

Course number & Name: Legal Research I (LEG 116)

Credit hours: 4 Quarter Hours

Method of Delivery: Traditional/Classroom (on Campus, Wednesday evenings)

Course Description: This course introduces the student to a variety of legal research tools and techniques. An emphasis is placed on legal analysis, proper citation form, and cite checking. The course includes a review of grammar basics, the Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD) Citation Manual (A Professional System of Citation), and a series of written assignments ranging from simple case briefs to business letters. The students will be drafting legal documents during class and as outside homework assignments.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of LEG 100 Introduction to Law and LEG 117 Civil Procedure or permission of the department director.

Textbooks:

1. The Legal Research and Writing Handbook: A Basic Approach for Paralegals, Seventh Edition (ISBN 9781454840817)
2. ALWD Citation Manual, 6th Edition (ISBN 9781454887768)

Authors:

1. Andrea Banchik Yelin and Hope Viner Samborn
2. Coleen Barger

Publisher:

1. Wolters Kluwer Law & Business (2015)
2. Wolters Kluwer Law & Business (2017)

Materials needed for this course: Access to computer (including Internet/email).

Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
6. Developing effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research and understanding case law (components of a case).
7. The Interoffice Memorandum of Law
8. The paralegal professional and the ethical guidelines affecting this profession.

Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).

2. Identify the various research tools/sources of a law library (including primary and secondary sources of law and distinguishing between mandatory and persuasive authority).
3. Identify the traditional and various online/electronic methods of performing legal research (including shepardizing).
4. Correctly apply ALWD format rules to legal citations
5. Understand and develop effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research
6. Identify the basic components of a case citation.
7. Identify the basic components of a case brief (with an emphasis on identifying and developing legal issues).
8. Identify the basic components of and develop an Interoffice Memorandum of Law.
9. Distinguish between ethical and unethical practices of behavior pursuant to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations 8 ethical guidelines (affecting all paralegals) in the Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.
10. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Midstate Grading scale:

90 - 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 - 59	F

*All students must have a 70% or better to pass this course

Midstate Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism is using another person’s words, either by paraphrase or direct quotation, without giving credit to the author(s). Plagiarism can also consist of cutting and pasting material from electronic sources by submitting all or a portion of work for assignment credit. This includes papers, computer programs, music, sculptures, paintings, photographs, etc. authored by another person without explicitly citing the original source(s). These actions violate the trust and honesty expected in academic work. Plagiarism is strictly against the academic policy of Midstate College. Its seriousness requires a measured, forceful response which includes consequences for inappropriate and/or no citation.

In courses containing writing assignments, the College promotes the use of an electronic resource which compares the student’s writing against previously submitted papers, journals, periodicals, books, and web pages. Students and instructors can use this service to reduce the incidence of plagiarism. This electronic resource has been found to conform to legal requirements for fair use and student confidentiality. It is able to provide a report to the student indicating the parts of the assignment that match.

Student Success: The Office of Student Success is available to students seeking tutoring for individual classes or who need assistance with writing assignments. Information is also available on test taking techniques, how to take notes, developing good study skills, etc. Contact Student Success in Room 110 (in person); (309) 692-4092, extension 1100 (phone); studentsuccess@midstate.edu (email).

Assessment Portfolio Reminder:

Students (depending on your program major) may be required to prepare an assessment portfolio for graduation. Keep a copy of this syllabus in the portfolio. Along with assignments from this course, Paralegal Studies students will begin assembling assignments completed in other legal courses for the development of their professional portfolio. The Portfolio will be completed/graded in Legal Research II. The instructor will provide the student with more information on the portfolio throughout the LEG 116 course.

Instructor: Ashley Miller, Attorney
National Labor Relations Board
Adjunct Faculty Professor, Legal Studies
ammiller4@midstate.edu

Office Hours – Wednesday, 5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M. in the classroom or by appointment.

Assistant Instructor: Mark Wiltse, Legal Studies Director
mwiltse@midstate.edu

Legal Studies Department
Office: 219
Phone: (309) 692-4092, Extension 2190
Fax: (309) 692-3893

Course Policies and Procedures:

1. This course is taught from a lecture format with integrated discussion of examples and assignments. The student is encouraged to take an active role in the learning process. **Students that miss 30% (or more) of the scheduled classes will not be allowed to successfully complete this course (unless departmental approval is obtained).**
2. All assignments in this course must have a professional appearance (submitted in typewritten form, using 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with proper grammar/spelling/structure).
3. There will be 30 weekly assignments throughout the term. The Week 9 Memorandum and the Week 10 Ethic Paper will be worth 100 points each. The other 28 homework assignments will be worth 10 points each. No points will be awarded if these assignments are not turned in. A late penalty of 50% will be assessed to your assignments grade if these assignments are turned in late, contain spelling/grammar errors, and/or are lacking in

- content/incomplete. Late assignments will only be accepted up to 7 days after their due dates. Any assignment turned in after this 7-day period expires will receive no credit.
4. In the event you are absent, you will need to email the assignments for the class you miss (assignments submitted via email must be submit as a Microsoft Word attachment). In return, I will email the assignments you need to have completed by the following class period. If assignments are not turned-in on their due date, they will be assessed a late penalty. Late assignments will only be accepted up to 7 days after their due dates. Any assignment turned in after this 7-day period expires will receive no credit.
 5. Exams must be taken on the dates scheduled by the instructor. Failure to take an exam on the scheduled date will result in a grade of "F" (0 points). Make-up exams will be given only when special circumstances are approved by the instructor. Make-up exams must be taken in the testing center. It is the student's obligation to make the appropriate arrangements to have a test administered.
 6. "Pop-Quizzes" may be given throughout the term. Make-up quizzes will not be given.
 7. All work must be completed by week 12 (August 08, 2018 at 9:00 PM).
 8. Academic dishonesty (cheating / plagiarism) in any form will not be tolerated in this course and may result in the dismissal / suspension from the course / program / college.
 9. Cell phones / beepers are prohibited from use in this course.
 10. This class may be required to meet at the law library located in the county courthouse (324 Main Street, Peoria, IL). Two weeks advance notice will be provided by the instructor.
 11. This is a tentative syllabus and outline and is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Participation Requirements: Each student is expected to participate in research/homework assignments relating to the subject materials for the week. Discussions will take place each week relating to the required weekly research/homework assignments. Attendance is mandatory in this class. Students will be deducted 10 points from participation grade for each course missed. If a student does not attend the entire class (arrives late, leaves early, etc.), partial points will be assessed from the class participation grade. See Instructor's Final Grade Determination Below.

Students that miss 30% or more of the scheduled classes will not be allowed to successfully complete this course (unless departmental approval is obtained).

Examination Information:

1. Midterm Examination – will consist of 50 points and it will cover chapters 1 – 13 (excluding chapter 12). It will be administered in week 5.
2. Final Examination – will consist of 50 points and it will cover chapters 12, 14 – 25. It will be administered in week 12.

Methods of evaluating student performance: See Instructor's Grading Scale Below.

Instructor's Grading Scale: Your final grade will be based on the total points accumulated on the examinations (Midterm and Final), the Ethics Paper, the Memorandum, Class Participation, and

the Homework Assignments administered throughout the course. There is a total of 690 points issued for the class. The point distribution is based on the following (totaling 690 points):

1. 280 Points = Homework Assignments (28 assignments x 10 points per assignment)
2. 100 Points = Memorandum
3. 100 Points = Ethics Paper
4. 110 Points = Class Participation – 11 classes x 10 points per class for full attendance (partial points for partial attendance)
5. 50 Points = Midterm Examination
6. 50 Points = Final Examination

*All students must have a 70% or better to pass this course.

Legal Research I – LEG 116
Summer Term 2018
Class Schedule

Week 1 – Wednesday, May 23:

1. Introduction to Legal Research I and Course Goals
2. Pretest
3. Chapter 1 – Introduction to Legal Research
4. Chapter 2 – Legal Authorities and How to Use Them

Week 1 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.

Week 1 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
2. Identify the various research tools/sources of a law library (including primary and secondary sources of law and distinguishing between mandatory and persuasive authority).
3. Correctly apply ALWD format rules to legal citations
4. understand and develop effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research
5. Identify the basic components of a case citation.

6. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 2 – Wednesday, May 30:

1. Chapter 3 – Court Decisions
2. Chapter 4 - Digests
3. Chapter 5 – Validating

Week 2 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
6. Developing effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research and understanding case law (components of a case).

Week 2 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
2. Identify the various research tools/sources of a law library (including primary and secondary sources of law and distinguishing between mandatory and persuasive authority).
3. Identify the traditional and various online/electronic methods of performing legal research (including shepardizing).
4. Correctly apply ALWD format rules to legal citations
5. understand and develop effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research
6. Identify the basic components of a case citation.
7. Identify the basic components of a case brief (with an emphasis on identifying and developing legal issues).
8. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 3: – Wednesday, June 06:

1. Chapter 6 – Secondary Authority
2. Chapter 7 – Constitutions and Statutes

Week 3 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).

2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
6. Developing effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research and understanding case law (components of a case).

Week 3 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
2. Identify the various research tools/sources of a law library (including primary and secondary sources of law and distinguishing between mandatory and persuasive authority).
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4. Correctly apply ALWD format rules to legal citations
5. Understand and develop effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research
6. Identify the basic components of a case citation.
7. Identify the basic components of a case brief (with an emphasis on identifying and developing legal issues).
8. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 4 – Wednesday, June 13:

1. Chapter 8 – Legislative History
2. Chapter 9 – Administrative Materials and Looseleaf Services

Week 4 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
6. Developing effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research and understanding case law (components of a case).

Week 4 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
2. Identify the various research tools/sources of a law library (including primary and secondary sources of law and distinguishing between mandatory and persuasive authority).
3. Identify the traditional and various online/electronic methods of performing legal research (including shepardizing).
4. Correctly apply ALWD format rules to legal citations
5. understand and develop effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research
6. Identify the basic components of a case citation.
7. Identify the basic components of a case brief (with an emphasis on identifying and developing legal issues).
8. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 5 – Wednesday, June 20:

1. Chapter 10 – Commercial Databases
2. Chapter 11 – Practice Rules
3. Chapter 13 – Practitioner’s Materials

Week 5 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
6. Developing effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research and understanding case law (components of a case).

Week 5 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
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3. Identify the traditional and various online/electronic methods of performing legal research (including shepardizing).
4. Correctly apply ALWD format rules to legal citations

5. understand and develop effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research
6. Identify the basic components of a case citation.
7. Identify the basic components of a case brief (with an emphasis on identifying and developing legal issues).
8. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 6 – Wednesday, June 27:

1. Midterm Examination
2. Introduction to Legal Writing/Writing Lab: Supplemental Materials
3. Chapter 14 – Research Strategy
4. Chapter 15 – Getting Ready to Write
5. Chapter 16 – Clear Writing and Editing
6. Chapter 17 – Writing Basics

Week 6 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
6. Developing effective research strategies for both traditional and online/electronic legal research and understanding case law (components of a case).
7. The Interoffice Memorandum of Law
8. The paralegal professional and the ethical guidelines affecting this profession.

Week 6 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
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8. Identify the basic components of and develop an Interoffice Memorandum of Law.
9. Distinguish between ethical and unethical practices of behavior pursuant to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations 8 ethical guidelines (affecting all paralegals) in the Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.
10. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

WEEK 7 – WEDNESDAY, JULY 04: NO SCHOOL, INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Week 8 – Wednesday, July 11:

1. Chapter 18 – Case Briefing and Analysis
2. Chapter 24 – Outlining and Organizing a Memorandum
3. Chapter 25 – Letter Writing

Week 8 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
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Week 9 – Wednesday, July 18:

1. Chapter 19 – The Legal Memorandum
2. Chapter 20 – Questions Presented and Conclusions or Brief Answers
3. Chapter 21 - Facts

Week 9 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
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Week 9 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
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10. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 10 – Wednesday, July 25:

1. Chapter 22 – The IRAC Method
2. Chapter 23 – Synthesizing Cases and Authorities

Week 10 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
5. The basic components of a case citation/brief.
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Week 10 Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the structure and authority of both the federal and state branches of government (with an emphasis on the hierarchy and proper names of the courts within the federal and state judicial systems).
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10. Demonstrate the ability to write in the accepted form and style using proper grammar.

Week 11 – Wednesday, August 01:

1. Chapter 22 – The IRAC Method (continued)
2. Chapter 23 – Synthesizing Cases and Authorities (continued)
3. Chapter 12 – Ethical Rules

Week 11 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
2. Traditional Legal Research
3. Online Legal Research
4. Effective Legal Writing (ALWD citation/format rules).
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Week 12 – Wednesday, August 08:

1. Final Examination
2. Posttest

Week 12 Topics: The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Federal and state branches of government (emphasis on the judicial systems).
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3. Online Legal Research
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