

LAW 17 – LEGAL WRITING

Instructor: [Henry Soledad, Esq.](#)

Office: Faculty Office #20

Meeting Time: Tuesdays 8:30 – 9:55 PM (mandatory)

Location: CMS 005

Office hours: Before or after class Tuesday evenings.

Email: soledahm@lamission.edu

Etudes Site <http://etudes.org>

Resources: LexisNexis (required) – available through the LAMC bookstore.

Recommended - The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog: CSU 3 units. This course consists of advanced legal drafting and writing, including research and special projects. The student will draft a business letter, a demand letter, a Legal Memorandum, a Mandatory Settlement Conference Brief, a Motion for Summary Judgment, and a Final Research Project.

Law 17 introduces the student to advanced legal drafting and writing, including research and special projects. The student will also study and learn the essentials of legal research.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Law 17 is organized into assignments, quizzes, and one final paper.

COURSE TEXT

LexisNexis (required) – available through the LAMC bookstore.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the class, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate their knowledge in the substantive law and procedures of legal writing including Legal Writing in Plain English, preparing Business Letters, Demand Letters, Legal Opinion Letters, Legal Argumentation, How to do an A+ research paper, Legal Memorandum, Mandatory Settlement Conference, Motion for Summary Judgment, Legal Research and Writing papers

2. "Think critically" in law, and in the area of legal writing

3. Brief a law case in legal writing

4. Prepare a legal research and writing paper in the area of legal writing - using correct legal research procedures, citations, and good legal writing content, form, and presentation.

Students will read law cases and write a case briefs 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.

GRADING & EVALUATION

The class will be composed of assignments, quizzes, and written projects. The deadlines will be clearly posted on etudes. Quizzes will be posted and students are expected to fill in their answers to the multiple choice/essay questions during a deadline period. After the time period has expired, the quiz/assignment link will no longer be available, and the student will NOT be allowed to take the quiz/assignment.

The "letter grade" scale is as follows.

A = 90 - 100 percent of total points

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79

D = 60 - 69

F = Below 60

Distribution of Grades

Tests = 30% of your grade

Assignments = 35% of your grade

Final Legal Research Paper = 25 % of your grade

On-Campus Attendance = 10% of your grade

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: ASSIGNMENTS SUBMITTED LATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNLESS PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUESTED AND GRANTED BY THE INSTRUCTOR.

EXTRA CREDIT: Since the law is in constant change, along with the advent of the Internet, issues may arise that are timely and germane to our class. Therefore, opportunities may arise during the term that allow for extra credit, although no extra credit is presently offered.

INCOMPLETE: If you require a grade of "incomplete," you must advise me as soon as possible and discuss the terms of its removal.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic honesty is highly valued at Mission College, just as it is at all colleges and universities. A student must always submit work that represents his or her original words or ideas. If any words or ideas are used that do not represent the student's original words or ideas, the student must cite all relevant sources. The student should also make it clear to what extent such sources were used. Words or ideas that require citations include, but are not limited to, all hard copy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communications when the content of such communications clearly originates from an identifiable source. All submissions to any public meeting or private mailbox fall within the scope of words and ideas that require citations if used by someone other than the original author. The submission of a plagiarized assignment will result in an "F" for the course.

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

Class format: This class is a hybrid class, with mandatory meetings on campus Tuesday evenings, CMS 005, 8:30 - 9:55 pm. We use the etudes course management system. Carefully read [our policies](#).

The class follows a weekly format. If you click on the links on the left side of your etudes classroom, you will see your assignments, quizzes, and discussions. There are many opportunities for you to participate and earn points to attain a good grade.

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

To be a successful 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://etudes.org>

Contacting Your Instructor: Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions; email me at: soledahm@lamission.edu in the subject line put: Law 17 #3200. I am also available in-person before or after the on campus class, or email.

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 Bluebook 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	Proficient	Adequate	Inadequate
	A	B	C	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](http://AAFPE.org)

Students who plagiarize will receive zero credit on the assignment, may fail the class entirely and face further disciplinary actions.

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

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.

[Check the Academic Calendar for Important Dates](#)

If you stop attending a class (or wish to drop a class), YOU MUST DROP THE CLASS YOURSELF ONLINE– OFFICIALLY – on or before the specified date. Failure to do so may result in a grade of “F” in that class. REGISTRATION INFORMATION Website – <http://www.laccd.edu> (Student Information System)

Admission Regular Office Hours (Subject to change) Monday and Thursday – 8am-5pm Tuesday and Wednesday – 8am-7pm Friday – 8am-12noon

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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 Spring Semester, February 23, 2014 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.”
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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-resources>

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/

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.