

ADVANCED LEGAL WRITING SYLLABUS

Professor Natalie Mack
Summer 2012, Term A
TWR (except as noted on page 4), 9:00–11:20 a.m.
Room 300

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Office Hours: Tuesday through Thursday 11:30-12:00, and by appointment

COURSE CONTENT AND GOALS

Advanced Legal Writing is an intensive writing lab that builds on the skills you acquired in your first-year legal writing courses, using shorter and more varied assignments from transactional, litigation, and legislative practice. In a supportive, collaborative classroom environment, you will learn about drafting statutes, contracts, complaints, answers, motions and notices of motions, orders, interrogatories, general correspondence, and opinion letters. You will also re-examine, and take to a higher level, aspects of the types of writing you did in your first-year writing courses. For example, you will work on objective issue statements and persuasive questions presented, objective and persuasive fact statements, and the large-scale organization of the discussion sections of research memos and the argument sections of briefs. Throughout the course, you will refine your knowledge of writing mechanics and improve your ability to write clearly, precisely, forcefully, and persuasively.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Mary Barnard Ray & Barbara J. Cox, *Beyond the Basics: A Text for Advanced Legal Writing* (2d ed., West Group 2003).

Bryan Garner, *The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style* (2d ed., West Group 2006).

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (19th ed., Harvard L. Rev. Ass'n 2010).

Please bring *Beyond the Basics* and *The Redbook* to every class. You will use *The Bluebook* for out-of-class writing assignments only, so if you do not already own a copy, you may prefer to use the copy on course reserve in the library rather than purchase the book.

PROFESSIONALISM

Thorough preparation, timely arrival, regular attendance, active participation, a supportive attitude toward your classmates, and timely completion of all assignments are expected.

THE WEST EDUCATION NETWORK (TWEN)

Please sign up for this course immediately on TWEN, at www.lawschool.westlaw.com. You will be notified by e-mail as new course materials are posted on TWEN, so provide the e-mail address at which you wish to receive information about the course. You will also use TWEN to submit electronic versions of writing assignments and to sign up for conferences.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Out-of-Class Assignments

You will draft seven documents outside of class: (1) a revised statute, (2) a contract, (3) a complaint, (4) a writing-process exercise, (5) a rewrite of the statute or the contract, (6) a brief, and (7) an opinion letter. Each assignment must be submitted both electronically (through the assignment drop box on TWEN) and on paper. For certain assignments, I will give you a detailed critique of your writing to help you improve your performance on later assignments both in this course and in the workplace.

In-Class Exercises

We will spend a significant portion of each class period on writing exercises. Some exercises are designed to teach you new skills, while others are intended to increase your mastery of skills you already possess. We usually will begin each class with an exercise based on the assigned reading for that class. We then will discuss the exercise and the reading, often exchanging papers for constructive comments or viewing and discussing sample papers as a class. When time permits, you will have an opportunity to rewrite your initial exercise in class before submitting it for a grade. Although you will strive for excellence with your out-of-class assignments, your goal with the in-class exercises is to achieve the best quality you can in a limited amount of time.

CONFERENCES

I will meet with you individually at least twice during the course. These conferences are an opportunity for us to review your work and address any concerns you have regarding your writing skills or the course. Please review your critiqued assignments before we meet, and come to the conference with specific questions you would like to discuss. I also am available for consultation during my regular office hours and by appointment.

GRADING AND ATTENDANCE

Your grade for the course will be based on the following factors:

1. Quality of out-of-class writing assignments (60%), including substance, organization, style and mechanics, and compliance with deadlines and instructions;
2. Quality of in-class exercises (20%), including how well they apply the reading; and
3. Quality of class participation (20%), based on attendance, timeliness, and caliber of contribution to class discussions.

Especially because of the collaborative nature of the classroom exercises, your participation in class is important to your learning and that of your classmates, so attendance is not optional. Unexcused or excessive absences lower the class participation score, and I enforce the Law School's attendance rule, which requires a grade of F if a student misses more than 20% of the scheduled classes. Thus, missing three or more classes would result in a failing grade. Please notify me as soon as possible if you need to miss a class for any reason. Reasonable accommodation will be made for religious observances if you provide me with at least two weeks' notice. You must earn a passing grade on all assignments to receive credit for the course.

HONOR CODE

The Honor Code applies in this course. You may not collaborate on any out-of-class assignments in this course except as expressly authorized by me. Please consult with me if you have any questions about the Honor Code and its application.

DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please provide me with a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. You may reach Disability Services at 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The University of Colorado at Boulder Policy on Discrimination and Harassment (www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html), the University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment, and the University of Colorado Policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff, and faculty. If you believe you have been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status, contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at www.colorado.edu/odh.

ADVANCED LEGAL WRITING, SUMMER 2012—SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule is subject to change. Changes or additional assignments will be announced in class or sent by e-mail to all students. Please check your e-mail daily. **You are responsible for all information provided in class, sent by e-mail, or posted on the class TWEN site.** Unless otherwise noted, all out-of-class writing assignments are due at the start of class.

DATE	TOPIC	READING	WRITING
Tuesday, June 5	Introduction to the Course	Syllabus; Beyond the Basics (“Beyond”), Ch. 1	Grammar and punctuation evaluation
Wednesday, June 6	Statutes, Regulations, and Other Rules. Writing Right: Grammar and Self-Editing	Beyond, Ch. 3; Redbook (“RB”) 143-81, 319-22; handout on legal writing style	Exercises: revise statute; draft ordinance; grammar worksheet
Thursday, June 7	Contracts	Beyond, Ch. 5; RB 453-70	Statute due. Exercise: compare contract provisions and rewrite
Tuesday, June 12	No class; first conference on writing skills		
Wednesday, June 13	Pleadings	Beyond, Ch. 11; RB 383-90	Contract due. Exercises: draft complaint; draft answer
Thursday, June 14	Writing Right: Punctuation. Notices of Motion, Motions, and Orders	RB 1-52; review punctuation handout; Beyond, Ch. 12; RB 391-402	Exercises: punctuation worksheet; draft notice of motion, motion, and order
Monday, June 18	Issue Statements and Questions Presented	Beyond, Ch. 6; RB 344, 347, 414	Complaint due. Exercises: draft objective issue statement; draft persuasive question presented
Tuesday, June 19	Writing Right: Usage and Style; The Writing Process. Memo Discussion Sections	Beyond, Ch. 2; RB 183-318 (read all text; skim examples); Beyond, Ch. 9; RB 344-52	Ch. 2 Exercise 1 due. Exercises: process and style; identify large-scale organization
Wednesday, June 20	Argument Sections of Briefs; Objective Statements of Facts	Beyond, Ch. 10; RB 408-33; Beyond, Ch. 7; review RB 344, 347	Exercises: critique and rewrite argument sections; write statement of facts
Wednesday, June 27	Persuasive Statements of Facts; second conference on writing skills	Beyond, Ch. 8; review RB 415-16	Exercise: identify and evaluate persuasive techniques
Thursday, June 28	General Correspondence	Beyond, Ch. 14	Rewrite due. Exercise: write response to demand letter
Friday, June 29	Opinion Letters	Beyond, Ch. 15; RB 353-65	Brief due. Exercise: achieve the proper tone
Monday, July 2	Interrogatories	Beyond, Ch. 13	Exercise: draft and revise interrogatories
Tuesday, July 3	Last day of class; review of course; course evaluations		
Thursday, July 5	No class (reading day for final exams; no exam in this course)		Opinion letter due at 5:00 p.m. on July 6.