

Lawyering Skills & Strategies
Spring 2026
Syllabus

Prof. Kenneth R. Swift

krswift@central.UH.edu

431F

6207 Lawyering Skills and Strategies - A4 - SWIFT- 12365

6207 Lawyering Skills and Strategies - B2 - SWIFT- 12204

Preliminary Syllabus

This is a preliminary syllabus. A final syllabus will be available at the start of the semester. After the semester begins, only utilize the syllabus posted on the course website.

Additional Text

We will use the same textbooks as last semester. In addition, this semester you will also need to purchase *The Greenbook: Texas Rules of Form*, 16th Edition (2025), ISBN: 9798218739997. Among other outlets, it can be purchased online here: <https://texaslawjournals.directfrompublisher.com/catalog/book/texas-rules-form-greenbook> . **Make sure to obtain the 16th edition**, which was just published this year.

Course Objectives

This semester you will continue to develop and refine the legal writing, analysis, and research skills you learned last semester. This semester you will apply those skills in the context of persuasive writing.

As we did last semester, we will continue to explore a variety of additional legal skills and forms of legal communication. Classroom sessions will again be a combination of lecture, group work, and experiential learning simulations.

Additionally, this semester we will explore contract drafting and other legal drafting skills. You will have the opportunity to edit a contract and draft a contract.

Course Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The course rules, policies, and procedures set forth in the Student Manual distributed in the Fall semester continue to apply this semester. A copy of the manual is available

on the course website. As with Fall semester, office hours will be posted on the course Canvas site and will be updated from time to time depending on assignment due dates.

Preliminary Syllabus

Course Points

Subject to change, points for the semester will be awarded as follows:

Final Trial Memorandum	30
Persuasive Analysis Quiz	20
Writing Exam	40
Citation and Research Quiz	15
Contract Drafting:	15
Participation and Effort	8

As with last semester, participation and effort points will be scaled.

Course Grade

The Law Center mandates that this course be graded on a curve between 3.2 and 3.4 with a mandatory grade level percentage distribution requirement. Your grade in this class will be based on your overall point total.

As was the case last semester, participation and effort points will be awarded for completing various course assignments such as citation exercises, Core Grammar exercises, and preliminary writing assignments to a reasonable effort standard. These points will be scaled and included in the overall point total.

Attendance

In accordance with the Law Center attendance rules, you may miss no more than 20% of scheduled classes/mandatory class activities this semester. After you have missed 20%, I will submit your name to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs with a recommendation that you be dropped from the course. Arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 15 minutes early will count as an absence for that class hour.

Office Hours

My office hours are posted in the Contact Information of the course website. Note that office hours will vary, and additional hours will be added, at different times throughout based upon where we are at in the course.

Honor Code

The Honor Code applies to this class. You are responsible for complying with the Honor Code and for knowing its provisions. If you have questions about a certain activity, please ask me. Additionally, the course rules in the Student Manual, distributed at the start of the first semester and posted on the course website, apply to this semester.

Legal Writing Center

All UHLC students may obtain free individual tutoring at the Legal Writing Center, located in the library. Several outstanding third-year law students staff the Legal Writing Center. On all ungraded assignments, the tutors will answer your questions on legal writing, research, and citation. They also will be able to help you with basic grammar skills, proper English usage, and sentence/paragraph construction. You may schedule appointments with the Writing Center tutors by calling 713-743-0759 or emailing C_LawLegalWritingCenter@central.uh.edu. Walk-ins are also welcome.

Additional Support and University Required Language

Legal Writing Center

All UHLC students may obtain free individual tutoring at the Legal Writing Center, located in the library. Several outstanding third-year law students, known as Legal Writing Fellows, staff the Legal Writing Center. On all ungraded assignments, the tutors will answer your questions on legal writing, research, and citation. They also will be able to help you with basic grammar skills, proper English usage, and sentence/paragraph construction. You may schedule appointments with the Writing Center tutors by calling 713-743-0759 or emailing C_LawLegalWritingCenter@central.uh.edu. Walk-ins are welcome and the Writing Fellows are available virtually.

Mode of Presentation (University required designation)

(FF) Face to Face. *For this instruction mode, instructors and students are expected to normally be physically present in the classroom. If the course has a final examination, it will be in a classroom requiring your physical presence. Other assessment, such as a mid-term exam, may also be in a classroom.*

Names and 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 course. 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 any concerns about how I or your classmates address you.

UH Required Syllabus Elements

CAPS

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can 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 at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html

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Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students’ mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let’s Talk location in-person or virtually. Let’s Talk are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now? - If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is

available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat 988lifeline.org.

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/>. Please be aware that under the sexual misconduct policy, SAM 01.D.08, faculty are required to report to the University any information received regarding sexual misconduct as defined in the policy. Please note that the reporting obligations under the sexual misconduct policy reach to employees and students. ***Also, as a required reporting party, I am not a confidential resource.***

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

Recording of Class (University required language)

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 Center for Students with DisABILITIES. 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; 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.

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](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/>.

Syllabus Changes

Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email.

Helpful Information

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

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

Law Center Required Syllabus Elements

Honor Code

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. *It is an Honor Code violation to review the graded assignments distributed to, or written by, any of my students from prior years.*

AI Generated Text

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

Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to not prompt, generate, obtain, read, or use any AI Generated Text in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Text from yourself or others. This pledge includes that your assessment work product in the course is without any contribution from AI Generated Text. This specifically extends to the plagiarism policy and unauthorized aid/materials parts of the Honor Code: AI Generated Text will be treated as from another/other in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any work product 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 mid-terms and final exams. AI Generated Text 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 unless specified as an exception below. The parts of the Honor Code that refer to unauthorized materials or aid are specifically prohibited from any use of AI Generated Text in this course unless specified as an exception below.

Syllabus

Course Texts and Abbreviations:

From Last Semester:

George W. Kuney & Donna C. Looper, *Mastering Legal Analysis and Drafting* (2009) Carolina Academic Press ISBN: 978-1-59460-628-1 ("Kuney")

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (Columbia Law Review Ass'n et al. eds., 22nd ed. 2025), ISBN: 979-8-218-57457-4.

Amy E. Sloan, *Researching the Law: Finding What You Need When You Need It* (2017) Wolters Kluwer Law & Business ISBN: 9781454886495 ("Sloan") (Note: online supplement not required)

Tracy L McGaugh & Christine Hurt, *Interactive Citation Workbook for The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (2020-21 Edition) ("Interactive")

New This Semester:

The Greenbook: Texas Rules of Form, 16th Edition (2025), ISBN: 9798218739997.

Among other outlets, it can be purchased online here:

<https://texaslawjournals.directfrompublisher.com/catalog/book/texas-rules-form-greenbook> . **Make sure to obtain the 16th edition**, which was just published this year.

Weeks One and Two

Unless otherwise noted, asynchronous units are due by 6 p.m. on Thursday, January 29.

Note: This checklist covers the classes in both the weeks of 1/19 and 1/26.

Week of 1/19

Reading:

None

Class Topics:

- Semester overview and course progression
- Introduction to drafting
- Introduction to advocacy
- Review of fall semester items

Week of 1/26

Reading:

Kuney, Ch. 5, pp. 87-107 (suggested review; assigned first semester)

Class Topics:

- Review of written legal analysis structure
- Bluebook Review

Notes and Due Dates:

- You will need your Bluebook for class.

Asynchronous Units Checklist

None

Core Grammar: The Core Grammar exercises may be completed at any time up to the due dates below.

Exercises B (1-4), C (1-2): **2/12**

Exercises C (3-4), E (1-4): **2/26**

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