New Course Request

Indiana University

South Bend Campus

Check Appropriate Boxes: Undergraduate credit [X] Graduate credit [ ] Professional credit [ ]

1. School/Division: College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
2. Academic Subject Code: POLS
3. Course Number: Y221 (must be cleared with University Enrollment Services)
4. Instructor: E. Benchik
5. Course Title: Legal Research and Writing for Paralegal Studies
   Recommended Abbreviation (Optional): 
   (Limited to 32 Characters including spaces)
6. First time this course is to be offered (Semester/Year): Fall 2010
7. Credit Hours: Fixed at ___ or Variable from ________ to ________
8. Is this course to be graded S-F (only)? Yes [ ] No [X]
9. Is variable title approval being requested? Yes [ ] No [X]
10. Course description (not to exceed 50 words) for Bulletin publication: Development of research and communication skills special to the area of law. Includes methods of organizing and conducting legal research, resources available for legal research, presentation of findings in memoranda and briefs, other forms of legal writing.

11. Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at ___ or Variable from ________ to ________
12. Non-Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at NA or Variable from ________ to ________
13. Estimated enrollment: 25 of which 0 percent are expected to be graduate students.
14. Frequency of scheduling: 1 per year Will this course be required for majors? Yes [X] perlega1 students only
15. Justification for new course: We are seeking to combine computer aided research (Y214) and book research (Y234) into one course.
16. Are the necessary reading materials currently available in the appropriate library? Yes [X]
17. Please append a complete outline of the proposed course, and indicate instructor (if known), textbooks, and other materials.
18. If this course overlaps with existing courses, please explain with which courses it overlaps and whether this overlap is necessary, desirable, or unimportant.
19. A copy of every new course proposal must be submitted to departments, schools, or divisions in which there may be overlap of the new course with existing courses or areas of strong concern, with instructions that they send comments directly to the originating Curriculum Committee. Please append a list of departments, schools, or divisions thus consulted.

Submitted by:

Department Chairman/Division Director

Date 10/28/09

Approved by:

Dean

Date 12/4/09

Dean of Graduate School (when required)

Date

Chancellor/Vice-President

Date

University Enrollment Services

Date

After School/Division approval, forward the last copy (without attachments) to University Enrollment Services for initial processing, and the remaining four copies and attachments to the Campus Chancellor or Vice-President.
Courses associated with these subject areas may or may not be offered at the Columbus campus. View the IUPUC Schedule of Classes first, then search for the appropriate full bulletin description here. You may also check the Degree Programs link on the IUPUC homepage to discover which courses are required for specific degrees offered by the Columbus campus.

Courses >> POLS >> Y221

POLS Y221 - Legal Research and Writing for Paralegal Studies (3 cr.)

P: Y211. Development of research and communication skills special to the area of law. Includes methods of organizing and conducting legal research, resources available for legal research, presentation of findings in memoranda and briefs, other forms of legal writing.
Political Science Y221  
Legal Research and Writing for Paralegal Studies  
DRAFT SYLLABUS

Instructor: Edward Benchik  
Office Number: (574) 233-7701  
Fax Number: (574) 233-7721  
Email: ebenchik@iusb.edu

This course aims to develop the research and communication skills special to the area of law. It introduces students to methods of organizing and conducting legal research, resources available for legal research, presentation of findings in memoranda and briefs, and other forms of legal writing.

Course Objectives:

1. To acquire proficiency in using the Lexis search engine to find cases, statutes, secondary authorities, and to check citations to determine continued validity of decisions

2. To become familiarized with Lexis and other computer research materials in the public domain

3. To learn basic skills needed to use online and published resources for application in a working legal environment

4. To acquire familiarity with standard citation (Bluebook) form

5. To learn essential aspects of legal writing as currently practiced in professional settings

Texts/Reading Material:

The textbook that will be used in this course is Bouchoux, Legal Research and Writing for Paralegals, Aspen Publishers, 4th edition, 2006.

Students will also need to obtain the most recent 18th edition of A Uniform System of Citation, commonly known as the Bluebook or Harvard Citator. On occasion the instructor will distribute handouts that supplement the class lecture and students are expected to review the same and to become familiar with its contents. The instructor has from time to time secured instructional materials gratis from Lexis/Nexis that explicate current or newly added features and students will be held responsible for the information set forth within.
Grading Scale:

Students will be evaluated based upon performance on two assigned research projects and a final exam. All graded work will be take home. All work is to be completed individually; no assistance outside of class should be sought by or offered to other students. Violation of this directive will be regarded as academic fraud and will referred to the appropriate office for further investigation that may result in the imposition of sanctions.

Each of the four graded assignments and the final exam will count equally toward the grade.

The following grading scale will be in force:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
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Absence Policy:

Because of the cumulative nature of the subject matter, no more than two unexcused absences are permitted absent compelling circumstances and instructor’s approval.

University Policies:

The University has enacted several policies that govern teaching faculty and students. This instructor has agreed to be bound by all applicable policies and expects the students to do likewise. Any request for an accommodation, whether due to disability, religious observance or any other matter of import that potentially affects the student’s ability to attend and follow the course, should be brought to the instructor’s attention as soon as practicable once the student realizes that such a request will need to be made.

Disability Services:
If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. Contact the Director of Disabled Student Services (Administration Building, room 149, telephone number 520-4832), as soon as possible to work out the details. Once the Director has provided you with a letter attesting to your needs for modification, bring the letter to me. For more information, please visit the web site for Office of Disabled Student Services http://www.iusb.edu/~sbdss/

Academic Misconduct and or Dishonesty:

Students are expected to be familiar with and to adhere to all published University policies and directives regarding academic fraud or dishonesty in any form. Not only does academic misconduct adversely affect the student’s relationship with the University and potentially subjects the student to whatever sanction the University elects to impose, it also casts grave doubt upon the student’s chance for success in a field that is highly regulated and whose practitioners are subject to professional discipline not only for their own acts, but for those of subordinates working under their supervision.

Honesty in an academic setting is generally presumed, but the instructor reserves the right to transmit concerns about possible misconduct to the appropriate departmental or administrative authority for further disposition as that person or entity may deem appropriate. Any violation may result in serious academic penalty, ranging from receiving a warning, to failing the assignment, to failing the course, to expulsion from the University.

Class Meeting Topics:

First week  Introduction to internet and library based legal research
             Research fundamentals — Relative advantages and disadvantages between online searching and traditional paper based research
             Overview of online resources: Indiana appellate and trial courts, Indiana Secretary of State, other state agencies, including Delaware Secretary of State

Second Week  Overview of West regional reporter series and citation form; introduction of alternate citation forms (i.e., Indiana Rules of Appellate Procedure, ALWD) Search strategies, introduction of methods for structuring of search query Boolean v. natural search language.

Third Week  Identification of databases, including regional reporter system
             Importance of searching in a sufficiently narrow database to maximize efficiency
             Use of digest and key numbering system as applied to case law
Keyword/topic based searches
Specific issues that arise in researching case law: terms of art, similar search terms that can produce different or unintended or unneeded search results

Fourth Week
Researching statutes, federal and state constitutions, administrative codes and court rules
Use of digest and key numbering system as applied to statutes and constitutions
Research project 1 assigned

Fifth Week
Mechanics of Legal Writing
Grammar, spelling, punctuation
Preference for Plain English over legalese
Legal Writing: Dos and Don't's
Research project 1 due

Sixth Week
Strategies for Effective Writing
Legal writing conventions: avoidance of nominalizations, repetition, active v. passive voice, importance of brevity and clarity
Writing project 1 assigned: internal 'memo setting forth research findings

Seventh Week
Shepardizing and cite checking with Lexis and Shepard's hardbound volumes; identification of symbols and meanings associated with same, limitations of symbol codes
Writing project 1 due

Eighth Week
Secondary sources: American Law Reports, legal encyclopedias, law reviews, Commerce Clearing House topical materials and specialized case reporter systems
Research project 2 assigned

Ninth Week
Continuation of secondary sources: treatises, legislative history, Restatements of the Law, attorney general opinions, legal dictionaries
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenth week</td>
<td>Increasing readability: parallel structure, paragraphs and transitions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Research project 2 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eleventh Week</td>
<td>Other legal websites: Martindale-Hubbell, martindale.com, law digests</td>
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<td>law school resources, international law resources, federal district</td>
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<td>courts and courts of appeal website and libraries</td>
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<td>Twelfth Week</td>
<td>Motion practice: motion to dismiss, motion for summary judgment,</td>
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<td>discovery motions</td>
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<td>Writing project 2 assigned</td>
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<td>Thirteenth Week</td>
<td>Appellate brief writing: federal and state practice, application of</td>
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<td>rules of appellate procedure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writing project 2 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourteenth Week</td>
<td>Review/course evaluations</td>
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