



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
SCHOOL of LAW

Legal Communication and Research Skills I

Professor Frohock

Section A3—Fall 2020

Zoom Class Meetings:

Friday 12:00-1:40 p.m.

Zoom Appointments:

cfrohock@law.miami.edu

Objectives

LComm I will help you develop reasoning, writing, research, and oral argument skills in the context of simulated legal disputes. You will learn how to prepare documents, how to interact with clients and colleagues, and how to research legal issues. You will also receive training in oral advocacy and other communication skills essential to a successful career. By the end of your first year, you should have the skills to succeed as a summer law clerk or intern.

This course teaches foundational lawyering skills: engaging in predictive legal analysis, conveying that analysis in writing, and conducting legal research. The course uses many tools to help you learn, including lectures, readings, writing exercises, research exercises, and detailed feedback.

Online Attendance

This is a learning-by-doing class. Accordingly, punctual attendance at all Zoom classes and other meetings is required, and any unexcused absence will adversely affect your grade. Because the American Bar Association requires class attendance, missing more than 20% of class meetings may preclude you from earning credit for this course. If you do miss a class, you are responsible for all material covered, announcements made, and assignments given.

Assignments

Partial & Complete Memoranda	Ungraded
Professionalism & Class Participation	15%
Grammar & Writing Skills	15%
Research Report	Pass/Fail
FINAL Memorandum	70%

Professionalism and Class Participation

You are an attorney in training, and your commitment to the ideals and values of professionalism begins now. Your grade includes a component for professionalism and class participation, with the expectation that you will do the following:

1. attend all Zoom classes and other meetings and be punctual;
2. complete all reading and writing assignments;
3. participate in class discussions;
4. submit all assignments on time;
5. proofread and edit your documents;
6. show respect and civility to others; and
7. make a good-faith effort and follow directions on all assignments, whether graded or ungraded.

Deadlines

All assignments must be submitted on time. In legal practice, time management and adherence to deadlines are essential; missing a deadline may constitute legal malpractice. **Students who submit a late assignment may forfeit the opportunity to have the benefit of my critique or face other penalties.**

That said, an emergency may require a deadline extension. If an emergency arises, please let me know as soon as possible.

Texts

Required

1. Barton & Smith, The Handbook for the New Legal Writer (2d ed.)
2. Strunk & White, The Elements of Style (4th ed.)
3. The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (21st ed.)
4. Core Grammar for Lawyers (subscribe at coregrammarforlawyers.com with class code 320-73-4155)

Recommended

1. Black's Law Dictionary
2. Cohen & Olson, Legal Research in a Nutshell (10th ed.)
3. Barris, Understanding and Mastering the Bluebook (3d ed.)

Blackboard

The course webpage is available on Blackboard, including all assignment folders and weekly handouts. Assignments submitted on Blackboard must be uploaded by the date and time specified on your Assignment Schedule. **Once a document is submitted, that document is final.**

Honor Code

You must follow the Law School's Honor Code. Plagiarism is an Honor Code violation that may result in penalties, including suspension. Do not accept assistance, give assistance, or collaborate on any assignment except as permitted. If you are unsure whether an action violates the Honor Code, ask me *before* undertaking the action.

Academic Integrity Policy

Students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Meetings of this course might be recorded by the University. Any recordings will be available to students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Recordings may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments. If the instructor or a University of Miami office plans any other uses for the recordings, beyond this class, students identifiable in the recordings will be notified to request consent prior to such use.

Disability & Accommodation

If a student has a disability, or suspects that he or she may have a disability, please contact Jessie Howell, Director of Accessibility, for information about available opportunities, resources, and services. Her phone number is 305-284-4551, and her email address is access@law.miami.edu.

Title IX

The University of Miami seeks to maintain a safe learning, living, and working environment free from all types of sexual misconduct, including Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Sex- or Gender-Based Discrimination, Sexual Assault (including Sexual Battery), Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Harassment, and Stalking. For additional

information about the University’s efforts to prevent, stop, and address sexual misconduct, including resources and reporting options, please visit www.miami.edu/titleix or contact the University’s Title IX Office at titleixcoordinator@miami.edu.

Assignment Schedule

This schedule may change during the semester.

Week	Date	Assignments
1	August 14	Introduction Read: • Assignment Materials for Heading & Question Presented, Partial Memo, and Complete Memo
2	August 21	Read: • <u>Elements of Style</u> , pages 1-33 • <u>Handbook</u> , chapters 1-6 & 43 Ungraded Heading and Question Presented—due on Blackboard by 8:00 p.m.
3	August 28	Read: • <u>Elements of Style</u> , pages 34-65 • <u>Handbook</u> , chapters 7-8 & 18-19 • <u>Bluebook</u> , B1-B10 • Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.800 Core Grammar Pre-Test—due online
4	September 4	Read: • <u>Elements of Style</u> , pages 66-85 • <u>Handbook</u> , chapters 9-12 • <u>Bluebook</u> , R4.1, R10-10.2, T6 Ungraded Partial Memo—due on Blackboard by 8:00 p.m.
5	September 11	Read: • <u>Handbook</u> , chapters 39-42

6	September 18	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <u>Handbook</u>, chapters 13-17 <p>Ungraded Complete Memo—due on Blackboard by 8:00 p.m.</p>
7	September 25	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Assignment Materials for Final Memo · <u>Handbook</u>, chapters 20-23 <p>Legal research—librarian visit</p>
8	October 2	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <u>Handbook</u>, chapters 32-34 <p>Legal research—librarian visit</p>
9	October 9	Core Grammar Post-Test—due online Research Report—due on Blackboard by 8:00 p.m.
10	October 16	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <u>Handbook</u>, chapters 35-42
11	October 23	Review for Final Memo
12	October 30	Review for Final Memo
	November 2	Final Memo—due on Blackboard by 8:00 p.m.