

PELLISSIPPI STATE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MASTER SYLLABUS

**ADVANCED LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING
LAW 2020**

Class Hours: 3.0

Credit Hours: 3.0

Laboratory Hours: 0.0

Revised: Fall 04

NOTE: This course is not designed for transfer credit.

Catalog Course Description:

A study of the format and organization of legal memoranda and briefs, common writing problems, citation and computerized legal research.

Entry Level Standards:

College-level competencies in logic, reading, and English are required.

Prerequisites:

LAW 1050, LAW 1060

Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials:

Wydick, Richard C., *Plain English for Lawyers* (Carolina Press, 1998)

Samborn, Hope Viner and Andrea B. Yelin, *Basic Legal Writing for Paralegals* (Little, Brown, 1997).

A Uniform System of Citation (current ed.)

Other Materials:

Johnson, Berring, Woxland, *Winning Research Skills*, 4th Ed. (Westlaw, 1999)

Discovering Westlaw, 7th Ed. (Westlaw, 1999)

I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis:

Week	Topic
1	Introduction (3.0 hours)
2	Writing (1.5 hours); English Fundamentals (1.5 hours)
3-4	Review of Legal System (.5 hour); Research Techniques (.5 hour); Resources (.5 hour); and Cases (.5 hour) Briefing (1.5 hours); Punctuation (1.5 hours) Finding Cases (1.0 hour)
5-6	Citation Exercises (1.0 hour); Citation Test (3.0 hours) Cases/Keycite (2.0 hours)
7	Intro to Legal Memo (1.5 hours), Wording (1.0 hour) - Legal Memo 1 Assigned (.5 hour)
8-9	Legal Problems in Memos (.5 hour); Organization (1.0 hour); synthesis (1.0); IRAC (3.0 hours); Language Quirks (.5 hour)
10	Review Outlining (2.0 hours) Legislation (.5 hour), Draft Memo 1 (.5 hour); Review Outlining (2.0 hours)
11	Persuasive Writing (1.75 hours); Memo 2 Assigned (.25 hours) Adm. Law (1 hour); Memo 1 due

- 12 Citation Test 2 (3.0 hours)
- 13 Citation Test 3 (3.0 hours)
- 14 Outlines (.75 hour); Organization (.75 hour); Letter Writing (1.0 hour); Draft Memo 2 (3.5 hours)
- 15 Memo 2 Due

II. Course Objectives*:

- A. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of legal ethics. I, III, V
- B. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of computerized legal research systems. I, III, V
- C. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of what constitutes primary authority in legal research. I, II, V
- D. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of what constitutes secondary authority in legal research. I, II, V
- E. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of how to find research tools, such as digests and citators. I, II, III, V
- F. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of the importance of clarity in legal writing. I, II, III, IV
- G. Develop a complete and thorough understanding of the organization of a legal memorandum. I, II, III, IV
- H. Draft an objective legal memorandum that identifies issues, states the facts, discusses the law, and reaches a conclusion. I, II, III, IV, V
- I. Demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of persuasive legal writing. I, II, III, IV

*Roman numerals after course objectives reference goals of the Paralegal Studies program.

III. Instructional Processes*:

Students will:

- 1. Practice elements of the work ethic such as professionalism, preparedness, punctuality, honesty, cooperation, dependability, contribution, effectiveness, good manners, etc. *Personal Development Outcome, Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcome, Transitional Strategy*
- 2. Refine their writing skills and expand their legal vocabularies through completion of weekly guided writing exercises that allows them to communicate more effectively with lawyers, legal professionals, and clients. *Communication Outcome, Transitional Strategy*
- 3. Carry out course assignments such as team discussions, team case studies, experiential exercises, oral, written, PowerPoint, WordPerfect, Westlaw, Internet skills development, etc. that help develop a respect for diversity. *Communication Outcome, Personal Development Outcome, Information Literacy Outcome, Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome, Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcome, Technological Literacy Outcome, Transitional Strategy, Active Learning Strategy*
- 4. Take part in course assignments such as team discussions, team case studies, experiential exercises, oral, written, PowerPoint, WordPerfect, Westlaw, Internet skills development, etc. that help develop teamwork, leadership, and followership skills. *Communication*

Outcome, Personal Development Outcome, Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome, Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcome, Information Literacy Outcome, Transitional Strategy, Active Learning Strategy

5. Perform course assignments such as team discussions, team case studies, experiential exercises, oral, written, PowerPoint, WordPerfect, Westlaw, Internet skills development, etc. that help develop critical thinking, problem solving, goal setting, and planning skills. *Communication Outcome, Personal Development Outcome, Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome, Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcome, Information Literacy Outcome, Technological Literacy Outcome, Transitional Strategy, Active Learning Strategy*
6. Listen to guest speakers from the legal community to learn the demands for clear legal writing in the law office. *Personal Development Outcome, Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome, Transitional Strategy*

*Strategies and outcomes listed after instructional processes reference Pellissippi State's goals for strengthening general education knowledge and skills, connecting coursework to experiences beyond the classroom, and encouraging students to take active and responsible roles in the educational process.

IV. Expectations for Student Performance*:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Recognize and avoid acts that constitute unethical behavior. A
2. Write legal prose which is direct, concise, and clear. F, I
3. Recognize the passive voice and convert it to active voice. F, I
4. Prepare office correspondence. F
5. Prepare letters of representation for each client. A, B, D, E, G
6. Draft legal pleadings. A, F, I
7. Draft memoranda in support of motions. A, B, E, F, G, H, I
8. Research primary authority. B, C
9. Research secondary authority. B, D
10. Formulate a query for computerized legal research. B
11. Shepardize cases on Westlaw. B
12. Search databases on Westlaw. B
13. Maneuver between databases on Westlaw. B
14. Sign on and off Westlaw and use client identifiers. B
15. Save and print Westlaw research results. B
16. Prepare an office memorandum effectively communicating research of legal issues. B, C, D, E, F, G, H

*Letters after performance expectations reference the course objectives listed above.

V. Evaluation:

A. Testing Procedures:

Students are evaluated primarily on the basis of research and writing projects. The instructor will provide full details the first week of class via a syllabus supplement

B. Laboratory Expectations:

N/A

C. Field Work:

Students will complete several out-of-class skills projects, described on the supplementary syllabus.

D. Other Evaluation Methods:

1. Class participation, group work, and homework will also comprise the final grade for the course. The instructor will provide full details the first week of class via a syllabus supplement.
2. All tests and papers will be graded for spelling and English usage in addition to content and format.
3. Any student encountering academic difficulty during the term is strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss options and solutions.

E. Grading Scale:

A	93-100
B+	88- 92
B	83- 87
C+	78- 82
C	73- 77
D	65- 72
F	64 and below

VI. Policies:

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State Technical Community College expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. [NOTE: No differentiation is noted for excused/unexcused absences. These will be treated as an absence.] (Pellissippi State, 2004-2006 Catalog, page 83)

B. Academic Dishonesty:

Pellissippi State Technical Community College expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. [NOTE: No differentiation is noted for excused/unexcused absences. These will be treated as an absence.] (Pellissippi State, 2004-2006 Catalog, page 83)

C. Other Policies:

Late papers will not be accepted nor will make-up tests be given without specific approval of the instructor.

Computer Usage Guidelines:

College-owned or –operated computing resources are provided for use by students of Pellissippi State. All students are responsible for the usage of Pellissippi State’s computing resources in an effective, efficient, ethical and lawful manner. (Pellissippi State, 2004-2006 Catalog, pages 67-70)

Accommodations for disabilities:

If you need accommodation because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please

inform the instructor immediately. Privately after class or in the instructor's office.

To request accommodations students must register with Services for Students with Disabilities:

Goins 127 or 131, Phone: (865) 539-7153 or (865) 694-6751 Voice/TDD.