

Lawyering Skills and Strategies – Fall 2023

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Office Hours: To Be Announced

Course Objectives: Day in and day out, lawyers wield words like weapons. They do so primarily in written form – not oral. In this class we will focus on improving your legal writing skills. This will serve you well as you prepare to write law school exams; create a writing sample to obtain summer employment; and, ultimately, begin legal practice.

This semester, expect to master the following course objectives:

1. Understand the sources, hierarchy, and precedential value of laws.
2. Distinguish different types of legal rules, dissect legal rules into their basic components, and synthesize a unified rule of law from disparate sources.
3. Conduct client intake and identify issues applicable to the client's case.
4. Effectively execute online legal research and select appropriate authority to address issues in the client's case.
5. Understand and apply case precedent to the client's case.
6. Understand and apply enacted law to the client's case.
7. Translate legal research and analysis into objective writing that is organized effectively; conveys all relevant and required substance clearly and concisely; and omits extraneous matters.
8. Understand and apply legal citation proficiently using *Bluebook* and *Greenbook* citation formats.
9. Master grammar and punctuation commonly used in legal documents, and basic tenants of legal style.
10. Understand the nexus between substantive law, procedure, legal skills, and ethics.

Course Materials: To be Announced – check UHLC website in late July.

Grading | Honor Code | Late Submissions: The purpose of this course is to teach you to use doctrinal law in a practical setting. Accordingly, I will calculate your grade based on written work product produced in response to assignments that mimic tasks you will encounter in practice. I will also test you on citation skills and your mastery of legal grammar. Your grade will be determined based on your performance of the following tasks:

| Assignment | Final Grade | Due Date |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|
| Citation, Grammar, and Research Exercises; Periodic Writing & Peer Editing Assessments | 10% (completion grade) | <i>Passim</i> |
| IRAC, Research & Citation Assessment | 20% | TBD |
| Legal Memorandum Final Draft | 50% | TBD. |
| Client Email | 20% | TBD |

This course is graded anonymously. The UHLC Honor Code will apply to each assignment. Among other things, this means that you may NOT work together on any assignments for this class unless otherwise instructed by me. You may not plagiarize another's work. And you may not share your own work with another student. For more information about the UHLC Honor Code, please consult the code itself, [available at this link](#). If you are ill or otherwise unable to turn in an assignment on time, please request an extension, in writing, before the assignment's due date. Assignments turned in late without a prior extension will result in a grade reduction.

Attendance Policy | Class Administration: This class will meet in person. If necessary and classroom technology permits, you may attend this class virtually up to four times this semester. Consult Blackboard for the

proper Microsoft Teams Link. Be prepared to discuss the lecture material that I assign for each day of class. I will call on you at random. If you will not be prepared for class, please email me before class to let me know.

Legal Writing Center: An excellent resource for free individual tutoring during the regular semester is the Legal Writing Center. The Center is staffed with successful second- and third-year law students – our “Writing Fellows” – who can help you with legal writing and other academic concerns.

With regard to graded assignments, each professor has different rules about how much assistance the Legal Writing Center may offer. Before approaching the Writing Center, be sure to confirm with your professor a) that you make seek assistance, and b) what type of assistance will be available to you.

Ask a question or schedule an appointment with a Legal Writing Fellow by emailing C_Law_Legal_Writing_Center@Central.UH.EDU.

Contact Information | Open-Door Policy: I enjoy meeting with students outside of class and consider it an important part of my job. Please do not hesitate to come by and see me to discuss LSS, your career plans, your course schedule, or whatever is on your mind. I schedule office hours with an online booking system you can access through our Blackboard course but, if you need to contact me, please email me at kbrem@central.uh.edu.

Inclusion:

- **Preferred Pronouns.** I want to address each of you in a manner that corresponds to your identity. Feel free to reach out to me at any time if you want to make me aware of your chosen name or preferred pronouns, or if you have concerns about how your classmates or I address you.
- **Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids:** The University of Houston complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for disabled students. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, UH strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact [the Justin Dart Jr. Student Accessibility Center](#) (formerly the Justin Dart, Jr. Center for Students with DisABILITIES) and Samantha Ary, Academic Records Coordinator at the Law Center. Ms. Ary’s office is in the Office of Student Services suite. She can be reached at sary@central.uh.edu or (713) 743-7466. Requests for accommodation that involve graded assignments should be directed to Ms. Ary as soon as possible to allow adequate time to process the request.

University Syllabus Provisions:

- **Wellness Resources:** The University of Houston offers Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) to help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service available at convenient locations and hours around campus: www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html.
- The Texas Lawyers’ Assistance Program (TLAP) also supports law students who are dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and other mental health problems. You can reach TLAP at any time at 1-800-343-8527. TLAP’s website includes a page with links to resources about mental health that are of interest to law students: www.tlahelps.org/law-students. Check it out!
- **Class Recordings:** I will record classes and post links to these recordings on the class web course as soon as they are available. You may use these recordings for your own studying and notetaking purposes, but please do not share them with anyone without my prior written permission. University procedures require that your failure to comply with these requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

- **COVID-19:** If you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms that are not clearly related to a pre-existing medical condition, do not come to class. Please see [Student Protocols](#) for what to do if you experience symptoms and [Potential Exposure to Coronavirus](#) for what to do if you have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Students are encouraged to visit the University's [COVID-19](#) website for important information including diagnosis and symptom protocols, on-campus testing, and vaccine information. Please check the website throughout the semester for updates.
- **Vaccinations:** Data suggests that vaccination remains the best intervention for reliable protection against COVID-19. Students are asked to familiarize themselves with pertinent [vaccine information](#) and to consult with their health care provider. The University strongly encourages all students, faculty and staff to be vaccinated.

Syllabus: Please consult the course syllabus I will provide on the first day of class for reading assignments and assessment deadlines. Please complete all reading assignments *before* coming to class.

Depending on the needs of the class, this syllabus may change as the semester progresses. I will notify you of any changes to the syllabus in writing, by email, using your UH email address. Please check it regularly.

Professor Brem