

Computerized Legal Research
Dixie State College of Utah-CJ 2310 CRN: 23820
MWF 12:00 p.m.-12:50 p.m.

Instructor: Craig Harter
Office: NIB (North Instructional Building) #110
Office Hours: 10:00-10:50 am Tuesday/Thursday
Telephone: 435.652.7659
Email: harter@dixie.edu
Room: Udvar-Hazy 148

Course Description:

This class will enable a student to take a factual situation and examine the legal issues. The student will be able to do some limited legal research through available online resources. It will also cover the writing of legal memorandums and legal briefs. This course will further explore the problems, issues, and trends related to criminal justice. The student will be exposed to a variety of teaching methods, including, but not limited to the following: lecture, video, guest lecturers, and assigned text study.

Students are expected and encouraged to utilize the basic research skills necessary to construct and articulate their views through both research and writing. This course will teach students how to articulate themselves through writing and perform the necessary research to support those views. The student is encouraged to express personal opinions freely, but most remember to observe all legal and ethical considerations in arriving at a certain answer/opinion.

Text:

“Foundations of Legal Research & Writing,” Fourth Edition by Carol M. Bast and Margie Hawkins

Course Goals and Objectives:

- Students will be given a legal question that needs to be answered.
- Students will be able to write, understand, research, and verify the rule correct rule(s) of law.
- Students will be able to distinguish between primary, secondary, and persuasive authority.
- Students will be able to correctly incorporate and utilize case proper case citations.
- Students will be able to identify and draft a proper legal thesis when addressing the legal question(s) at issue.
- Students will be exposed to the judicial system, including the process of how a case is appealed.
- Students will be able to draft the following legal documentation: Client Transmittal Letter, Office Memo, and Memorandum of Law.
- Students will learn to construct and articulate their views upon the criminal justice system through research and writing.
- Students will learn how to properly shepardize case law.
- Students will learn to observe all legal and ethical considerations in arriving at a certain answer/opinion.

Prerequisite

Students enrolled in this course must have successfully completed the Criminal Justice (CJ) 1010: Introduction to Criminal Justice (*unless otherwise approved*).

Grading Criteria:

Participation/Quizzes:	50 pts
Assignment #1	50 pts
Assignment #2	50 pts
Assignment #3	50 pts
Exam 1:	50 pts
Exam 2:	50 pts
Exam 3:	50 pts
Exam 4:	50 pts
Final Exam:	50 pts

Final Grades will be determined as follows:

A	=	450 - 420
A-	=	419 - 389
B+	=	388 - 359
B	=	358 - 329
B-	=	328 - 298
C+	=	297 - 268
C	=	267 - 238
C-	=	237 - 208
D	=	207 - 178
F	=	177 and below

Expectations:

Classroom attendance and participation are a mandatory part of course instruction. Students are expected to read ahead of time and prepare to be called on to comment on related issues. All assignments are to be completed on a timely basis and in a thorough manner. Students shall be expected to bring their textbook to class. Note taking and of all relevant in class discussion is detrimental to the student's success as there will be point that either may or may not be adequately covered, or amendments to a 'related area' in the textbook. The student is responsible for all assigned reading and testing purposes, regardless of whether or not the material was discussed in class. **The instructor may change the syllabus as needed in order to enhance the learning experience.**

Students should check their dmail on a regular basis as case law may be provided for an in class discussion. If students use an alternate account other than their dmail, they should provide it to the instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Students are encouraged to work together for purposes of studying for upcoming exams, and in related coursework. Avoid cheating in all forms! If a student is caught cheating, the instructor will be forced to report academic dishonesty to Dixie State College of Utah. Any such academic dishonesty will subsequently be reported to any college institution to which you may apply, and can ultimately affect your ability to attend college.

Student's with Disabilities

Proper documentation of a disability is required in order to receive services or accommodations. Any student who is eligible for requesting reasonable academic accommodations due to a disability must provide a letter of accommodation to their professor from the Disability Resource Center within the first week of the course. Please take the initiative to provide the aforesaid documentation to your instructor(s). The Disability Resource Center is located in the basement of the Career Center/Financial Aid Building (located next to the Testing Center).

Important Dates/Deadlines

Jan 11	Classwork Starts
Jan 13	Last Day to Add Without Signature
Jan 18	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan 19	Drop fee begins (\$10 per class)
Jan 26	\$50 Late Registration/Payment Fee
Feb 2	Pell Grant Census
Feb 2	Last Day for Refund
Feb 2	Last Day to drop without receiving a "W" grade
Feb 3	Courses dropped for non-payment
Feb 5	Last Day to ADD Classes
Feb 15	President's Day
Feb 22	Mid-Term Grades Due
Mar 5	Last Day to DROP/AUDIT Classes
Mar 8-12	Spring Break
Apr 2	Last Day for Complete Withdrawal
Apr 12	Fall registration open to Seniors (90+ credits)
Apr 13	Fall registration open to Juniors (60+ credits)
Apr 14	Fall registration open to Sophomores (30+ credits)
Apr 15	Fall registration open to all students
Apr 29	Classwork Ends
Apr 30	Final Exams
May 3-6	Final Exams
May 7	Commencement

Class Schedule

- January 11 Course Introduction, Course Syllabus, *Chapter 1: Law & Sources of Law* pp. 1-16, for 1/13 class discussion.
- January 13 Course Lecture, Chapter 1 Review, Discussion on Articles 1, 2, & 3 of the Constitution.
- January 15 Case Review, "How to Brief a Case," *Read Chapter 2: Legal Reasoning and Analysis* pp. 17-42 for 1/20 class.
- January 18 NO SCHOOL!! MLK HOLIDAY
- January 20 Course Lecture, Chapter 2 Review,

January 22 In class Discussion “How to Retrieve a Case Online.” Read Chapter 3: Secondary Sources and Finding Tools pp. 43-98 for 1/25 class.

January 25 Course Lecture, Chapter 3 Review (Test #1 will be in the testing center from 1/27-1/30).

January 27 Review Chapters 1-3 (*Reminder: Test #1 in the testing center today until 1/30*).

January 29 Case Review. Read Chapter 4: The Judicial Branch and Cases pp. 99-129 for 2/1 class.

February 1 Course Lecture, Chapter 4 Review. *Homework: Cyberlaw Exercises/Legal Research Assignment.*

February 3 Legal Research Assignment (*In class assignment*), How to Construct a Legal Memorandum.

February 5 Case Review (Ex post facto/Supremacy Clause Issue). Read Chapter 5: Primary Sources; Constitutions, Constitutions, Statutes, Court Rules and Administrative Law pp. 131-188 for 2/8 class.

February 8 Course Lecture, Chapter 5 Review.

February 10 Case Review, In class research assignment.

February 12 In class assignment/discussion “How to Draft a Legal Memorandum” Read Chapter 6: Citators, pp. 189-218, for 2/17 class.

February 15 NO SCHOOL!! PRESIDENT’S DAY HOLIDAY

February 17 Course Lecture, Chapter 6 Review.

February 19 In class assignment/discussion “How to Shepardize a Case.” Read Chapter 7: Overview of the Research Process and Ethical Considerations, pp. 219-238 for 2/26 class.

February 22 In Class Movie: *Gideon’s Trumpet (Part 1)*

February 24 In Class Movie: *Gideon’s Trumpet (Part 2)*

February 26 Course Lecture, Chapter 7 Review. Read Chapter 8: Computer Assisted Legal Research, pp. 239-257 for 3/1 class.

March 1 Course Lecture, Chapter 8 Review. (*Test #2 will be in the Testing Center from 3/1-3/3*).

March 3 Case Review (TBA), In class research assignment. Read Chapter 9: Introduction to Legal Writing, pp. 259-280 for 3/5 class.

March 5 Course Lecture, Chapter 9 Review. Read Chapters 10: Fundamentals of Writing, and 11: Transmittal Letter, Client Opinion Letter, and E-Mail Correspondence for 3/15 class, pp 281-292; pp. 293-307.

March 8 NO SCHOOL!! SPRING BREAK

March 10 NO SCHOOL!! SPRING BREAK

March 12 NO SCHOOL!! SPRING BREAK

March 15 Course Lecture, Chapter(s) 10 & 11 Review.

March 17 Class assignment/discussion: “*How to Organize Work Product.*”

March 19 In class assignment/discussion “How to Write a Client Transmittal Letter,” (50 pts) Read Chapter 12: Pleadings pp. 309-328 for 3/22 class.

March 22 Course Lecture, Chapter 12 Review. (*Test #3 will be in the testing center from 3/22-3/24*).

March 24 In class assignment/discussion (TBA)

March 26 In class assignment *Pleadings: Complaint & Answer.* Read Chapter 13: Law Office Memo pp. 329-351 for 3/29 class.

March 29 Course Lecture, Chapter 13 Review.

March 31 In class assignment/discussion “How to Write a Law Office Memorandum” (50 pts).

April 2 In class assignment/discussion “How to Write a Law Office Memorandum” Cont’d. Read Chapter 14: Memorandum of Law pp. 353-372 for 4/5 class.

April 5 Course Lecture, Chapter 14 Review.

April 7 In class assignment: “Fundamentals to Writing a Successful Memorandum of Law.” (50 pts).

April 9 In class assignment/discussion “How to Organize a Memorandum of Law.” Read Chapter 15: Appellate Brief pp. 373-397 for 4/14 class.

April 14 Course Lecture, Chapter 15 Review. (*Test #4 will be in the testing center from 4/14-4/16*).

April 16 In class assignment: “Importance of Clarity and Conciseness in Appellate Briefs.” Read Appendix ‘A’: Search and Seizure, pp. 399-400 for 4/19 class.

April 19 Course Lecture, Appendix ‘A’ Review. Read Appendix ‘D’: Mechanical Errors, pp. 421-433 for 4/21 class.

April 21 Course Lecture, Appendix ‘D’ Review. Read Appendix ‘E’: Problems, pp. 435-440 for 4/23 class.

April 23 Course Lecture, Appendix ‘E’ Review.

April 26 Finalize Course Material for Final Exam.

April 28 Review For Final Exam