

Introduction to Law and Legal Writing

Course Description

This course seeks to provide MSJ students with the tools to identify legal risks, interact effectively with legal counsel, and translate counsel's legal analysis into business decisions and policies. As such, the course provides MSJ students with an introduction to the legal system, basic legal research, and reading the law. Students will learn about sources of law, how to find legal documents using free online resources, how to read cases, statutes and regulations, and how to write about legal concepts for business and professional audiences.

Readings

Information on how to obtain this course's readings is listed under the [first class assignments for Online Certificate and MSJ Students' page](#).

Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic
1-2	Introduction to Law, The Legal System, Case Briefing and Legal Writing
3-4	Case Briefing: Identifying Issues, Facts, Rules of Law, Disposition and Reasons and Policies
5	Legal Analysis and Drawing Conclusions
6-7	Legal Writing: Explaining Legal Analysis
8	Legal Research

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- CO 1. Recognize the basic elements of the United States legal system;
- CO 2. Identify the jurisdictional and procedural status of a case;
- CO 3. Identify the relevant facts, issues, and rules of law in judicial opinions;
- CO 4. Brief judicial opinions;
- CO 5. Spot issues and legal rules that apply to select issues;
- CO 6. Translate a statute or regulation into a business policy;
- CO 7. Implement basic case and statute citation rules;
- CO 8. Identify relevant facts and issues in a hypothetical legal problem and assess whether involvement of legal counsel is necessary;
- CO 9. Interact effectively with legal counsel and translate counsel's interpretation of the law into business decisions;
- CO 10. Utilize online research tools.

Overview of Course Activities

Activity #1: Tutorial Questions

The Tutorial Questions are weekly assignments designed to ensure that you have an accurate understanding of the key points in the readings. Answers to these questions can be any length. Your goal should be to accurately state the relevant points of law as concisely as possible. Your professor will provide feedback and guidance on your responses. **Answers are due by 11:59PM on Wednesday.**

Tutorial Questions for week 1 are available with the [first week's assignments](#). Tutorial Questions for the remaining weeks of the course are available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #2: Discussion Questions

A "threaded discussion" is a discussion forum that allows students to respond to questions posted by the professor (original responses), which can then be read by other users who add their own comments in response (secondary postings). Unlike chat rooms and other "real-time" interaction forums, threaded discussions do not require different users to be logged on at the same time.

Discussion questions are assigned each week. **Original responses to these questions must be posted by Thursday at 11:59PM.** Original responses must be at least **250 words** and must incorporate concepts from the lectures and assigned readings.

Secondary Responses/Postings: Each student must post **two or more** secondary responses to other students' postings **for each discussion question**. Secondary responses are due by **11:59PM on the Monday following the week in which the questions were assigned**. They must be a minimum of **150 words** and, like original responses, should incorporate concepts from the lectures and assigned readings. Students are encouraged to embark on interactive discussions that go beyond the minimum number of secondary postings.

Although the discussion board is expected to be student-driven, professors will be participating in the discussions as well. Discussion Questions for week 1 are available with the [first week's assignments](#). Discussion Questions for the remaining weeks of the course are available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #3 – Class Plagiarism Examples

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 1. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #4 – Identifying Sources of law and Relevant Policy

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 2. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #5 – Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting Resources

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 3. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #6 – Case Brief

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 4. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #7 – PowerPoint Presentation to Board: Regulation of Genetic Test Kits/23andMe/Insider Trading

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 5. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #8 – Quiz

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 5. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #9 – PowerPoint Presentation: New Jersey Scope of Practice for APRNs/FINRA Responsibilities for Firms Concerning IRA

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 6. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Activity #10 – Comparison of Scope of Practice Rules and Regulations

This activity is due on Saturday of Week 8. Further information is available on the Blackboard course site.

Grading

ACTIVITIES	% OF FINAL GRADE
Activity #1: Tutorial Questions	15%
Activity #2 & #3: Discussion Questions	15%
Activity #3: Discussion Questions & Class Plagiarism Examples	5%
Activity #4: Identifying Sources of law and Relevant Policy	5%
Activity #5: Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting Resources	10%
Activity #6: Case Brief	10%
Activity #7: PowerPoint Presentation to Board: Regulation of Genetic Test Kits/23andMe/Insider Trading	10%
Activity #8: Quiz	10%
Activity #9: PowerPoint Presentation: New Jersey Scope of Practice for APRNs/FINRA Responsibilities for Firms Concerning IRA	10%
Activity #10: Comparison of Scope of Practice Rules and Regulations	10%

Responses to the Tutorial Questions and Discussion Questions will be graded each week in which they are assigned. At the end of the course, the lowest grade you receive for the Tutorial Questions and for the Discussion Questions will be dropped and will not be counted towards your final grade for the course. The purpose of this policy is to accommodate unanticipated professional or personal scheduling conflicts that may arise during the course.

IMPORTANT: You are required to post a *minimum* of one 250-word main post plus two 150-word secondary posts to each weekly discussion thread/topic. Your weekly discussion board grade will be based upon the quantity and overall quality of your postings.

Late Activities: For purposes of grading, activities and assignments that are submitted late will be treated as not having been submitted at all. The professor may make exceptions to this policy for true emergencies, such as serious illness. Requests for exceptions should be made in advance of the deadline, if possible. The professor's decision to grant or deny a request for an exception is final and unreviewable.

The following grade scale will be used to calculate final grades. The following is an explanation of how points equate to grades, based on a 4.33-point scale:

Grade	Quantitative	Qualitative	Definition
A+	4.33	Excellent	Superior understanding of the content and method of the course, extraordinary ability to recognize relationships between concepts, initiative in doing work in which quality consistently surpasses that required.
A	4.00		
A-	3.67		
B+	3.33	Good	Good understanding of the content and method of the course, demonstrated ability to recognize relationships between concepts, substantial achievement of course objectives and fulfillment of course requirements.
B	3.00		
B-	2.67	Fair	Rudimentary understanding of the content and method of the course, limited recognition of relationships between concepts, basic but incomplete achievement of course objectives and requirements.
C+	2.33		
C	2.00		
C-	1.67	Unsatisfactory	Little understanding of the content and method of the course, inability to demonstrate minimum recognition of relationships between concepts, unsatisfactory achievement of course objectives and requirements.
D+	1.33		
D	1.00		
F	0.00	Failure	Lack of understanding of the content and method of the course, failure to achieve objectives and/or complete requirements of the course.

Grades are based strictly on individual performance, not on any external factors (e.g., tuition reimbursement policies at your place of employment). Any questions about grades must be made in writing.

