

: Law 17 - Spring 2012 - Syllabus



Paralegal Studies Program

Los Angeles
Mission College

Syllabus

Law 17 - Legal Writing - 3:00 Units

Spring 2012

Spring 2012 - Section 0322

Instructor: [David Jordan, Esq.](#)
Office: Faculty Office #20
Office hours: Wednesdays 4:00 – 5:00 PM, or by appointment.
Phone: 818/364-7720 - cell phone 818-415-2015
Email: abogado@pacbell.net
Moodle Page: <http://moodle.lamission.edu/course/view.php?id=1005>

Textbook: There is no required textbook for the class

Classwiki: <http://legalwriting.pbworks.com/w/page/16131590/FrontPage>

Course Description: This course explores legal drafting and writing, including legal memoranda, motions, pleadings, demand letters, a research brief, and special projects including a [final legal research and writing paper](#).

Course Organization: Law 17 is organized into assignments, quizzes, a final legal research and writing project, and forum discussions. Read "[Where to Start](#)"

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Brief law cases in various legal subjects to improve students' understanding of the law and improve their legal analysis, argumentation, and legal writing required by a paralegal in a law firm.
2. Critically analyze and argue issues of various legal subjects and topics as listed in #1 above.
3. Prepare legal documents, forms or papers including a legal demand letter, a legal memorandum, various types of motions, a mandatory settlement conference, trial brief, and other legal documents required by a paralegal in a law office.

Also students will prepare a final legal research and writing paper. See format of the paper at <http://profjordan.pbworks.com/format>. The final legal writing and research paper will be in the form of a position or argumentative paper. It will train the student in legal analysis, finding of law cases, and improving legal argumentation. The paper will be graded by using the following grading rubric -<http://missionparalegal.pbworks.com/rubric-finalpaper>

Students will review various cases and write a case brief demonstrating their understanding and application of the essential facts and rules of law and legal principles of the case. see case brief rubric at <http://missionparalegal.pbworks.com/briefing>

Skill Level: College level reading and writing; ability to access the internet. Necessary skills include proficiency using a word processing program, including spell checker, using a web browser, sending and receiving email, saving documents as RTFs (rich text format), uploading and attaching documents.

Estimated Time per Week: 10 hours (see [Carnegie Rule](#))

Class format: The class is an entirely online class. We use the [Moodle Course Management System](#). Carefully read [our policies](#).

The class follows a weekly format. If you click on "Section Links" in upper left corner of your moodle class, you will see the weekly assignments, quizzes, forums and activities. There are many opportunities for you to participate and earn points to attain a good grade.

Online classes require your attention and effort. If you fail to log into the class during the first two weeks you will be excluded from the class. There are activities and assignments each week; you will need to log into the class several times a week.

To be a successful online/hybrid student, you need to do schedule a regular time for studying, read and complete on line activities, and [more](#).

Technical Requirements: The minimum computer requirements are: Computer, either a Macintosh or IBM compatible; modem, minimum 28.8, broadband or high speed internet access is preferred and is required to view the videos. Software: Web browser software, preferably Firefox 3.5 or Internet Explorer 8, an e-mail address and a word processing program.

Get Firefox: <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/all.html>

Get Internet Explorer: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/Internet-explorer/default.apx>

Get a free email account at: www.mail.google.com

Students who do not have regular computer access may use computers in the campus Learning Resource Center. Be sure to save all your papers and assignments on a flash drive.

Course Login: <http://moodle.lamission.edu>

First Assignment: Introduce yourself to the class under the forum discussions for the first week. This is where you will get to know your classmates. Post your introduction by Sunday evening, 11:55 pm, February 19, 2012. You may be withdrawn from class if you do not post your introductions by the end of the 2nd week of class.

Contacting Your Instructor: I check my email several times a day and respond to emails within 24 hours. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions; email me at: abogado@pacbell.net, in the subject line put: **Law 17 #0322**. I am also available in-person or by telephone on Wednesdays, 4:00 – 5:00 PM.

Discussion Forums: The [discussion forums](#) are the main area for class participation. The weekly discussions open on Mondays and close the following Sunday at 11:55 PM. Initial posts are due by Wednesdays at 11:55 pm. Initial posts should be at least two paragraphs in length (approximately 120-150 words), respond directly to the topic in a reflective manner, referencing the topic link and content provided, and applying the law or case materials. Respond to at least *two* students to each forum by Sunday evening at 11:55 pm.

CLASS BIOGRAPHIES/INTRODUCTIONS : You will find your instructor's autobiography posted in the "Discussion Board" of the class website. Please post your bio in the discussion board by Friday of week one. In your bio, please be sure to include:
Your name (firstname only),
Academic/Career Goals/Expectations of the class
How you found out about the class/program
Other items of interest, and
Include any preliminary questions or concerns you have at this point.

DISCUSSION FORUMS: Every week a discussion questions posted to the website "FORUMS." You are required to post a answer to each discussion question by Wednesday of the forum week. Further, you are required to post, at least, one response to two or more of your classmates' initial responses. You are not required to respond to every classmate. You may, although this is a decision each student will make.

Minimum THREE different days per forum week. As we begin our online work together I want to discuss an important aspect of online learning, namely participation. **Participation** is an important part of this collaborative online learning environment. It is well documented that participation and collaboration does enhance learning & whether it be in-class or at a

distance. You are encouraged to initiate and respond regularly and make sure **your ideas are presented clearly and are substantive**. **Postings that lack substance will receive little or no credit. For example, "I agree," "Good posting," or similar messages that add little or nothing to the discussion will receive few, if any credits.** Discussions posted to the website are an important part of the learning that takes place in this class. In essence, we learn from each other. Share ideas or questions with your colleagues. Ask them questions. Share your own experiences.

SOME SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION:

Class Meeting Discussions:

- **Please read, review, and reflect on each message PRIOR to posting to the forums.** Remember: Others cannot get visual clues as to meaning, therefore, be careful in what and how you communicate. **Once posted, messages cannot be deleted!**
- All postings to any meeting in this class are to be considered CONFIDENTIAL and for consideration and discussion only by members of this class.
- Ask questions about areas of the subject that you wish to better understand or for clarification and/or amplification.
- Read your classmates comments and presentations, and respond constructively.
- Offer personal/professional experiences/observations relevant to the items being discussed.

Participation Rubric:

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
A minimum of 3 postings per forum on at least 3 separate days.	Less than 3 substantial postings.	Three required substantial postings.	More than the 3 substantial required posting.
Answers by Wednesday -----	Posting answers after Wednesday	Posting answers on Wednesday	Posting answers before Wednesday
Respond to classmates by Sunday			
Well reasoned with appropriate analysis.	No response or lacks applicability.	Response is applicable, but may not be thorough or lacks depth.	Thorough response with appropriate depth.
Appropriate dialog with classmates	Responses do not clearly relate to topic.	Responses relate to topic.	Responses clearly relate to topic.
Appropriate grammar, spelling, and APA references.	Spelling and/or grammar errors.	No spelling or grammar errors..	No spelling, grammar errors, or punctuation errors.

Student deliverables should be submitted on the specified date by midnight of the student's time zone. For purposes of scheduling, each week or module begins on Monday 12:01 AM and concludes the following Sunday at Midnight.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK:

VOCABULARY - You are expected to read and understand the material presented in the assigned text and articles you locate.

FORMAT - Papers submitted should be written in accordance with the **APA, Bluebook, or other recognized formatting style.**

GRAMMAR - Use active voice in your writing. Also use the spelling and grammar check feature of your Word Processor before submitting your papers.

Homework Assignments: Assignments require you to read and brief law cases. Read the information on "[briefing law cases](#)". Below is the grading rubric for your case "briefs"

CASE BRIEF GRADING RUBRIC

	Outstanding A	Proficient B	Adequate C	Inadequate D/F
Case Name and Citation	Complete case name and properly formatted citation appear at the top of the case brief	Complete case name is provided but citation is incomplete	Complete case name is provided but no citation is give	Neither the case name nor the citation appears at the top of the case brief OR both case name and citation are incorrect.
Operative Facts	Operative facts are relevant to the issue being examined by the court and are logically organized.	Facts are relevant to the question being answered but lack coherence or organization.	Irrelevant facts are included. Lack of logical organization.	Relevant facts are omitted or lost in discussion of unrelated information.
Procedural Facts	Procedural history of the case is clearly and logically presented in proper chronology.	Procedural history of the case is presented but chronology is confusing.	Some procedural history is presented.	No procedural history is presented.
Issue/Short Answer	Includes all elements (applicable law, issue being examined and relevant facts) in a well crafted, grammatically correct question. Answer responds to question being posed.	Issue is separately articulated, but does not include all elements; applicable law, issue being examined and relevant facts. Answer responds to question being posed.	Issue is not separately articulated, but implied through description of facts or discussion of law. Answer does not respond to question being posed.	Issue is not articulated No answer is given.
Law	Law is correct and is relevant to the question being answered. Rule(s) of law succinctly paraphrased rather than quoted.	Law is correct and is relevant to the question being answered, but is not paraphrased	Rules of law are used in providing answer, but it is unclear if writer understands the law and is properly applying it.	Rules of law are omitted from answer or incorrect law is used.
Rationale	The court's reasoning is presented in a clear and logical fashion, leading the reader to an understanding of the rationale behind the law.	Law is applied to the facts, but the underlying rationale is not clear.	Analysis is unclear, causing the reader to question whether the law is correct.	No analysis of the law is given.
Writing Mechanics	Sentence structure, grammar, punctuation are substantially correct. Each component's material is logically organized and presented in a clear, concise manner.	Sentence structure, grammar, punctuation are substantially correct. Organization is logical but needs better consistency and clarity.	Adherence to rules of writing is poor. Material lacks organization and/or is unclear, making it difficult to understand.	Rules of writing are ignored or misunderstood. No apparent logic to the organization of the material. Writing lacks clarity.

**above adopted from case grading rubric - [AAFPE.org website](#).

Students who plagiarize will receive zero credit on the assignment.

Quizzes: The class is divided into weekly quizzes which are submitted under moodle (they are not timed quizzes like other classes)

Assignments: This includes creating legal documents, and briefing law cases

Forum Discussions: The class is divided into weekly discussion forums. This is 15% of your grade.

Late Assignments Our "[Late Work](#)" Policy is firm.

Grading Policy: Letter grades will be determined based upon the following:

Grade Distribution

Tests are 30% of your grade

Assignments are 30% of your grade

[Final Legal Research Paper](#) = 25 % of your grade

[Discussion Forums](#) = 15% of your grade and entered at the end of the semester

Grade Scale:	A	90-100
	B	80-89
	C	70-79
	D	60-69
	F	≤ 60

Please note that a grade of C or higher is required for each of the 12 paralegal certificate classes.

Points will be posted on the class website after each activity closes.

Reasonable Accommodation: For students requiring accommodation the DSPS office provides special assistance in areas like: registering for courses, specialized tutoring, note-taking, mobility assistance, special instruction, testing assistance, special equipment, special materials, instructor liaisons, community referrals, and job placement. The phone number for the Office of Students with Disabled Student Programs and Services is: (818) 364-7732. see their website at <http://lamission.edu/dsps>

Important Dates

Website opens Sunday 2/5/12 at 6 pm

February 05, 2012 Residency Determination Date for Spring 2012.
February 06, 2012 Day and Evening Classes Begin for Spring 2012.
February 11, 2012 Saturday Classes begin for Spring 2012.
February 17, 2012 - February 20, 2012 HOLIDAYS PRESIDENT'S DAY (COLLEGE CLOSED).
February 21, 2012 Last day to DROP with our incurring fees or with a REFUND for Spring 2012.
March 04, 2012 Last day to DROP without a "W" (No REFUND).
March 09, 2012 Last day to petition for Credit/No-Credit for Spring 2012.

<p>March 09, 2012 Last day to do Section Transfer for Spring 2012.</p>
<p>March 29, 2012 Deadline to petition for Spring/Summer 2012 graduation.</p>
<p>March 30, 2012 CESAR CHAVEZ DAY (COLLEGE CLOSED).</p>
<p>April 02, 2012 - April 09, 2012 SPRING BREAK.</p>
<p>May 06, 2012 Last day to DROP with a "W".</p>
<p>May 26, 2012 Classes end for Spring 2012.</p>
<p>May 28, 2012 - June 04, 2012 FINAL EXAMS FOR SPRING 2012.</p>
<p>May 28, 2012 MEMORIAL DAY(COLLEGE CLOSED).</p>
<p>June 05, 2012 Graduation Day for Spring 2012.</p>

Calendar of Activities

Week 1 - Due 2/12/12

- * Read the [syllabus](#) for the class
- Post your [Introduction](#)
- Read [Dear Online Student](#)
- Read "[How to Study Law](#)" and post to moodle
- Read [Good Legal Writing](#) and post to moodle
- Read [The Uses of Argument](#) and post to moodle
- Read [Analytic Thinking](#) and post to moodle
- Read "[Character Counts](#)" and post to moodle
- Read Differences between a "Case" and a "Code" ([10 Hour Law School](#)) and post to moodle
- Read "[Recognizing Plagarism](#)" and take the test

Week 2 - Due 2/19/12

- * Read Legal Writing in Plain English
 - #1 [Valley Forge case](#) Assignment
 - #2 [New Orleans v. Dukes](#) - "Grandfather Clause" Assignment
 - Test #A - [Legal Writing in Plain English](#) Assignment
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 3 - Due 2/26/12

- * Read Business Letters
 - * #3 "Whose Dance is it Anyway" - develop school district policy
 - * #4 Death Penalty - Baze v. Rees case
 - * Test #B Legal Demand Letter
 - * Post the Topic for Your Final Paper
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 4 - Due 3/4/12

- * Read Demand Letters
 - * #5 Marbury vs. Madiscon case
 - * #6 Blakey v. Continental Airlines
 - * Test #C Demand Letter
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 5 - Due 3/11/12

- * Read Legal Opinion Letters
 - * #7 Stansbury v. California case
 - * #8 Freedom of Speech - Hazelwood case
 - * Test D - Legal Opinion Letter
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 6 - Due 3/18/12

- * Read Legal Argumentation
 - * #9 Post Research Topic and Preliminary Information on your Legal Writing Paper
 - * #10 Hudson v Michigan instructions-hudson
 - * #11 Jackson v Birmingham Board of Education instructions-jackson
 - * Test #E Legal Argumentation instructions-argumentation
 - weekly forum discussion
-

Week 7 - Due 3/25/12

- * Read How to do an A+ research paper
 - * #12 case Nixon v Fitzgerald
 - * #13 case Gonzales v. Raich
 - * Test #F Post your thesis for your Legal Writing Paper
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 8 - Due 4/1/12

- * Read Legal Memorandum
 - * #14 - Erie v. Thompkins
 - * Test #G Legal Memorandum
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 9 - Due 4/8/12

- * Read Mandatory Settlement Conference
- * #15 Crown Packaging - Patent Infringement
- * Test #H Mandatory Settlement Conference Statement - msc-brief

- weekly forum discussion
 - **Spring Break 4/9/12 - 4/15/12**
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Week 10 - Due 4/22/12

- * #16 Roper v Simmons
 - * Read Motion for Summary Judgment
 - * Test #I Motion for Summary Judgment
 - * Read Standard Complaints
 - * Test #J Standard Complaint
 - weekly forum discussion
-

Week 11 - 4/29/12

- Read Legal Writing and Research paper
 - #17 - Child Custody - Nicolson v. Pappalardo
 - #18 - Trademark Infringement - Sobmondo Entertainment v. Falls Media
 - Test #K - Post the Outline - law17-outline - of your final legal writing project
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 12 - Due 5/6/12

- * Read "Putting Together End Notes"
 - * #19 Credit Default Swap Agreement - Citigroup case
 - * Test #L Post your "footnotes" or "end notes" - law17-footnotes - complete case citations, and not just internet websites
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 13 - Due 5/13/12

- * #20 - Dog Sniff case
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 14 - Due 5/20/12

- * Test # M - Post your Final Legal Writing Project - law17-final-paper
 - weekly forum discussion
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Week 15 - Due 5/27/12

- * TBA

Week 16 - Due 6/3/12

- * TBA

updated: 1/13/12