from the Registrar. The student must also retain the TWEN email confirmation indicating the date and time of submission, as well as the attachment to the confirmation email.

7.2 Retained Documents for Grade Appeals. Any student wishing to appeal a final grade must retain and make available to the Professor the ungraded copies, the email confirmations and attachments, and the graded copies of all assignments submitted by the student for the Course.