Course Objectives, Reading Assignments and Exercises

INTRODUCTION & RESEARCH PLAN – Week 1  
Friday, August 23, 2019

Learning Objectives
- Describe the structure and hierarchy of authority in the American legal system
- Draft an efficient, well-organized, and cost-effective research plan

Reading Assignments
- Steenken and Brooks, Sources of American Law, Chapter 1.1 – 1.62, The United States Legal System.
- Summer Associate Skills

Exercise: Draft a Research Plan (Due August 28th)

SEARCH STRATEGIES – Week 2  
Friday, August 30, 2019

Learning Objectives
- Construct search queries that efficiently retrieve relevant resources
- Demonstrate proficiency with terms & connectors and natural language searches

Reading Assignments
- Steenken and Brooks, Sources of American Law, Chapter 5, Electronic Research.
- Lexis – Terms and Connectors
- Westlaw - Terms and Connectors

Videos
- Westlaw – Advanced Search and Field Searching
- Lexis – Searching with Terms & Connectors

Exercise: Terms and Connectors Searching (Due September 4th)
SECONDARY SOURCES - Weeks 3 & 4

Learning Objectives
- Describe the various types of legal secondary sources
- Evaluate and select appropriate secondary sources when researching a specific topic
- Cite major secondary sources using proper citation format according to the Bluebook

Friday, September 6, 2019

Reading Assignments
- Steenken and Brooks, Sources of American Law, Chapter 6, Secondary Sources.
- Let the Experts Serve You - Student Lawyer October 2014

Exercise: Secondary Source Research (Due September 11th)

Friday, September 13, 2019

Reading Assignments
- Alan L. Dworsky, User's Guide to The Bluebook, Section 1-3, pp. 1-6, Introduction

Video: Introduction to the Bluebook

Midterm Assessment: (Due September 23rd)

CASES (INCLUDING CITATORS) – Weeks 5 & 6

Learning Objectives
- Distinguish between persuasive and controlling case law
- Efficiently search for relevant cases using various strategies such as search queries, topics/key numbers, citators, and secondary sources
- Validate cases using citators
- Cite cases using proper citation format according to the Bluebook

Friday, September 20, 2019

Reading Assignments
- Steenken and Brooks, Sources of American Law, Chapter 3, Judicial Opinions & Common Law.
• Which Court is Binding? Mandatory vs. Persuasive Cases, Writing Center Georgetown University Law Center.
• Westlaw – Searching for Cases

**Video**
• Lexit – Search Term Maps

**Exercise:** Case Research (Due October 2nd)

**Friday, September 27, 2019**

**Reading Assignments**
• Lexis – Shepard’s
• Westlaw – Keycite
• Westlaw – Overruling Risk
• Westlaw – Key Numbers

**Videos**
• Westlaw – Using Keycite
• LexisNexis – Using Shepard’s
• One Good Case Method
• Bluebook Format for Case Citations

**Exercise:** Case Bluebooking (Due October 2nd)

**STATUTES – Weeks 7 & 8**

**Learning Objectives**
• Distinguish session laws and codes
• Efficiently search for relevant statutes, session laws, multi-state surveys, and court rules using various strategies such as search queries, popular name, and secondary sources.
• Validate statutes using citators
• Cite statutes using proper citation format according to the Bluebook

**Friday, October 4, 2019**

**Reading Assignment**
• Westlaw – Searching Statutes

**Exercise:** Statutory Research (Due October 16th)

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Friday, October 11, 2019

Reading Assignment
• Alan L. Dworsky, User’s Guide to The Bluebook, Section 5, pp. 33-39, How to Cite a Statute.

Videos
• Westlaw – Statutes and Regulations Compare
• Bluebook Format for Statute Citations
• Bluebook Format for Statutes in Print

Exercise: Statutory Bluebooking (Due October 16th)

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE HISTORY – Week 9
Friday, October 18, 2019

Learning Objectives
• Locate and distinguish the types of documents generated during the legislative process
• Appraise the usefulness of legislative history documents to fulfil a legal research objective

Reading Assignments
• Steenken and Brooks, Sources of American Law, Chapter 2, Constitutions & Statutes, Section 2.6.
• Finding Legislative History on Lexis Advance

FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE LAW – Week 10
Friday, October 25, 2019

Learning Objectives
• Describe administrative law and the process by which it is authorized, created and enforced
• Efficiently search for controlling administrative regulations, executive orders, agency decisions and advisory documents
• Cite administrative materials using proper citation format according to the Bluebook
Reading Assignments


Videos

- Master the CFR – Into to the Code of Federal Regulations
- Basic Bluebook Citation Regulations

Final Assessment (Due November 4th)