

Poli Sci 4323: LSPI Courts In Action: Phase I, July-August 2019

Time/Days	11:00am-noon and 1:00-5:00pm, M-F
Location	morning: Miners Hall 301; afternoon: Cotton Memorial 201, except on July 18, 22, 23, 26, 30, 31 & Aug 2: meet in Library on those afternoons-see days highlighted in blue on calendar below
Professor	Lisa J Soto
TA	Michael Samaniego
Office	Miners Hall 107
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Phone	747-8581
Office Hours	by appointment

Course Description

This course addresses the legal system in action by introducing you to legal analysis and legal writing. The course will instruct on reading and understanding the law coming from the courts and the legislature, emphasize strong writing and grammar fundamentals as strategies for effective legal writing, and require you to engage in basic legal analysis and legal writing. The aims of this course include your ability to:

- Actively read and extract key information from judicial opinions and statutory law;
- Engage in legal analysis and critically analyze legal information;
- Begin to understand and engage in legal writing;
- Improve upon grammatical knowledge and writing principles for strategic legal writing; and
- Analyze the law, take public policy into consideration, and apply it all to real world situations with real world implications.

Required Texts & Materials

The Elements of Legal Style (2nd Ed.) by Brian A. Garner

A Lawyer Writes: A Practical Guide to Legal Analysis by Christine Coughlin, Joan Malmud Rocklin, and Sandy Patrick

Harvard Law School: The Case Studies materials (*provided with permission*)

Additional Handouts throughout the course

Assignments & Projects

Various small-scale assignments (in-class and homework) will be given throughout phase I, in addition to a legal memorandum, a case study project to include a group paper and presentation, and a final grammar and writing examination.

Grading & Policies

Your phase I grade will be based upon the following:

- 35%: Legal Memorandum
- 25%: Harvard Case Study Project Paper
- 10%: Harvard Case Study Project Presentation
- 15%: Grammar & Writing Examination
- 15%: Performance/Participation in Class (to include small-scale assignments)

Performance in class means active attendance with meaningful participation and completion of work; I look for quality, not quantity, in terms of your classroom contributions. I may exercise the Socratic method during the course and expect everyone to have completed all homework assigned and be ready to participate in class each day.

I expect you to submit all assignments in a timely manner. **Save early; save often; save in multiple places.** Losing material because of computer crashes, equipment-related problems, etc., is never an excuse for late or incomplete assignments. You must complete all of the assignments, regardless of absences. Late assignments will be downgraded one letter grade per day late, up to three letter grades.

A suspected act of plagiarism (or other form of academic dishonesty) will be referred to the Dean of Students. **You should be familiar with ethical guidelines for conduct spelled out in the Student Affairs section of the Handbook of Operating procedures** <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?alias=admin.utep.edu/hoop> and be aware of other University regulations.

You must do your own original work in this class and appropriately identify that portion of your work that is collaborative with others, borrowed from others, or extracted from other sources, including legal materials. Whenever you borrow **original** materials, quote from a source (three words or more), or use ideas from others, you are legally and ethically obligated to acknowledge that use, following appropriate conventions for documenting sources. You will learn basic legal citation in this course. To borrow someone else's publication without acknowledging that use is an act of academic and professional dishonesty.

If you have doubts about whether you are using your own or others' work ethically and legally, ask me. Follow this primary principle: be up front and honest about what you are doing and about what you have contributed to an assignment. In addition to following the basic principles of fair use of others' work and honesty and forthrightness in crediting the contribution of others to your work, you are expected to adhere to another basic professional principle: always treat others with respect. I expect robust discussion, debate, and differences of opinion in class and also expect that everyone interact and discuss issues in a respectful manner.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. University policy requires that you attend every class. If you do miss a class, for whatever reason, you are responsible for finding out about missed information and completing assignments in a timely manner, whether on the syllabus or assigned in the class itself. This is a two-part course; your final grade will be issued at the end of Phase II. Missing more than two of my classes collectively in Phase I and Phase II may result in your overall course grade being lowered as much as one full letter grade or more. Be punctual. Being late to class and/or leaving early three times counts as an absence. On the days that you are required to sign in for attendance purposes, you must sign in for yourself. You may not sign in for another person, regardless of the circumstances. Doing so may be construed as academic dishonesty. **If you have an emergency or an absence that you believe should be excused, contact me directly to address it, and do so prior to the absence, when possible.** With regard to assignments completed in class and homework assigned when you are absent, you are responsible for asking about the assignments and completing them in a timely manner.

Compositions

You are expected to produce original, high-quality, sophisticated work. Neatness, visual appeal, and mechanical and grammatical correctness are essential, but do not guarantee that a text is well constructed. I expect you to proofread and edit each submission to avoid careless errors; **spelling and grammar check is not a sufficient method of proofreading for grammar or for spelling.** Your out-of-class assignments should be composed in a formal, high-quality form. Your written documents should also have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting. All assignments should comport with the instructions given.

Accommodations

I am committed to following the laws that pertain to individuals with disabilities and to making reasonable accommodations, in accordance with the applicable law, and in consultation with students and Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). If you believe you have a disability for which accommodations are needed or if you already have a documented disability for which accommodations are needed, please (1) notify and consult with CASS as soon as possible (747-5148; Union East, Room 106) and (2) inform me of the accommodations needed, as applicable.

Weekly Schedule (Provisional -- Subject to change)

***ALW** refers to *A Lawyer Writes: A Practical Guide to Legal Analysis* by Christine Coughlin, Joan Malmud Rocklin, and Sandy Patrick

***Garner** refers to *The Elements of Legal Style (2nd Ed.)* by Brian A. Garner

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 (7/16-7/19)	<p>LSAT NO CLASS</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing Pretest</p> <p>Long lunch period to read: ALW, ch 3 & Christensen article</p> <p><i>Course Introduction</i></p> <p><i>The Anatomy of Judicial Opinions; Reading Cases Effectively</i></p> <p><i>Case Briefing Workshop and Review of Opinions</i></p> <p><i>Mindset; Investing Now</i></p> <p>Homework: Complete Torts Briefs; Read Garner ch 2.1-2.21</p>	<p>AM: Grammar, syntax, etc., preview—why it matters-legal cases lost on grammatical errors</p> <p>Torts Briefs Due at 1pm</p> <p><i>Review Briefs</i></p> <p><i>Introduction to Legal Analysis</i></p> <p><i>Hand out cases for legal memorandum assignment</i></p> <p>Homework: Read ALW ch 2 & 4; read memo cases; Read Garner ch 2.22-2.28</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>AFTERNOON LIBRARY LAB 204A</p> <p><i>Sources & Systems of Law</i></p> <p><i>Legal Memorandum Assignment; Memo Case Briefs</i></p> <p>Legal Memorandum Briefs Due at 5pm</p> <p>Homework: Read ALW ch 5 & 11; Read Garner ch 3.1-3.5</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p><i>Legal Analysis and Legal Writing</i></p> <p><i>Analyzing Legal Issues I</i></p> <p>Homework: Read ALW chs 6, 7, 8 & 9; Read Garner ch 4.1-4.14</p>
Week 2 (7/22-7/26)	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>AFTERNOON LIBRARY LAB 204A</p> <p><i>Analyzing Legal Issues II</i></p> <p>Homework: Read ALW chs 12, 13, 14 & 15; Read Garner ch 5</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>AFTERNOON LIBRARY LAB 204A</p> <p><i>Legal Proofs</i></p> <p>Homework: Read Garner ch 7.1-7.20</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p><i>Analyzing Legal Issues & Legal Proofs Cont'd</i></p> <p>Homework: Read ALW ch 16</p>	<p>AM: Editing Workshop</p> <p><i>Analyzing Statutory Issues</i></p> <p><i>Legal Memorandum Q&A</i></p>	<p>AM: Harvard Case Study Project</p> <p>LIBRARY Soto & Samaniego 2nd Floor</p> <p>SUBMIT LEGAL MEMORANDUM BY 10PM SATURDAY</p> <p>Homework: Read Harvard Case Study Memo and Review Packet</p>

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 3 (7/29-8/2)	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>Financial Regulation Case Study</p> <p>Assign Groups</p> <p>Review Paper Assignment</p> <p>Homework: Read Garner ch 6.1-6.24; Work on Harvard Case Study Project</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>AFTERNOON LIBRARY LAB 204A</p> <p>Financial Regulation Case Study Group Work</p> <p>Homework: Work on Harvard Case Study Project</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>AFTERNOON LIBRARY LAB 204A</p> <p>Financial Regulation Case Study Group Work</p> <p>Homework: Work on Harvard Case Study Project</p>	<p>AM: Grammar & Writing</p> <p>Financial Regulation Case Study Review of Appendices & Issues</p> <p>Homework: Work on Harvard Case Study Project</p>	<p>LIBRARY Soto & Samaniego 2nd Floor</p> <p>Financial Regulation Case Study Work</p> <p>Homework: Work on Harvard Case Study Project</p>
Week 4 (8/5-8/6)	<p>GRAMMAR & WRITING EXAMINATION 11am-noon</p> <p>HARVARD CASE STUDY PROJECT PAPER DUE at 5PM</p>	<p>LAST DAY OF PHASE I</p> <p>TORTS FINAL IN THE MORNING;</p> <p>HARVARD CASE STUDY PROJECT PRESENTATION IN THE AFTERNOON</p>			