Lawyering Skills & Strategies II
Spring 2026

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1.   Overview and Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn the basic workings of the American legal system; how to analyze and apply legal sources; and other skills you need to succeed in law school and beyond, with a strong focus on research and writing. To accomplish these goals, you will draft documents; work through legal problems inside and outside the classroom; review texts about effective writing; and engage in simulation exercises. More specifically, the course objectives for LSS (which is a two semester course) include:

1	Understanding the sources, hierarchy, and precedential value of laws.
2	Ability to distinguish different types of legal rules, to dissect legal rules into their basic components, and to synthesize a unified rule of law from disparate sources.
3	Proficiency in identifying issues applicable to the client's case.
4	Effective execution of on-line legal research and selection of authority to address issues in the client's case.
5	Proficiency in understanding and applying case precedent to the client's case.
6	Proficiency in understanding and applying enacted law to the client's case.
7	Ability to translate legal research and analysis into an objective writing that is organized effectively, conveys all relevant and required substance clearly and concisely, and omits extraneous matters.
8	Ability to translate legal research and analysis into a persuasive writing that is organized effectively; conveys all relevant and required substance clearly, concisely, and strategically; and omits extraneous matters.
9	Exposure to the considerations underlying contract negotiation and drafting to address the client's needs effectively.

10	Introduction to the general principles for legal citation, proficiency in *Bluebook* citation for cases and statutes, and proficiency in *Greenbook* citation for cases.
11	Proficiency in using correct grammar and punctuation regardless of the document or communication drafted.
12	Awareness of how the topics discussed and assignments given in the course fit into the practice of law.
13	Awareness of ethical and professional issues in practice.

2.   **Course Materials**

Our class will be managed using Canvas, which you can find through AccessUH.

The following textbooks are required for the course:

- *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (21st. ed. 2020)

- *The Greenbook, Texas Rules of Form* (16th ed.)

I recommend the following additional materials as <u>optional</u> resources:

- *Texas Law Review Manual on Usage & Style* (14th ed. 2020)

- *The Elements of Style: Simplified and Illustrated for Busy People*, William Strunk, Jr. & Virginia Campbell, available on Amazon

- *Core Grammar for Lawyers*, available at www.coregrammarforlawyers.com

3.   **Assignments and Grading**

The following assignments constitute the baseline for your grade for this course, subject to adjustments identified in this information sheet:

- **Contract – 25%**
- **In-Class Assessment – 15%**
- **Motion for Summary Judgment First Draft – 15%**
- **Motion for Summary Judgment – 35%**

▪ **Professionalism – 10%** (negotiations, oral argument, Procertas, ICW, and MPT). As future attorneys, I expect you to demonstrate professionalism in this class. This means coming to class and to meetings with me on time and prepared, participating in class discussions, staying on task we are using laptops, making a good faith effort on ungraded assignments, and showing respect for me and other students during class and in any email or other communications. In addition, an important part of your professionalism grade will be timely completion of and *making a good faith effort on* any exercises I ask you to do. Unexcused failure in any regard will result in a loss of professionalism points.

If a graded assignment is not turned in by the deadline, I may deduct 10% of your total points during each hour that your assignment is late, starting with the first hour. So, if your assignment is due at 10 am on a given day, I may deduct 10% if you submit it at 10:05 am on the due date, 20% if you submit it at 11:05 am, etc.

If you are unable to complete a graded assignment by the deadline, you must contact me ***before*** the due date to seek an extension. If any deadlines present major difficulties for multiple students because of proximity to midterm exams or similar academic obligations, please inform me as soon as you become aware of the problem. The sooner you let me know, the more likely it is that we can work out a fair solution.

UHLC uses an anonymous grading system to ensure fairness in grading. Your name should not appear anywhere on the graded assignments, and you must remove personal metadata from your assignments in accordance with the instructions provided below. You should not give me your exam number, and you should take care to avoid providing information on graded assignments that may identify you. I reserve the right to deduct points from a graded assignment if you fail to abide by instructions that are intended to safeguard anonymity, including those regarding extension requests.

Curve, Grade Distribution, and Honor Code:

This course is subject to a mandatory grading curve. The average grade in each section must be between 3.2 and 3.4.

The course is also subject to the mandatory First Year Grade Distribution:

    A or A-: 5% to 30%
    B+ or B or B-: 50% to 90%
    C+ or below: 5% to 20%

The UHLC Honor Code applies to this class. http://www.law.uh.edu/student/HONOR-CODE-AND-PROCEDURES.pdf. Students are responsible for knowing its provisions and complying with them. Please direct any questions regarding the Honor Code's applications to specific activities to me.

Formatting Requirements:

Unless instructed otherwise, all assignments must conform to these specifications:

- Use Times New Roman, 12-point type, on white letter-size paper.
- Double-space each assignment, except for headings.
- Use one-inch margins on all sides.
- Place page numbers in the bottom center of each page.
- Adhere to any other instructions provided for an assignment.

Remove Metadata:

To safeguard anonymity, you must scrub each graded assignment of metadata that could identify you by taking the following steps immediately before submitting it:

- Under "File" (typically at the top left of your screen when you are in Word), click the "Check for Issues" box.
- Click "Inspect Document."
- Click "Yes" when asked if you want to save changes.
- Click "Inspect."
- If the inspection reveals that data were found under "Document Properties and Personal Information" (it probably will), click "Remove All."

4. <u>Class Meetings and Office Hours</u>

This class will be in person, face-to-face. Class will meet each week during the semester for one hour on Tuesday and one hour on Thursday in Room 207.

You are expected to be prepared to discuss the material that I assign for each day of class. I will call on you at random. If you will not be prepared for class, I ask that you let me know by e-mail before class.

Office hours will be held on Tuesdays at 3:00 pm in person and on Fridays at 1:00 pm via Zoom.

<u>Recording of Class</u>

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center](). If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

5.   Honor Code and AI Generated Text

The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. **You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code.** Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

Generative artificial intelligence is a form of machine learning that creates new and original output based on the data it has been trained on or has access to, employing algorithms to generate content in response to prompts. Examples of the technology include what are known as generative "large language models" (LLMs). Two well-known LLM implementations are ChatGPT and Claude. LLM output can include text, images, music, code, and more. This syllabus policy covers the textual output of generative LLMs (AIGenerated Work Product)—which can include computer code or programs and human-language content. Because AIGenerated Work Product can often mimic human intelligence, it could potentially be used as a substitute for a student's own work product. Such use is potentially problematic to the extent that it becomes a substitute for internalized student understanding of the material or creates a dependency on AI-Generated Work Product, which may be strictly prohibited in settings that include the bar examination.

Subject to the exceptions immediately below, your continuing enrollment in this course constitutes your pledge not to generate or to use any AI-Generated Work Product—whether from yourself or others—in relation to any assessment in this course. The term "assessment" means any graded or ungraded work product for this course that is submitted to the instructor, presented in a class session, or used in an oral or written graded assessment for this course.

The following AI-Generated Work Product uses are exceptions to the preceding prohibition. The exceptions' intent is to allow the generation and use of AI-Generated Work Product for specific, narrowly defined activities related to this course.

- You may generate and use AI-Generated Work Product for class preparation, although you must disclose the full extent of that use if your instructor asks. You may generate and use AI-Generated Work Product for study supplements to aid with general understanding of course content. This could take different forms that include creating examples or explanations of a concept, generation of diagrams and flow charts, "gamification" of course content, flash cards for study, or sample questions and answers.

- You may generate and use AI-Generated Work Product for an outline that summarizes the course content.

- You may use AI-Generated Work Product to check your originally drafted text for misspellings, grammar and punctuation errors, strength and clarity of prose, verbosity, effective transitional language and thesis sentences, word choice, excessive passive voice, and like things.

- You may use AI-Generated Work Product for the purpose of language translation.

6.   Laptops and Electronic Devices

Consistent with UHLC's computer use policy, improper use of a computer during class (including, but not limited to, composing, sending, or reading emails; instant messaging; searching or browsing the Internet; playing games; and/or viewing movies) may result in dismissal from the class session or a reduction in your final grade. Unless you are instructed otherwise, please turn off cell phones and similar devices. *See* http://www.law.uh.edu/jd/current/handbook.pdf

The University of Houston is committed to student success and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Blackboard; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

7.   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).

8.   Chosen Names and Preferred Pronouns

I want to address each of you in a manner that corresponds to your identity. Although mistakes happen, chosen names and preferred pronouns—including non-binary ones such as they / them / their—must be respected in my classroom. Feel free to reach out to me at any time if you want to make me aware of your chosen name or preferred pronoun, or if you have concerns about how your classmates or I address you.

9.   Counseling and Psychological Services

Counseling and psychological services (CAPS) is available to help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. www.uh.edu/caps. You can reach 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 needed for the "Let's Talk" program, a drop-in consultation service held at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://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 sources about mental health that are of interest to law students: https://www.tlaphelps.org/law-students.

10. **Student Health and Safety**

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a "responsible employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/.

Security Escorts and Cougar Ride

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. Our Security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety please call 713-743-3333. Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called Cougar Ride that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/.

Other Helpful Information

Coogs Care: https://uh.edu/dsa/coogscare/

Student Health Center: https://www.uh.edu/healthcenter/ https://www.uh.edu/healthcenter/