

LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING

Weekday Program

Legal Research Syllabus, Fall 2008—All Weekday LRW Instructors

Introduction

The Legal Research and Writing (LRW) course in the Weekday program has two components: the full-year writing classes taught by the Legal Writing Department faculty, and the fall semester research labs taught by student teaching assistants (TAs) under the supervision of the department faculty and by research librarian guest lecturers. This syllabus addresses the basic requirements and the weekly sequence of classes, readings, and assignments for the research lab component of the LRW course. All the students in the Weekday LRW course will be using this syllabus for their research lab work. Writing class syllabi will vary, however, according to the Legal Writing Instructor teaching the writing class. Please check the writing syllabus for your particular Legal Writing Instructor for detailed information about your writing class. Note that your work in the research lab, like your work in the writing class, is subject to the provisions of the Weekday Program *Legal Research and Writing Student Manual*, including the *Code of Conduct* in the Manual Appendix.

In the research lab component of the course, you will learn about many of the sources used in legal research, and you will do weekly assignments that require you to apply your knowledge. (You may be surprised by the number and variety of research sources and by the many different ways they are used and updated.) You will also learn proper citation for the sources you have found, and some of your assignments will include citation work as well as research work. Please note that you will use and add to the research and citation skills you learn in research lab for the Research Memorandum and Appellate Brief assignments in your writing class, for other class assignments and extracurricular activities you do over the course of law school, and for many matters over the course of your legal career.

During most research lab meetings, your TA will introduce the week's research topic(s) and the corresponding assignment, and will answer questions and review earlier materials as needed. In some other meetings, library faculty will present guest lectures about over-arching research topics and answer questions. To be properly prepared for research lab in any week, you should do the topic reading listed below *before* the research lab for which it is assigned. Note, also, that you may want to do the research lab topic reading each week before your Monday writing class because legal research topics may be discussed in writing class as well.

There is no research lab meeting during the first week of law school classes. You will sign up for the weekly meeting time for your research lab in your writing class, which does meet during the first week. In that same writing class, you will also receive the

passwords for the online sites that you will need to access to do some of the assignment work for the lab classes. Your first research lab will then meet during the second week of classes at the time you have signed up for.

Please note that there are two things you need to do before the first research lab meeting. The first is to do the assigned topic reading for that class, which is listed below. The second is to use the passwords you receive in your first writing class to register on the online sites so that you can access any online materials that your TA may wish to reference during the lab.

Textbooks

The required textbooks for the research lab, which overlap somewhat with the writing class, are:

Amy E. Sloan, *Basic Legal Research: Tools and Strategies* (3d ed. 2006) ("Sloan")

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (Columbia Law Review Ass'n et al. eds., 18th ed. 2005) ("Bluebook")

Lab Assignments and Grading

You will note below that you will receive a weekly assignment, covering one or two research topics, at the end of most research lab meetings. Go to your instructor's TWEN site to download the directions for each assignment; your TA will give you any additional information you might need about completing the assignment. Each assignment will consist of a combination of CALI ("Computer Assisted Legal Research Exercises") online work about the week's topic(s) and hands-on research and/or citation work for the topic. Which combination will be assigned in any given week will vary according to the topic(s) and where the week falls in the sequence of the research lab curriculum. You will earn a total of fourteen points toward your LRW semester point total if you properly complete all of the weekly assignment. The point value of individual assignments may vary. There will also be a semester-end research exam to test how well you have understood and retained the research skills covered in the assignments; it will be worth twenty points.

In order to earn the point value for each week's assignment, you must: a) complete the assignment in satisfactory fashion, b) properly document your completion of the assignment, and c) properly submit the documentation to your TA by the due date and time (typically, the start of the lab following the lab in which you received the assignment). The TWEN assignment posting will explain how to meet these three standards for each assignment; there may be some variation in requirements due to the variety of tasks you will do. Most assignments will require that all answers be correctly done or all sources accurately located by the due date and time to be completed in satisfactory fashion. The citation parts of assignments will apply a different, "near perfection" standard that your TA will explain; you will be required to redo citation work that does not meet the standard but will still receive full credit if your redo

work is satisfactory.¹ Overall, the lab assignments can be more time consuming than they look, especially when you first start learning about legal research and citation, so you should not leave them until the last minute.

Note that you may not choose to skip an assignment, to submit an incomplete or unsatisfactory assignment, or to forego doing any required redo for an assignment, and simply not earn point credit for the assignment. While you will not, in fact, earn point credit for any assignment or redo that is not completed in satisfactory fashion and on time, you must have completed all the assignments and redos in satisfactory fashion by the end of the semester or you will receive an Incomplete in the course.

Collaboration

When you work on your lab assignments, we encourage you to collaborate with other students in interpreting the questions, tracking down the resources, discussing citation rules and their application, and discussing possible answers.² When it comes to writing up the citation answers, submitting the answers to any of the CALI exercises, or tracking down a source online, however, you must each formulate and submit your own answers independently. If you work in a group to track down a hard copy source in the library, one person in the group may submit documentation of your work as a group as long as the documentation clearly shows all the members of the group. Please note also that, for all types of assignment work, students may not "divide and conquer" any assignment, with each student independently researching or working on one part of the assignment and then sharing results with the others. Each student should be involved in every step of each assignment; in other words, each student should have first-hand knowledge of each step and be able to explain how the answer for each step of the assignment was reached. Please refer to the Weekday Program *Legal Research and Writing Student Manual*, including the *Code of Conduct* in the Appendix, for additional information regarding collaboration and plagiarism.

¹ The "near perfection" standard: If the citations in your completed assignment contain some errors but do reflect satisfactory effort, your TA will give you one week to redo the citations in question so as to meet the near perfection standard. If the first redo still contains errors but does reflect satisfactory effort, you will be required to do a second redo. Each redo is due at the start of the lab following the lab in which the redo was assigned. If your initial submission of the citations reflects satisfactory effort, if you redo the citations satisfactorily and on time (either the first or second time), and the rest of the assignment was satisfactory upon first submission, you will receive full credit for the assignment. If you have not satisfactorily completed the citations after two redos, you will not receive point credit for that assignment but must still complete the exercise to the "near perfection" standard by the end of the semester. Therefore, if you find that you are having trouble with the citations, you should ask your TA for help before you run out of redos.

² Please note, however, that you may not collaborate when doing the research and citation work for the assignments in your writing class unless specifically directed otherwise by your legal writing instructor. Part of your grade for the assignments in your writing class will be based on your ability to independently apply the research and citation skills you have learned in lab, and therefore that work must generally be done on your own for the writing class. Check with your instructor if you are unsure about the collaboration rules for any assignment in your writing class.

We hope you enjoy your year in the Legal Research and Writing course!

Semester Week	Calendar Week	Research lab topic(s)	Reading to be done before lab	Assignment given in lab	Assignment due by start time of lab	Notes about writing class, law school events and calendar, and other info
1	Aug. 18	No lab	None	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆Law school classes start 8/20; first writing class 8/20 ◆Writing class: Sign up for lab time and receive online passwords needed for research and access to TWEN site
2	Aug. 25	Introduction: Research lab & research sources, library tour	► Sloan: Chapter 1, Sections A-C, E	None	None	◆Attend lab at the time and place you signed up for during writing class in Week 1. This will be your regular time and place for the semester except as noted below.
3	Sept. 1	Guest librarian: Secondary source research overview	► Sloan: Chapter 2; Chapter 3, Sections A-C, E-F	Legal research fundamentals	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆Monday, Sept. 1 is Labor Day; no writing classes ◆Labs that meet at the same time as each other will be grouped this week; your TA will tell you what classroom to go to for lab this week ◆Friday, Sept. 5, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. is the University Convocation. Research labs scheduled to meet during that time may be rescheduled; check with your TA.
4	Sept. 8	Secondary sources: Practice Manuals and Treatises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Sloan: Chapter 10, Sections A-c, E-F (for Tuesday trainings) ► Review Sloan, Chap. 3, p. 36 (for lab) 	Introduction to secondary sources (with focus on Practice Manuals and Treatises)	Legal research fundamentals	◆Lexis and Westlaw secondary source research training in addition to regular lab class: Tuesday, September 9, 11:00-1:00; Rooms TBA
5	Sept. 15	Secondary sources: Legal Encyclopedias & Periodicals	► Review Sloan , Chapter 3, pp. 32-35 and 36-41	Encyclopedias & Periodicals	Introduction to secondary sources	

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6	Sept. 22	Secondary sources: ALRs Citation: Placement and principles; full and short cites	► Sloan: Chapter 1, Section D; review Sloan , Chap. 3, pp. 41-42 ► Bluebook: Introduction, Rules B1-2, B5, B13, R6	ALRs	Encyclopedias & Periodicals	◆ Closed Memo for writing class due next week ◆ Legal authority citations provided in lab this week for you to place properly into Closed Memo
7	Sept. 29	Guest librarian: Primary source research overview & developing an integrated research strategy	► Sloan: Chapter 11	None	ALRs	◆ Closed Memo due at Registrar's Office by 11 a.m. on Monday, Sept. 29 ◆ Research Memo assignment distributed in writing class on Wednesday, October 1 ◆ Labs that meet at the same time as each other will be grouped this week; your TA will tell you what room to go to
8	Oct. 6	Primary sources: State Statutes; Federal Statutes; statute citation	► Sloan: Chapter 6; Chapter 10, Section D ► Bluebook: Rules B6 & R12	Statutes; Statutory citation	None	◆ Lexis and Westlaw primary source research training: during regular writing class hours on Monday, Oct. 6 and Wednesday, Oct. 8 in addition to regular lab class
9	Oct. 13	No lab	None	None	None	◆ Fall Break: Thursday, October 16 & Friday, October 17 ◆ Enjoy!
10	Oct. 20	Primary sources: Reporters and Digests; case citation	► Sloan: Chapter 4 ► Bluebook: Rules B5 & R10	Reporters & Digests; Case citation	Statutes; Statutory citation	
11	Oct. 27	Citators Secondary authority citation	► Sloan: Chapter 5; Chapter 3, Section D ► Bluebook: Rules B8-9, R15-16	Citators; Secondary authority citation	Reporters & Digests; Case citation	

Semester Week	Calendar Week	Research lab topic(s)	Reading to be done before lab	Exercise(s) assigned in lab	Exercise(s) due by start time of lab	Notes about writing class, law school events and calendar, and other info
12	Nov. 3	Primary & Secondary source wrap-up: Rules and Restatements; Rule & Restatement citation When to stop researching	► Sloan: Chapter 3, pp. 42-48; Chapter 6, pp. 170-72 ► Bluebook: Rule R12.8.3	Rules & Restatements; Research completion; Rule & Restatement citation	Citators; Secondary authority citation	◆ Required Career Services presentation in one of writing class hours; which hour TBA
13	Nov. 10	Guest librarian: Cost-efficient research techniques; appropriate use of online search engines	To be determined; ► Browse Sloan: Appendix A	Costs of legal research	Rule & Restatements; Research completion; Rule & Restatement citation	◆Research Memo for writing class due next week ◆Labs that meet at the same time as each other will be grouped this week; your TA will tell you what room to go to ◆Check with your TA about assignment turn-in for next week
14	Nov. 17	Optional review session at regular lab time and place	► Review Sloan book and CALI materials as necessary	None	Costs of legal research	◆Research Memo due at Registrar's Office by 11 a.m. on Monday, November 17
15	Nov. 24	Multiple choice research exam: Administered during Monday writing class hour. No lab meeting this week.	None	None	None	◆Thanksgiving break Wednesday, November 26-Friday, November 28 ◆Enjoy!
16	Dec. 1	No lab	None	None	None	◆Wed. December 3 is last day of classes ◆Law school follows Mon., Thurs., Fri. class schedule this week ◆Good luck with exams!

