**Legal Drafting Course Policies & Assignment Schedule**

Cupples, Spring 2020

**Both Sections:** Monday/Wednesday class + Tuesday/Thursday class

**A. Required Course Materials**

The following materials are required:

• Twen Course – please sign up soon.

• Course Packet - available at the UF Law bookstore a week before classes start.

• Any material uploaded to Twen or emailed.

**B. Work Load and Preparation for Class**

American Bar Association Standard 310 requires that students devote 2 hours to out-of-class preparation for every “classroom hour” of in-class instruction. Legal Drafting has 2 “classroom hours” of in-class instruction each week; thus, the ABA standard requires at least 4 hours per week of preparation outside of class.

**C. Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes**

Students will work with simulated fact patterns and applicable statutes, rules, and case law to prepare legal documents. If you work diligently, **Legal Drafting** **will help you become more law-practice-ready** by helping you practice tasks that lawyers and courts must perform:

• Carefully reading and analyzing language.

• Applying laws, cases, rules, and conventions when drafting documents.

• Drafting and editing documents so that—

(1) they contain the content necessary for your case;

(2) the content is well organized and easy to follow; and

(3) the content is articulated so that it is clear, unambiguous, precise, and correct.

• Self-editing.

• Working independently.

• Working as part of a team.

• Keeping track of and meeting deadlines.

• Behaving in a manner that is suitable for a professional setting.

**D. Cell Phones & Laptops**

When meeting with clients, judges, or employers, lawyers often must put away cell phones, like. During our class—

• Cell phones must be **silenced and** **put away**—not on the table, not in your lap. ☺

• Laptops must be closed unless you’re asked to open them.

It’s good practice. ☺

**E. Grading & Factors Affecting Grades**

**1. Types of Take-Home Assignments & Saving Marked Ones**

There are 3 types of take-home assignments:

(1) Ungraded drafting assignments (“Regular Assignments”).

(2) Graded assessments.

(3) Final Project (a document based on the contracts segment of the course).

Please *carefully read* any handouts that are uploaded to Twen or emailed—the instructions and tips will save you time.

**2. Timeliness & Completeness of Assignments**

You are allowed **one “freebie” late assignment**: i.e., you may turn in one Regular Assignment late (not graded assessments and not the final project).

Regular Assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the due date **even if you are absent** that day. If you are absent, please email the assignment by the time class starts (8:00 am). Failure to timely submit a satisfactorily completed assignment may result in the dropping of your course grade by one level: for example., from “A” to “A-” or from “C+” to “C.”

Failure to turn in any **graded assessment** on time (without authorization) will automatically result in a one-letter-grade drop in the grade for that assignment: for example, from “A” to “B” or from “B+” to “C+.”

**Failure to timely submit two assignments** of any kind may result in a student’s being dropped from the class roll and being ineligible to submit the final project.

Failure to turn in the **final project** on time (without authorization) will automatically result in a one-letter-grade drop in the final grade: for example, from “A” to “B” or from “B+” to “C+.” The grade may continue to drop at the rate of one full letter grade per each 24-hour period that the final project document remains unsubmitted.

**3. Attendance and Participation**

Your course grade is affected by attendance and participation. If you are **absent from more than four class meetings**, you may be dropped from the class roll and become ineligible to submit the final project. See the College of Law attendance policy at: [**http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/academic-policies**](http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/academic-policies).

**4. Final Grades**

Factors relating to the calculation of the final grade are—

• Blind grade: your grade on the final project (a take-home project that is blind-graded).

• Raw grade:

- Final project = 70% of raw grade.

- Average of all graded assessments = 30% of raw grade.

• Final Grade: raw grades usually need to be bumped up to meet the mandatory

 curve and grade distribution. Factors playing a part in whose raw grades are

 bumped up include **diligence** in—

(a) preparing for class,

(b) participating in class, and

(c) preparing assignments.

The scale for graded assessments (not the Final Project) is as follows:

A 96-100 B- 80-82 D+ 67-69

A- 90-95 C+ 77-79 D 63-66

B+ 87-89 C 73-76 D- 60-62

B 83-86 C- 70-72 F below 60

**F. Overview of Ungraded Document-Drafting Assignments**

Most assignments will be submitted in hard-copy form at the beginning of class—**please bring 2 printed copies** unless informed otherwise. Here’s a list of Regular Assignments:

(1) **Complaint**, negligence (in class) (5) **Legislation Exercises**

(2) **Complaint**, breach of contract (6) **Set of Sections** (1st contract)

(3) **Answer** to badly drafted complaint (7) **Set of Sections** (2nd contract)

(4) **Complaint**, statutory

The list doesn’t include the graded assessments, the final project, or any preparatory assignments that may come up (e.g., the practitioner’s guide to a statute).

**G. Editing & Marking of Ungraded Drafting Assignments**

Some ungraded drafting assignments will be done in stages. We will go over portions of assignments in class so that you can **practice self-editing** (a skill necessary for lawyers).

I will mark the final version of (1) one complaint, (2) the collection of sections for the first contract, and (3) the collection of sections for the second contract.

**H. Disclosures Regarding UF Policies**

**1. College of Law Grade Policy** (Final Grades)

Grades for this course will be in compliance with the College of Law’s posted grading policy, including the mandatory mean and grade distributions. Final letter grades for the course are determined in accordance with the following point equivalency:

 Letter Grade Point Equivalent

 A (Excellent) 4.00

 A- 3.67

 B+ 3.33

 B (Average) 3.00

 B- 2.67

 C+ 2.33

 C (Below average) 2.00

 C- 1.67

 D+ 1.33

 D (Poor) 1.00

 D- 0.67

 E (Failure) 0.00

**2. University Policy on Grade Points**

Information on the University policy as to assigning grade points is available at: <http://catalog>.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

**3. Accommodations**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to Student Affairs (Dean Rachel Inman) when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**4. Course Evaluations**

“Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.”](https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.%E2%80%9D)

**5. UF Honesty Policy**

UF students are bound by the Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

For the University Honor Code, please see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

For the College of Law Honor Code, please see:

<http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/additional-information/honor-code-and-committee/honor-code>

If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

***Schedule of topics starts on next page***

**Legal Drafting Topic-Coverage Schedule (Cupples) Fall 2019**

The assignment schedule **will be distributed in multiple parts** (instead of all at once) during the semester. That distribution reduces confusion by reducing the need to rewrite the schedule if we need to spend extra time on any assignments**.**

Most drafting assignments are to be completed outside of the classroom. Each drafting assignment (not including assigned readings) may require at least 2 hours to complete. The Final Project will require far more than 2 hours, and the assessments may also.

The schedule for topic coverage is an estimate: we may need to spend more or less time on a given topic.

**Meetings 1-7** (Litigation Documents):

• Statutes, rules of civil procedure and judicial rules relevant to civil complaints.

• Common-law complaints.

• Answer.

• Statutory Complaint.

**Meetings 8-11** (Legislation):

• Analyzing and critiquing legislation.

• Legislative-analysis assessment.

**Meetings 12-26** (Contracts):

• Preparation for contract drafting:

- How courts read and construe contracts.

- Precise writing.

- Grammar and punctuation.

- Clear sentence structure.

- Class conventions for contracts (phrasing, formatting, etc.)

• Drafting of collection of contract provisions (beginning of contract #1).

• Drafting of collection of contract provisions (end of contract #2).