

Legal Methods January 2026

Office Hours: By Appointment
Class Room: See course description page
Class Webpage: Canvas

Course Objective:

This course will focus on developing skills necessary to be successful in law school. The course will provide instruction, as well as opportunities to practice and hone the skills taught, so that students will be adequately prepared to draft legal writing exercises and law school final exams.

Goals:

- To teach systematic case briefing skills to enable students to successfully prepare for class each day
- To teach essay writing skills to enable students to write high-scoring essays, as well as writing for an objective MPT
- To provide students with opportunities to self-reflect and garner a better understanding of the tools and skills necessary to successfully perform their 1L year and beyond

Class sessions:

January 12-15, 2026, daily
Daytime Sections: 9am-12:15pm, except Monday which will run from 9am-1pm
Evening Section: 6-9:15pm

Students will be required to attend one mandatory advising session during the week (the one-on-one advising session time will be set on an individual basis)

Reading Material:

None

The class materials and assignments will be provided by the professor. Please refer to the course Canvas page.

Office hours:

If you have any questions about the course, please ask me! Questions are welcome and encouraged.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, you may reach out to me. Please make an appointment if you have questions about the course or any assignments. During our appointment, we can review questions together, discuss study strategies, discuss best practices for class and exam preparation, and explore any questions, thoughts, or concerns you have about the course.

Grading:

This class is pass/fail.

To recognize the effort you put into this class from day to day, your grade will be spread across the week. Your grade will be taken, in part, from completion of assignments, an individual conference, essays, reflective pieces, and MPTs. The goal of these assignments is to give you an opportunity to engage with the material and strategies.

Part of your grade will come from rewriting your initial response, if requested.

Please note: To pass this class you are required to complete 100% of all assignments (including those assigned for completion out-of-class). The failure to complete 100%, including any requested re-writes, will result in a failing grade for the class.

Student Participation:

You are expected to discuss the assigned material in depth, so please make a commitment to be prepared. Your advanced preparation gives you the best opportunity to correctly synthesize and participate in our class discussion. Be prepared to actively engage – including completing any and all out of class assignments.

While the class is pass/fail, students with poor class participation may have their final grade dropped from passing to failing. The decision to drop a grade for participation is at our discretion and is non-negotiable. A drop in grade due to failure to participate in class can result from a combination of unpreparedness, not paying attention in class, and absences (even if you are within the twenty percent-absence limit). Note that volunteering every class does not constitute a substantial contribution—quality, not quantity matters.

Attendance:

Given the short nature of this course, 100 percent attendance in class is required. (This means this course has a no-absence policy.) I will take roll at the beginning

of class. To be counted present, you must be in attendance *for the entire, and not part*, of the class session. If/when class is occurring on Zoom, that means that you will need to be logged in throughout the class session **with the camera on**. Those individuals not satisfying the attendance requirement will be reported to UH Law Center administrative officials and may be dropped from, or fail, the course.

Computer and Phone Use:

The use of personal computers in the virtual classroom is permitted solely for the purpose of completing class assignments (i.e. note-taking, MPT, essays). Specifically excluded from in-class computer usage is anything beyond these activities, e.g., “surfing the web” and messaging. Nonparticipation and non-responsiveness in the classroom discussion attributable to diversionary uses of your personal computer or phone constitutes an absence from the class. The use of other electronics, including recording devices, is prohibited during class time. Please be sure that all noise-making devices, including cell phones, are in silent mode or powered off. Phones should be put away during class.

Your camera should be on during all class sessions that occur virtually. You are welcome to use a virtual background, provided it is school appropriate. If this is a problem, please reach out to me individually.

Instructor Evaluations:

Please feel free to provide us with feedback and comments during the course as they will help us improve this program. We will carefully consider all of the comments and suggestions that we receive.

Honor Code:

The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this class. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please ask me if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code’s provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to my course.

Failure to comply – in any respect – with the UHLC Honor Code will result in referral to the UHLC Honor Court, and may result in you failing this class and, potentially, other sanctions as determined by the UHLC Honor Court.

Of note, unless otherwise specifically instructed, all assignments are to be completed individually and you may not consult the internet, peers, or other resources not specifically included in the assignment instructions. Your work product must be exclusively your own, with help from no other person or technological system; not artificial intelligence systems may be a part of your process to generate assessment work product. It is an honor Code violation to review the graded assignments distributed to, or written by, any of my students from prior years.

Students may be asked to sign an honor code statement as part of their submission of any graded work including but not limited to projects, quizzes, and exams: *“I understand and agree to abide by the provisions in the (select: [University of Houston Undergraduate Academic Honesty Policy](#), [University of Houston Graduate Academic Honesty Policy](#)). I understand that academic honesty is taken very seriously and, in the cases of violations, penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the University of Houston.”*

Prohibited Use of Artificial Intelligence:

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text and other work product (AI Generated Work Product). Examples of the technology include what are known as “generative” large language models (LLMs), and a specific implementation that is well known to the general public is ChatGPT. These systems can generate text and other work product in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI Generated Work Product, appears to have human-mimicking “intelligence” and is thus potentially useable as a substitute for material one might generate themselves. AI Generated Work Product can include computer code or programs as well as human language content and materials.

Your continuing enrollment in this course obligates you to not knowingly prompt, generate, or use any AI Generated Work Product in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Work Product from yourself or others. This obligation includes that your assessment materials in the course be without any contribution from AI Generated Work Product. This obligation specifically extends to not plagiarize any writing required of you for assessment in this course. AI Generated Work Product will be treated as from another/others in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any material generated for this course that is submitted to the instructor or presented in a class session, regardless whether it is graded content or not. Assessments include midterms, interim assignments, and final exams. AI Generated Work Product may not be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non-proctored environment, such as a “take-home” final examination.

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).

Computer and Phone Use, Prohibited Recording:

The use of personal computers in the classroom is permitted solely for the purpose of completing class assignments. Specifically excluded from in-class computer usage is anything beyond these activities, e.g., “surfing the web” and messaging. Nonparticipation and non-responsiveness in the classroom discussion attributable to diversionary uses of your personal computer or phone constitutes an absence from the class. The use of other electronics, including recording devices, is prohibited during class time. Please be sure that all noise-making devices, including cell phones, are in silent mode or powered off. Phones should be put away during class.

Your camera should be on during all class sessions that (may) occur virtually. You are welcome to use a virtual background, provided it is school appropriate. If this is a problem, please reach out to me individually.

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.

Resources for Online Learning:

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 Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Wellness:

This is an inclusive learning space.

At UHLC, we are committed to ensuring inclusive online and classroom learning spaces, where you’ll be treated with respect and dignity, and where everyone is provided the equitable opportunity to participate, to contribute, and to succeed.

In this course, all students are welcome regardless of socio-economic status, age, race, ethnicity, disability, religion, national origin, veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political affiliation, marital status, and other diverse identities that we each bring to class. Our class is richer for this diversity.

Inclusive learning spaces facilitate the innovation and creative thought that enhance student success. This success arises from the participation, support, and understanding of you and your colleagues. We encourage you to speak up and share your views, but also understand that you are doing so in a learning environment in which we're all expected to engage respectfully and with regard to the dignity of all others.

If you feel like your class performance is impacted in any way by your experiences inside or outside of class, please reach out to us. We want to be a resource for you. If you feel more comfortable speaking with someone besides us, Student Services is an excellent resource: 713.743.2182. Finally, I encourage you to bring any issues negatively impacting UHLC's openness to diversity and inclusion to the Law Center's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The D&I Committee's charge includes "[b]uilding on the Law Center's strengths as a diverse and inclusive environment." You can contact the committee directly at UHLCD&I@uh.edu.

Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of this course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policies:

UHLC and the University are committed to maintaining and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment in which students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from discrimination and sexual misconduct. If you have experienced an incident of discrimination or sexual misconduct, a confidential reporting process is available to you. For more information, please refer to the University System's Anti-Discrimination Policy SAM 01.D.07 Sexual Misconduct Policy SAM 01.D.08.

Please be aware that under the sexual misconduct policy, SAM 01.D.08, faculty and other University employees are required to report to the University any information received regarding sexual misconduct as defined in the policy. Due to this reporting requirement, faculty members and other employees are not a confidential resource. The reporting obligations under the sexual misconduct policy extends to alleged conduct by University employees and students.

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/>.

Women and Gender Resource Center:

The mission of the WGRC is to advance the University of Houston and promote the success of all students, faculty, and staff through educating, empowering, and supporting the UH community. The WGRC suite is open to you. Stop by the office for a study space, to take a break, grab a snack, or check out one of the WGRC programs or resources. Stop by Student Center South room B12 (Basement floor near Starbucks and down the hall from Creation Station) from 9 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday.

UH Email:

Please check and use your CougarNet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the CougarNet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your CougarNet email, login to your Microsoft 365 account with your CougarNet credentials. Visit University Information Technology (UIT) for instructions on how to connect your CougarNet e-mail on a mobile device.

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](tel: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/>.

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 our classroom. Please 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 I or your classmates address you.

I use the pronouns she/her. You may address me by my title, Professor.

Syllabus Changes:

Please note that the instructors may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email.

Assignment for the first day of class:

Prior to the first class, your professor will email you an initial assignment. It will be due prior to the first class meeting.

Each class, please bring something to take notes on/with and any required assignments.

Proposed Course Outline:

A separate final schedule for the week will be distributed by the instructor shortly before the beginning of the week. It will include class assignments, homework, and relevant dates of assessments. The instructor may, of course, modify it as the week progresses, to achieve course objectives.

The proposed schedule is below:

Pre-Course:

Homework:

Due by 11:59pm Sunday evening

1. Brief U.S. v. Virginia
2. Complete Questionnaire

Both assignments are available on the Canvas page, submit both on Canvas page

Monday

Class

Fundamentals of Legal Writing, Chat with the Dean (First Floor Courtroom)

Homework (due by 11:59pm, submitted on Canvas):

1. Draft CReAC (will be discussed in class)

Tuesday

Class

Revising, Self-Grading

Homework (due by 11:59pm, submitted on Canvas):

1. Revision exercise (will be discussed in class)

Wednesday

Class

Exam/Essay Writing, Exam Skills

Homework (due by 11:59pm, submitted on Canvas):

1. Draft an exam essay (will be discussed in class)

Thursday

Class

Additional Law School Skills

Homework (due by 11:59pm, submitted on Canvas):

1. Reflections (will be discussed in class)