

 **HAMLIN UNIVERSITY**
School of Law
COURSE SYLLABUS

Faculty: **Professor Karen Westwood**

Course: **Advanced Legal Research**

Semester: **Fall 2013**

Meeting Schedule:

Room:

Textbook	Primary Text	Primary Text	Recommended not required
Author			
Title and edition of text			
Publisher/year			
ISBN			

Learning Outcomes for the Course: Students completing this course will have a solid foundation for researching online and in print for caselaw, statutes and regulatory material. They will develop a framework for understanding the arrangement of legal information and will practices skills in searching and reporting results.

Course Expectations: Each class session will include at least one hour of hands on “lab time” so regular attendance is critical. Students will report their research results in a number of ways they might encounter in practice – via email, formal written memo, oral report, client letter, etc.

HUSL Policies on attendance, lateness and preparation

The program of instruction at the School of Law is based on an active and informed exchange between instructor and student and between student and student. Regular, prepared class attendance helps develop skills essential to the competent

practice of law. A student who violates the attendance policy, including the instructor's specification of class expectation described below, may lose his or her right to take the exam in the course, to receive course credit or may receive other penalties described below and in Academic Rule 108. Persistent or frequent lateness or unpreparedness may also be the basis for reduction of the grade awarded in a course. See Academic Rule 108 for further details.

Attendance Policies in this Course: See above.

Punctuality/Preparation Policies in this Course: Weekly readings and assignments will be posted on "Web Courses" via Lexis. Students should check in regularly for readings and assignments.

Policy on Laptop Use in Class: Students should bring a laptop to class.

Other Classroom Policies:

Grading Components

Final examination: No Final Exam

Date/Time:

Requirements:

Component(s) of your grade:

Mid-term exam or quizzes: No

Midterm Exam

Dates/Times:

Requirements:

Component(s) of your grade:

Written Assignments:

Dates/Times: Weekly

Requirements: Late assignments will not receive full credit.

Component(s) of your grade:

Oral Presentation(s)

Dates/Times: One oral presentation to Professor

will be required

Requirements:

Component(s) of your grade:

Participation/Other Grade

Components

Requirements: Participation is required both online and in person in this class.

Component(s) of your grade

Reading assignments:

Aug. 18 – Topic: Intro. To Course, Sources of Law

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify the written law produced by different government entities

Readings and Class Preparation:

1. Readings posted on Lexis Web Course website

In-Class Exercise: Discussion Board Exercise “Ripped From the Headlines”

Aug. 25 – Topic: Research Trails, How to Evaluate Sources

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to create a research trail that can be followed by another attorney, professor, etc.;
2. Students will be able to perform a meaningful review of websites.

Readings and Class Preparation:

1. CALI Exercise on Evaluating Sources
2. Create research trail for assigned question
3. Readings posted on Lexis Web Course website

In-Class Exercise: Pair up and try to recreate your partner’s research, based on the trail; in-class evaluation

Sept. 1 – Labor Day Weekend

Sept. 8 – Topic: Caselaw Research

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to locate cases by citation or subject, on WestLawNext, LexisAdvance, and Bloomberg Law;
2. Students will be able to locate cases using free or low-cost websites;
3. Students will be able to Keycite/Shepardize cases and understand the results;

4. Students will gain facility with West's Key Number system and understand its value

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Sept. 15 – Topic: Caselaw Research – Part II

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will learn how to locate case briefs in multiple formats;
2. Students will use Minnesota and Federal docketing systems to retrieve docket information;
3. Students will be introduced to eFiling in Minnesota and in the Federal system

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Sept. 22 – Topic: State Statutes and Legislative History

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to locate statutes by citation or subject, in print and online;
2. Students will be able to perform legislative history on a Minnesota Statute; and as part of that determine whether they will need to visit LRL, the Minnesota Historical Society, or other location

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Sept. 29 – Topic: Federal Statutes and Legislative History

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to locate Federal statutes by citation or subject, in print and online;
2. Students will be able to perform legislative history on a Federal Statute; and as part of that determine whether their information is online, available in fiche, or in print.

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Oct. 6 - Topic: Administrative Law: Federal

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to locate administrative law in the Federal Register and CFR, by citation and by subject;
2. Students will be able to articulate the process of rulemaking to the degree necessary to locate information on a given rule

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Oct. 13 – Topic: Administrative Law: State

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to locate administrative law in the State Register and Minnesota Rules, by citation and by subject;
2. Students will be able to articulate the process of rulemaking to the degree necessary to locate information on a given rule

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Oct. 20 – Fall Break

Oct. 27 – Topic: Practice Materials

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will understand the role of practice materials in legal practice;
2. Students will evaluate a variety of CLE materials;
3. Students will search through practice materials to find forms.

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Nov. 3 – Topic: Business Research

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will learn about the major types of business research attorneys are called on to perform,
2. Students will learn how to research in a non-legal area and develop strategies for researching that material.

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Nov. 10 – Topic: Tax Research

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will gain a broad overview of specialized tax legal research products
2. Students will gain the skill of how to research in an unfamiliar area (how to find and use legal research guides and specialized legal research texts)

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: TBD

Nov. 17 – Topic: Putting it All Together

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will employ multiple skills they've learned during the semester;
2. Students will prioritize research requests and employ efficient research techniques

Readings and Class Preparation: Readings posted on Lexis Web Course

In-Class Exercise: Mock Practice Exercise and Debriefing