



## Paralegal Studies Program

Los Angeles  
Mission College

### Syllabus

Law 17 - Legal Writing – 3:00 Units

**Spring 2014**

Spring 2014 - Hybrid Class - Section 3305

Meetings: Weds. eve. 6:50 - 8:15 pm, [CSB 203](#)

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](mailto:abogado@pacbell.net)  
Etudes site <http://etudes.org>  
Calendar <http://duedates.pbworks.com/w/page/72770669/Law17-Spring2014>

Textbook:  LexisNexis

Lexis Nexis is required for the class

<http://abogado.pbworks.com/w/page/63168047/lexisnexis>

click [on this link to order your textbook](#)

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.

**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 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 etudes course management system. read <http://etudes.pbworks.com> Carefully read [our policies](#).

The class follows a weekly format. 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 [Google Chrome](#) 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 Google Chrome - <http://google.com/chrome>

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

Get a free email account at: [www.mail.google.com](http://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://etudes.org>

**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, 11:59 pm, 2/23/14. You may be dropped 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 #3305.** I am also available in-person or by telephone on Wednesdays 12 to 5:30 pm on campus in the faculty offices.

**Discussion Forums:** The discussion forums are the main area for class participation. The weekly discussions open on Mondays and close the following Sunday at 11:59 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 11:59 pm.

**CLASS 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

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:**

|   | <b>Unsatisfactory</b>                    | <b>Satisfactory</b>                         | <b>Exemplary</b>                                     |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>A minimum of 3 postings per forum on at least 3 separate days.</b> | Less than 3 <b>substantial</b> postings. | Three required <b>substantial</b> postings. | More than the 3 <b>substantial</b> required posting. |
| <b>Answers by Wednesday</b>   | Posting answers after Wednesday          | Posting answers on Wednesday                | Posting answers before Wednesday                     |

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**Respond to  
classmates by  
Sunday**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Well reasoned<br/>with<br/>appropriate<br/>analysis.</b>           | No response or lacks applicability.       | Response is applicable, but may not be thorough or lacks depth. | Thorough response with appropriate depth.           |
| <b>Appropriate<br/>dialog with<br/>classmates</b>                     | Responses do not clearly relate to topic. | Responses relate to topic.                                      | Responses clearly relate to topic.                  |
| <b>Appropriate<br/>grammar,<br/>spelling, and<br/>APA references.</b> | 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

|                               | <b>Outstanding<br/>A</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>B</b>  | <b>Adequate<br/>C</b>  | <b>Inadequate<br/>D/F</b>   |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Case Name and Citation</b> | 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. |
| <b>Operative Facts</b>        | 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.  |
| <b>Procedural Facts</b>       | 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.   |
| <b>Issue/Short Answer</b>     | 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. | Issue is not separately articulated, but implied through description of facts or discussion of law. Answer does not respond to | Issue is not articulated<br><br>No answer is given.   |

|                          |  |   |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|--|
|                          |  | Answer responds to question being posed.  | question being posed.  |  |
| <b>Law</b>               | 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.   |
| <b>Rationale</b>         | 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.   |
| <b>Writing Mechanics</b> | 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](http://AAFPE.org)

Students who plagiarize will receive zero credit on the assignment.

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**Quizzes:** The class is divided into weekly quizzes which are submitted under etudes (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.

**Dropping your class/Exclusion:** Check the [Academic Calendar](#) for the last day to drop the class with a "W"

College regulations state that a student **may be excluded** from a course following accumulation of absences equal to a week of course work. The 12th week of class is the last date a student may drop a class with a "W". (or the 8th week in a "Late Start" class). Thereafter, the student must receive a grade in the class.

If a student has a accumulated score of 50 or below in the 12th week (or the 8th week in a "Late Start" class), it is deemed that the student has accumulated absences in excess of a week of course work, and the instructor MAY, but is NOT required to DROP the student from class, with or without notice. **It is the sole responsibility of the student, and not the instructor, to drop the class.**

In addition, students who fail to login and post their introduction to class within the first (ten) days of class may be dropped from their online class.

**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

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|              |   |        |
|--------------|---|--------|
| 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 Accommodations:** 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>

Website opens Sunday 2/9/14 @ 8 am

Please note that if you do not drop the class by the specified deadline, then you must receive a grade, and cannot request to be dropped or to receive an Incomplete grade.

\*PLEASE NOTE: The District required earlier and revised deadlines starting Summer 2012. A "W" will appear on your transcript record after this date.

REMINDER: There is a new LACCD enrollment limit. The limit is now three times to take a class and includes both substandard grades and withdrawals. (See Important Notice, page 3 of the College Catalog)

If you stop attending a class (or wish to drop a class), YOU MUST DROP THE CLASS YOURSELF –

OFFICIALLY – on or before November 17th, 2013 (Internet). Failure to do so may result in a grade of “F” in that class

### **New 3 Repeat Rule**

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

### **All Students Please Read**

### **Beginning Summer 2012: New 3 Repeat Rule**

EFFECTIVE SUMMER 2012, course withdrawal (“W”) or a substandard grade (“D,” “F,” or “NP”) count as an attempt at a course. Only three attempts at any one course will be allowed, with some exceptions. Listed below are the new rules that all students need to know about.

- Students who drop or are excluded after the last day to drop without a grade of “W” will have a “W” appear on their transcript. The “W” will count as an attempt for that course.
- For the Fall semester, September 8th, 2013 is the last day to drop a 16-week semester length class without a “W.” Students will be able to drop a class online until this date. Contact the office of Admissions and Records for deadlines on late start, short-term and special program classes.
- A course in a student’s transcript which currently shows a recorded “W” counts as an attempt for that course.
- Students will not be allowed to register for any course within the LACCD if there are three recorded attempts for that course in any combination of W, D, F, or NP grades.
- Add permits for a course within the LACCD will not be processed if there are three recorded attempts for that course in any combination of W, D, F, or NP grades.
- For courses specifically designated as “repeatable,” students may repeat up to three times (See Title 5 California Code of Regulations sections 55040, 55041, 58161).
- Where the student’s number of enrollments in a course exceeds the allowable amount, the student may petition for an additional enrollment in cases of extenuating circumstances.

What students should do:

- Be sure you are academically ready for classes you enroll in.
- If you must drop a course, drop before the specified deadline for dropping a class without a grade of “W.”

### **Calendar of Activities**

### **Distribution of Grades**

Tests is 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

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A = 90% or above

B = 80% or above

C = 70% or above

D = 60% or above

A grade of C or greater is required to pass the class

### **Week 1 - Due 2/16/14**

\* Read the syllabus for the class

- Read [Dear Online Student](#)
  - Post your [Introduction](#)
  - Discuss [Law Study](#)
  - Discuss [Legal Argumentation](#)
  - Discuss [Learning Ethics](#)
  - Discuss [Strategies against Procrastination](#)
  - Discuss [Reading Law Cases-Codes](#)
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### **Week 2 - Due 2/23/14**

\* Read Legal Writing in Plain English

- #1 How to Write an A+ Paper
  - #2 Finding a legal topic for your final research paper
  - Test #A - [Legal Writing in Plain English Assignment](#)
  - weekly forum discussion
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### **Week 3 - Due 3/2/14**

\* 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 3/9/14**

- \* 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 3/16/14**

- \* 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 3/23/14**

- \* 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
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### **Week 7 - Due 3/30/14**

- \* Read How to do an A+ research paper
  - \* **NEW** #12 Pennoyer v Neff
  - \* **NEW** #13 case
  - \* Test #F Post your thesis for your Legal Writing Paper
    - weekly forum discussion
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### **Week 8 - Due 4/6/14**

- \* Read Legal Memorandum

- \* #14 - Erie v. Thompkins
  - \* Test #G Legal Memorandum
    - weekly forum discussion
    - **Spring Break 4/7 - 4/13**
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### **Week 9 - Due 4/20/14**

- \* Read Mandatory Settlement Conference
  - \* **NEW** #15 Affirmative Action - Grutter and Fisher cases
  - \* Test #H Mandatory Settlement Conference Statement - msc-brief
    - weekly forum discussion
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### **Week 10 - Due 4/27/14**

- \* #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
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### **Week 11 - Due 5/4/14**

- 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 5/11/14**

- \* 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 5/18/14**

- \* #20 - Dog Sniff case
    - weekly forum discussion
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### **Week 14 - Due 5/25/14**

- \* Test # M - Post your Final Legal Writing Project - law17-final-paper
    - weekly forum discussion
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### **Week 15 - Due 6/1/14**

- \* TBA

### **Week 16 - Due 6/8/14**

- \* TBA

### **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

If you require special accommodations for a disability, religious holiday, or any other reason please inform your instructor(s) within the first week of the course and we will accommodate you if at all possible. For accommodations due to disability, you must consult with the Disabled Students Programs and Services Office after which we will abide by their recommendations.

### **COLLEGE RESOURCES FOR LAMC STUDENTS**

see <http://lamission.edu/de/student-services>

**Admissions and Records:** Students can register for classes, request transcripts, file petitions for graduation, and drop classes at this office. For more information call 818-833-3322 or visit: <http://www.lamission.edu/admissions/>

**Assessment Center:** Offers student assessments in English, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and Mathematics. Please contact the Assessment Center at (818) 364-7613 for more information or visit <http://www.lamission.edu/assessment/>

**Bookstore:** For hours of operation, book availability, buybacks, and other information call 818-364-7767 or 7768 or visit <http://eagleslanding.lamission.edu/default.asp>

**Counseling Department:** For appointments and information call 818-364-7655 or visit <http://www.lamission.edu/counseling/>

**Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S):** For appointments, eligibility and information call 818-364-7732 or visit <http://www.lamission.edu/dsps/>

**Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOP&S):** For appointments, eligibility and information call 818-364-7645 or visit <http://www.lamission.edu/eops/>

**Financial Aid:** For information and applications call 818-364-7648 or visit <http://www.lamission.edu/financialaid/>

**Library:** For information on hours, resources, workshops, and other services contact 818-364-7106 or visit <http://www.lamission.edu/library/>

**STEM Office:** For information on free tutoring, resources and academic counseling for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Technology) students visit: <http://www.lamission.edu/stem>

**Tutoring Services in Learning Center:** Laboratories for Learning, Writing, Math & Science. Walk-in and appointment services offered. Call 818-364-7754 or visit [www.lamission.edu/learningcenter/](http://www.lamission.edu/learningcenter/)

### **Three Attempt Limit**

A new state policy in effect as of 2012 limits students to **three attempts per course**. Receiving a grade or a "W" for a course counts as an attempt, **regardless of when the course was taken**. Withdrawal by the deadline to avoid a "W" will not count as an attempt. For Spring 2013 the deadline to avoid a "W" is Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.

**updated: 1/30/14**

