**University of Florida Levin College of Law**

**Legal Writing II – Persuasive Writing Spring 2024**

**LAW 5793 Class Number 27571 Section Y**

**Mondays and Wednesdays 3:30pm to 4:55pm**

**Holland Hall 360**

Course Description:

Persuasive Writing continues the first-year legal writing curriculum by focusing on various forms of persuasive writing, including trial briefs, motions, and appellate briefs. Students will also prepare and deliver an oral argument.

professor: Professor Heather Kolinsky

[kolinsky@law.ufl.edu](mailto:kolinsky@law.ufl.edu)

Office: Holland Hall 343

(407) 701-4552 (cell)

office Hours:

I will hold regular drop-in office hours on **Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.**, beginning on Monday, January 22, 2024.

You may also schedule an appointment with me during regular business hours Monday through Thursday. Finally, if you want to drop by, I have an open door policy and I am happy to meet with you briefly at any time if I am not attending a meeting or otherwise engaged.

Additionally, if you have questions regarding the course or a specific assignment, please feel free to email me. I try to respond to emails quickly. TAs will be available to assist you as well, and information about their availability will be forthcoming.

**Note: Office hours and other conferences will not be held (with me or with your TA) within the 24 hours prior to graded-assignment due dates. In addition, once you receive your final project materials, you will not be able to meet with me, or with your TA, until you have submitted your final project.**

Teaching Assistants:

Autumn Klein [autumn.klein@ufl.edu](mailto:autumn.klein@ufl.edu)

Michael Romano [m.romano3@ufl.edu](mailto:m.romano3@ufl.edu)

Jacob Sandler [jacobsandler1@ufl.edu](mailto:jacobsandler1@ufl.edu)

Shayna Schulman [Shayna.schulman@ufl.edu](mailto:Shayna.schulman@ufl.edu)

Course Website:

You will be able to access the course Canvas site beginning a few days before our first class. I will use Canvas to send announcements, to provide detailed instructions for your assignments, and to post slides and supplemental materials. Please check Canvas frequently. While you may customize your notifications as you wish, you are responsible for frequently reviewing this course page for updates and for accessing course content. You will use Canvas for turning in written work, and for receiving feedback (from your TAs and from me).

Required TextS/PLATFORMS:

1. Rocklin, Rocklin, Coughlin, and Patrick, *An Advocate Persuades* (2d ed. 2022) (indicated as “*AAP*” in the course schedule)
2. *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (21st ed. 2020)
3. Lexis/Nexis Interactive Citation Workstation.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (OPTIONAL):**

1. Linda Barris, *Understanding and Mastering the Bluebook* (3d ed. 2015)

2. Richard C. Wydick & Amy Sloan, *Plain English for Lawyers* (6th ed. 2019)

3. Bryan A. Garner, *Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style* (4th ed. 2018)

4. Deborah Cupples & Margaret Temple Smith, *Grammar, Punctuation & Style: A Quick Guide for Lawyers & Other Writers* (2013).

Course Objective and Goals:

Welcome to Legal Writing II! I am excited to partner with you early in your law school career. The primary objective in Legal Writing II is for you to learn to construct thorough legal arguments and to express those arguments persuasively in writing. An additional objective is for you to learn to perform effectively in presenting oral argument in support of your legal position. Finally, you will practice and further refine your research strategies.

If you devote yourself to doing your best work, upon completion of this course you should be able to:

* Apply ethical and professional standards in crafting your written and oral advocacy;
* Find and use the fundamental sources of U.S. legal research, including constitutions and statutes, cases and digests, secondary sources, administrative law, and legislative history;
* Develop research strategies that maximize your efficiency and accuracy;
* Continue to improve your research, analysis, and legal writing under time constraints;
* Demonstrate increasing levels of citation literacy, including reading, writing, and placement;
* Frame legal issues to persuade a court to rule in your favor;
* Present compelling accounts of relevant facts;
* Analyze and advocate effectively, using compelling narratives, persuasive rule structures, analogical reasoning, relevant policy, strategic application of law to fact, and logical and persuasive organization;
* Communicate legal analyses in impactful, concise, and polished written products, including motion memoranda and appellate briefs;
* Understand the fundamentals of the trial process, including the filing of trial motions;
* Understand the fundamentals of the appellate process and appellate concepts, including the decision to appeal;
* Understand the importance of adhering to procedural rules and formatting requirements when submitting documents to a court;
* Effectively and critically edit, revise, and proofread your own persuasive legal writing as well as the writing of colleagues;
* Present legal arguments and answer questions effectively in meetings and simulated hearings;
* Prepare and effectively present an oral argument in support of your legal position in a simulated appellate oral argument;
* Continue to use and improve your writing generally, including effective topic sentences, transitions, paragraphs, as well as proper grammar, syntax, punctuation, and document format.

**Assignments and Course Schedule (subject to change):**

Reading: All reading should be completed *in advance* of the date for which it is assigned. All chapters on the syllabus refer to your assigned textbook. All other material can be found in Canvas; additional reading and reference material may be added to Canvas throughout the term. All assigned material is meant to be read carefully unless I have noted that you may “skim” the material.

Assignments: Writing Assignments 1 and 2 must be uploaded to Canvas, in Word or PDF. Many ungraded assignments will also require Canvas uploads—please consult the syllabus and mark your calendars accordingly.

The Unexpected: **For various reasons, including to give you free time during your final project period, I have altered some of the day meeting times for this course. Please review the dates and times of our class sessions, listed below.** Yellow highlighting on the schedule below denotes a day class is not usually held.While I encourage you to attend all class sessions in person, if you are unable to attend one of the class sessions held on a day or time other than our assigned day and time, you will be excused from attending class if, within 10 days of class, you (1) watch the video, and (2) send an email to me that includes any in-class activity (completed independently to the best of your ability) identifying three things you learned by watching the video.

**SYLLABUS**

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we proceed through the term, I may need to alter them to enhance your learning opportunities or in response to factors internal or external to our course. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

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| Week 1 | Introduction to Persuasive Writing – Classes 1 and 2 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 1/17 | * Introduction to Persuasive Writing and Advocacy | * Course Syllabus and Policies * *AAP*, Chapter 1 and 2 | None | * Read and listen for next class |
| 1/19  (Friday) | * Client-Centered Writing: Theme, Perspective, and Advocacy | * Listen to *The Drop Out*, “Closing Arguments” * *AAP*, Chapter 4 | None | * Read for next class |

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| Week 2 | Motions Practice -- Classes 3 and 4 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due before the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 1/22 | * Motions Practice * WA #1 | * *AAP*, Chapters 3.1 and 8 * WA #1 (Read Record) * BB: Trial court documents, B17, BT1; Secondary Sources; R15 |  | * Read for next class * Research Project #1 |
| 1/24 | * Statement of Facts * Standard of Review | * *AAP*, Chapter 10 | * **Research Project #1** |  |

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| Week 3 | Developing Persuasive Arguments – Classes 5 and 6 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 1/29 | * Creating persuasive arguments * Rules from a persuasive point of view | * *AAP*, Chapter 5 * BB: Prior and Subsequent History; R10.7 | * Draft of Statement of Facts (optional) | * Read for next class * Work on trial court memorandum |
| 1/31 | * Creating persuasive arguments (continued) * Persuasive Point Headings | * *AAP*, Chapter 6 | * None | * Read for next class |

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| Week 4 | Editing and Bluebook – Classes 7, 8, and 9 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 2/5 | * Editing and Proofreading | * *AAP*, Chapter 7 | * **Draft Outline** | * Read for next class |
| 2/7 | * Parentheticals * Effective use of case authority | * Practice Pointers: Using Case Authority Effectively (on Canvas) * Choosing Between In-Text Illustrations and Parenthetical Illustrations and Guidelines for Drafting Parenthetical Illustration Narratives, (on Canvas) * BB: R1.5, 1.6 & 10.6 | * **None** | * Read for next class * Work on trial court memorandum |
| 2/8 | * Writing Workshop | * Time TBD |  |  |

**\*\*WA#1 due Saturday, February 10, 2024 by 11:59p.m on CANVAS\*\***

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| Week 5 | Introduction to Appellate Practice – Classes 10 and 11 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 2/12 | * Introduction to Appellate Advocacy * WA #2 | * Full Record for Appeal * Supplemental materials on Canvas (TBD) | * **None** | * Read for next class * **Research Project #2 (due 2/19/2024 before 11:59p.m.)** |
| 2/14 | * Anatomy of an Appellate Brief | * *AAP*, Chapter 9 | * **None** | * Read for next class |

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| Week 6 | Appellate Briefs – Facts and Structure -- Classes 12 and 13 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 2/19 | * Revisiting Theme, Perspective, and Facts | * *AAP*, Chapter 10 * Page: *Come a Little Closer* * BB: Signals and Administrative materials; R 1.2-1.4, R12.4, R13, R14 | * Three cases (email) | * Read for next class * Work on appellate brief |
| 2/21 | * Developing a Roadmap, Point Headings, and Subheadings | * *AAP*, Chapters 3 and 7 (review) | * Best and worst case (email) | * Read for next class * Work on appellate brief |

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| Week 7 | Questions Presented and Unfavorable Law and Arguments – Classes 14 and 15 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 2/26 | * Questions Presented * Point Headings one more time | * Drafting the Argumentative Headings and Issue Statements (from Oates, *Just Briefs*, pgs. 134-40 and 159-67) on Canvas * BB: Appellate Court Documents, Record; B17 & BT1 | * None | * Read for next class * Work on appellate brief |
| 2/28 | * Persuasive Touchpoints; Opposing Arguments | * Exploiting Opportunities for Persuasion (from Beazley, *A Practical Guide to Appellate Advocacy* (on Canvas) | * None | * **Outline for Individual Conferences** |

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| Week 8 | Conference Week - Brief Fair – Classes 16 and 17 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 3/4 | * BRIEF FAIR | * None | * Draft (Outline or Better) due for individual conference | * Read for next class * Work on appellate brief |
| 3/6 | * NO CLASS | * None | * None | * None |

Week 9 -- SPRING BREAK March 11, 2024 through March 15, 2024 (NO CLASSES)

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| Week 10 | Transitioning to Oral Advocacy – Classes 18, 19, and 20 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by beginning of class | Work assigned in class |
| 3/18 | * Writing Workshop | * None | * **None** | * **None** |
| 3/20 | * Transitioning to Oral Advocacy | * *AAP*, Chapter 11 * Supplemental Materials on Canvas | * **None** | * **None** |
| 3/21 | * Preparing for Oral Arguments * Class Time TBD | * None | * **None** | * **None** |

**\*\* APPELLATE BRIEF DUE SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2024 BY 11:59P.M.**

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| Week 11 | FINAL ORAL ARGUMENTS – Class 21 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by beginning of class | Work assigned in class |
| 3/25 | * Supreme Court Oral Argument Listening Session | * None | * None | * None |
| 3/27 | * NO CLASS | * None | * None | * None |

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| Week 12 | Evaluations, Debriefs, and BB Review – Classes 22 and 23 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 4/1 | * Course Evaluations * Oral Arguments Debrief | * None | * None | * None |
| 4/3 | * Bluebook Review * Appellate Brief Global Feedback | * None | * **All assigned ICWs due before class today.** | * Research Project #3 (Procedural) |

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| Week 13 | Appellate Brief Debrief and - Class 24 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 4/8 | * NO CLASS | * None | * None | * Continue working on RP #3 |
| 4/10 | * Research Debrief * Final Project Tips | * None | * None | * None |

**\*\*FINAL PROJECT AVAILABLE FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2024\*\***

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| Week 14 | Classes 25 and 26 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Reading to be completed before class | Work due by the beginning of class | Work assigned in this class |
| 4/15 | * Guest Speaker | * None | * **None** | * None |
| 4/17 | * Write-on Comp.—Discuss ICW 17 (a five-part Law Review Exercise); Moot Court and Trial Team; Looking for a Job? Starting Your Summer Job. *Zoom Option Available* Research Debrief; Trial Memos, and Final Project Tips | * None | * **None** | * None |

**\*\*FINAL PROJECT DUE FRIDAY April 19, 2024\*\***

## Course, Law School, and University Policies:

### Policies To Prevent the Spread of illnesses:

We are all expected to follow the policies and requirements set forth by the University of Florida with respect to health-related issues. In addition, as a matter of civility and professionalism, please respect the health and wellbeing of your colleagues and professors by doing your part to prevent the spread of illness.

If you are feeling sick in any way during the semester, please stay home and take care of yourself. Please follow the instructions below when requesting an excused absence.  Please *also* contact the Office of Student Affairs at [student.svc@law.ufl.edu](mailto:student.svc@law.ufl.edu).

Attendance Policy:

This is a skills-based course, which means that your attendance is essential to achieving the course objectives. Your active and consistent participation in class discussions and exercises is expected and required. ABA standards and the law school policy, which can be found [here](https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/uf-law-student-handbook-and-academic-policies), require regular and punctual class attendance.

Teaching assistants will take roll during each class period. While you should plan to attend all class periods, you are permitted *two* unexcused absences *without* penalty.

* More than *six* unexcused absences *will* result in a *failing grade in the course*.
* More than *two* unexcused absences will likely result in a *reduction of your final grade*.
* Excessive tardiness will likely result in a *grade penalty*.

Religious Holidays, Illness, Extenuating Circumstances, and Emergencies:

If you have a religious holiday that falls on a class date or assignment due date, or otherwise prevents you from completing your work on time, please contact me well in advance of that holiday to arrange an accommodation and to obtain an excused absence. If the assignment is the final project, please contact Student Affairs.

If you are ill or have other critical extenuating circumstances that prevent you from being in class, you must contact me by email *prior* to the start of class to request an excused absence. In the case of an emergency that prevents you from contacting me prior to class, you must contact me *as soon as possible thereafter* to request an excused absence. *If* I grant your request, you will need to complete the following steps before I will convert your *un*excused absence to an *excused* absence:

1. Watch the class recording—available on our Canvas Page.
2. Email me no more than ten days after the missed class and include the following:
   1. A statement that you watched the video in full
   2. Any in-class exercise that you can complete independently (modify as needed)
   3. If there is no in-class exercise that you can complete independently, note three things you learned by watching the video.

Because this is a skills course, please do your best to schedule job interviews at times that do not interfere with our class time. If you are unable to avoid a conflict, please contact me as soon as possible. *If* I approve your absence, you should follow the instructions above for converting your unexcused absence to an excused absence.

Quiz/Exam Policy:

There may be pop quizzes during the semester. These scores will be considered part of your participation grade. The law school’s policy on exam delays and exam accommodations can be found [here](http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/forms-applications/exam-delays-accommodations-form).

Assignment Preparation/Submission and group work PolicieS:

Students will be divided into groups for some activities including case discussions, peer reviews, research assignments, and oral arguments. Each group will have an assigned TA who will assist students with in-class exercises and out-of-class assignments. TAs are 2Ls who did particularly well in their first-year legal writing courses. They are a tremendous resource to you. I encourage you to speak with your assigned TA regularly. Groups will be announced soon, and TAs will communicate regarding their availability.

*Feedback*

We will give and receive a tremendous amount of feedback in this course. Please provide feedback with both care and candor. Please accept feedback as a sign of respect—as evidence of the commentor’s confidence in your ability to strengthen your skill set and to improve your work product.

*Class Preparation and Participation*

Consistent with the American Bar Association Standard 310, you should spend *at least 6 hours per week* preparing for this 3-credit course. Participation grades are based on class attendance and preparation; the quality of class participation (both online and in person); timely and successful completion of all assignments (graded and ungraded) including oral advocacy; active participation in small group discussions; use of office hours, preparation for any out-of-class meetings, and your professionalism, generally.

*Assignment Submission and Late Policy*

Lawyers *must* be organized: failing to meet a deadline can create disastrous results for your client. If you are not yet in the habit of keeping a personal calendar, please start now.

Unless otherwise stated in Canvas or on the syllabus, your assignments must be turned in on Canvas. Key assignment due dates and times are on the syllabus. **Please read the syllabus carefully and mark your calendars accordingly.** Additional assignments may be announced during class.

If you turn in an assignment late (according to Canvas’ timestamp), your grade *for that assignment* will be lowered by 10% per day (24-hour period from the time the assignment is due). Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than three days late. If you turn in your final project late (according to the timestamp by the exam software or Student Affairs), your grade for the final project will be lowered by 20% per day (24-hour period from the time the final project is due). The final project will not be accepted if it is submitted more than three days late.

For writing assignments other than the final project, if you have an extraordinary circumstance outside of your control, please contact me *in advance* of the deadline or, if the emergency prevents you from doing so, *as soon as possible thereafter*. Contacting me does not guarantee a particular result. Computer and electronic platform problems, internet connectivity issues, car trouble, traffic, and the like should be foreseen by you. Please plan your time accordingly. To maintain anonymity in the grading process, any such requests related to the final project should be made to Student Affairs, not to me.

*Punctuality and Professionalism*

Punctuality is part of professionalism. Please be on time to class and do not leave early absent extenuating circumstances. As a law student and future lawyer, you are expected to conduct yourself with professionalism in the classroom and in all course-related activities. This includes common courtesy in the classroom as well as in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats. Please silence cell phones and computer notifications; please do not use electronics for non-course purposes; and please minimize all other class disruptions.

In addition to completing each written assignment, you will need to *revise and proofread* your documents numerous times before submitting them, just as you would in the practice of law.

Often, I will run our classroom like a law office or legal agency. Students will be the new associates; TAs will be the senior associates; and I will be the law partner or supervising attorney. In all course activities, students are expected to participate in good faith. If you have questions about professionalism, do not hesitate to ask.

*Academic Honesty and Plagiarism*

**All work you submit in this class must be your own.** For the written assignments up to the final project, you may discuss cases and ideas with your classmates; doing so is often helpful in refining and testing your interpretation and analysis. However, the UF Law Honor Code requires that your assignments represent your own work. Written work must be done independently. Your written work product may be shown *only to me and to your TA*, unless I expressly authorized otherwise; for example, I may authorize you to share your work product with a particular student for purposes of completing a peer review. Unauthorized collaboration on writing assignments (with anyone—UF Law affiliated or not) is a UF Law Honor Code violation. In addition, giving your work to another student violates the collaboration policy as much as taking work from another student does.

Additional restriction regarding the final project: Once the final project is released, you may not discuss *any* aspect of the project with anyone except Dean Inman, Dean Mitchell, or other Student Affairs personnel responsible for the scheduling and integrity of the law school’s final projects. If a problem arises during the final project period, to maintain anonymity in the grading process, please reach out to Student Affairs, not to me.

Unless I instruct otherwise as to a specific assignment, you may not use AI including, but not limited to, ChatGPT, Harvey, and the Lexis and Westlaw AI tools to assist in completing quizzes, exams, papers, and other assessments. On all assignments in my course, you may use the spelling and grammar function in Word and Grammarly. The UF Law Honor Code also prohibits students from using artificial intelligence unless it is authorized by the professor for the particular assignment.

Students should be sure that they understand the UF Law Honor Code located [here](https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/additional-information/honor-code-and-committee/honor-code).If you violate these instructions, you may fail this course and may be prohibited from sitting for the bar.Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Click [here](https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/) to get started with the DRC. If you are approved for accommodations, you must present your letter to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Brian Mitchell. **You are also responsible for sharing your accommodation letter with me.** We will need to meet to discuss your accommodations and to sign any remaining forms. Accommodations are not retroactive and obtaining your letter may take time; therefore, if you would like to learn more about accommodations or are interested in applying for them, please follow this procedure *as early as possible* in the semester. Please understand that I cannot grant accommodations that are not approved through this process. The law school’s policy on exam delays and accommodations can be found [here](http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/forms-applications/exam-delays-accommodations-form).

**Classroom Ethos:**

As a law student and future lawyer, it is important that you be able to engage in rigorous discourse and critical evaluation of texts and arguments while also demonstrating civility and respect for others. In addition, you may be asked to “represent” a client’s position with which you do not personally agree. While that may feel uncomfortable, it will strengthen your legal skills.

ELECTRONICS policy:

You must bring a laptop or tablet to every class so that you can access handouts on Canvas and participate in in-class activities. Please silence all devices before class and please do whatever is necessary to ensure that notifications, emails, and the like do not distract you. You may not communicate with one another during class electronically unless specifically instructed to do so.

ZOOM policy:

Please comply with the following during Zoom sessions:

* Cameras are required to remain *on* during the entire session.
* If you are in a group session, please use the “raise hand” feature to ask questions.
* Please mute yourself except when you are speaking.
* Dress appropriately—as you would during an in-person class or meeting.

**RECORDING LECTURES:**

I have requested that our class be recorded through the UFIT department. UFIT will be creating a MediaSite channel for our course. I will share the link to this channel with *all students in the course*. The uses and prohibitions delineated by the University for self-made videos apply equally to these MediaSite videos. If you use MediaSite or self-made videos in ways not approved by the University and without my written consent, you may be subject to civil liability, as well as to discipline under the UF Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

**UF LEVIN COLLEGE OF LAW STANDARD SYLLABUS POLICIES:**Other information about UF Levin College of Law policies, including compliance with the UF Honor Code, Grading, Accommodations, Class Recordings, and Course Evaluations can be found at this link: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/427635/files/74674656?wrap=1>.

## RESOURCES:

**UF LAW STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE (CANVAS):**

Please familiarize yourself with the law school’s UF Law Student Resource Guide in Canvas. It currently includes sections for:

* Attendance, Registrar, and Financial Aid, Outside Scholarships, Writing Competitions
* Weekly Calendar
* Students Organizations and Journals
* Academic Advising and Career Advising

**UF LAW STUDENT LIFE:**  
Please familiarize yourself with the law school’s [Student Life](https://www.law.ufl.edu/student-life) page on the UF Law website. It is a tremendous resource for both law school and university resources. Services include:

* Academics (e.g., Schedules, Calendars, Policies, Experiential Learning)
* Campus Logistics (e.g., Reserving a Study Room)
* Technology (e.g., Zoom, Canvas, ExamSoft, Helplines)
* Research Tools (e.g., Law Library, Westlaw, Lexis)
* Diversity & Inclusion (e.g., Statements, Policies, D&I Dean’s Information)
* Career and Professional Development (e.g., Advisors, Appointments, Symplicity)
* Health and Safety (e.g., Wellness, Title IX)
* Contact Information (e.g., Law School Departments)

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING:**

Law school can be very stressful, particularly in your first year. Knowing when to seek assistance for issues impacting your wellbeing is part of being a professional.

At a minimum each of us needs a safe place to live, sufficient food, and access to healthcare. All members of the UF Community who are experiencing food insecurity are eligible to visit UF’s food pantry. Learn more [here](https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/about/). Should you find yourself needing assistance with other basic needs, please notify me or the Office of Student Affairs so that we can direct you to appropriate resources. The Office of Student Affairs can be reached at (352) 273-0620 or [student.svc@law.ufl.edu](mailto:student.svc@law.ufl.edu).

Psychological needs and unexpected personal challenges are also not uncommon and may interfere with academic progress, social development, and emotional wellbeing. The law school and the Gainesville community offer a variety of services to assist you. Some entities equipped to assist include:

**UF Law Mental Health Counselor:** At UF Law we are fortunate to have a mental health counselor, **Ritzy Ettinger**, who is dedicated to the law school community. Ritzy assists with both crisis and non-crisis services. You may reach out to Ritzy by email or call the Student Life main office.

Name: Ritzy Ettinger

Direct Email: [rettinger@ufl.edu](mailto:rettinger@ufl.edu)

Student Life Phone: (352) 273-0620

**UF (Main Campus) Counseling & Wellness Center:** Provides crisis and non-crisis services.

Phone: (352) 392-1575 (UF Crisis Hotline 24 hours/7 days/week)

Website: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/crisis/>

**UF “U Matter We Care”:** Provides services if you or someone you know is in distress.

Phone: (352) 294-CARE (2273)

Email: umatter@ufl.edu

Website: <https://umatter.ufl.edu>

**Alachua County Crisis Center:** 24 hr./day crisis and suicide intervention phone counseling for all county residents.

Phone: (352) 264-6789

<https://www.alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/CrisisCenter/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

**UF Law Student Affairs Office**

Associate Dean for Administrative and Student Affairs, Rachel Inman

Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Brian Mitchell

Main Phone: 352-273-0620

Main Email: [student.svc@law.ufl.edu](mailto:student.svc@law.ufl.edu)

**Kognito (30 min. training)**Learn signs of psychological distress and how to approach a peer in distress.

Website: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/resources/kognito/>

**HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

**UF Student Health Care Center:** Find the healthcare you need, including free vaccines.

Phone: (352) 392-1161

Website: <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>

**UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center**

Phone: 9-1-1 for emergencies

Phone: (352) 733-0111

Or go to the emergency room at:

1515 Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608

Website: <https://ufhealth.org/uf-health-shands-emergency-room-trauma-center>

**University Police Department**

Phone: 9-1-1 for emergencies

Phone: 352-392-1111

Website: <https://police.ufl.edu/> (including victim assistance, UFAlert, self-defense classes, etc.)

**Gator Safe App**:

For a personal safety toolbox and other helpful links, download the GatorSafe App

<https://police.ufl.edu/services/community-services/gatorsafe-app/>

## Grading/Course Policies:

The three major writing assignments in this course consist of an initial trial court memorandum, an appellate brief, and a final project. Assignments may entail extensive research, submission of multiple drafts, meetings, and oral argument. There will also be additional research assignments, oral argument, activities, homework, and possible quizzes, which will count toward your participation grade.

Like all required courses, this course adheres to the law school’s mean and mandatory grade distribution, set out [here](https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/uf-law-student-handbook-and-academic-policies) under “grade distribution for required courses.”

The law school policy on exam delays and accommodations can be found [here](http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/forms-applications/exam-delays-accommodations-form).

**GRADING PERCENTAGES:**

15% WA#1 Trial Memorandum

25% WA#2 Appellate Brief

50% Final Project Final Project

10% Participation Including any ICWs and other ungraded assignments.

Grading Scale:

Like all required courses, this course adheres to the law school’s curve, including both a mean and mandatory grade distribution. More information can be found [here](https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/uf-law-student-handbook-and-academic-policies) under “grade distribution for required courses.”

Grades are recorded permanently by the Office of the University Registrar. The grade point average (GPA) is determined by computing the ratio of grade points of semester hours of work attempted in courses in which letter grades are assigned. Students receive grade points according to the following scale:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Points** |
| A (Excellent) | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.33 |
| B (Good) | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.67 |
| C + | 2.33 |
| C (Satisfactory) | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.67 |
| D+ | 1.33 |
| D (Poor) | 1.0 |
| D- | 0.67 |
| E (Failure) | 0.0 |

**Grading Standards for Final Drafts**

In conjunction with any assignment-specific standards, the grading standards applied to final assignments will be as follows:

**A or A-:** The paper is excellent in all respects. The analysis presented is persuasive and well-reasoned. The writing style is clear, direct, and grammatically correct. The paper is generally free of typos, formatting problems and citation errors.

**B+:** The paper is very good in all respects; however, it lacks some of the sophistication present in an A or A- paper. By and large, the analysis is persuasive and well-reasoned, the writing style is clear, direct, and grammatically correct, and the paper is free of typos, formatting problems, and citation errors.

**B:** The paper constitutes a solid, well-reasoned, and professional piece of work. The organization, writing style, use of citation and formatting of the paper demonstrate mastery of the basics of persuasive legal writing and citation.

**B- or below:** The paper is notably deficient in one or more respects: the analysis presented is thin, conclusory, or poorly reasoned; the writing style is unclear, confusing, or difficult to follow; the organization is poor; or the paper suffers from extensive grammatical, formatting or citation errors.

**Plagiarism and Quotations**

Plagiarism is an Honor Code violation. Sources must be acknowledged, not only when you quote text, but also when you paraphrase. Citing the original source when you paraphrase not only avoids plagiarism, but also gives your position more credence by showing that someone else has supported your view.

Direct quotes must be indicated by quotation marks, and the source should be cited immediately after the quoted passage or at the conclusion of the sentence in which the quoted passage appears. What is within the quotation marks should correspond exactly with the original; any changes should be indicated by square brackets ([ ]), and any omissions should be indicated by an ellipsis (. . .). Be sure you specifically double-check the accuracy of all quotations against the original sources.

When you cite a case directly, you are representing to the court that you read the opinion and that the opinion supports the proposition you are asserting. The headnotes, syllabus, and synopsis of a case are not part of the court opinion. Never cite to or quote from the headnotes, syllabus, or synopsis of a case.

**Proofreading**

Careless errors undermine your credibility. Excessive typographical, spelling, format, grammatical, or citation errors may cause a paper to be deemed unsatisfactory, regardless of its substantive merit. Proofreading is essential. Merely proofreading for typographical errors, however, will not reveal inaccuracies in your pinpoint citations. Therefore, you should double-check the accuracy of your pinpoint citations against the original sources.

**LAST, BUT NOT LEAST:**

**Formatting Requirements for Writing Assignments**

All assignments (except the Final Project) are to be submitted electronically via the course Canvas website, in Word. In addition to any formatting requirements specific to an assignment, documents should conform to the following standards:

* Double-space text (except for footnotes)
* Left-justified or full-justified text;
* Do not use a page number on the first page; all other pages should be numbered at the bottom, center, in a matching font and point-size;
* Use one or two spaces between sentences (just be consistent);
* Use Book Antiqua 14-point font
* Use italics for citations, not underlining
* **Please e-mail me a picture of a sea turtle to confirm you have read these requirements.**