This course syllabus is a general plan for the course. The instructor may announce modifications to this plan during class.


**Course Description:** Legal Writing I introduces the process of legal analysis and reasoning and teaches students to produce written documents in the style and format appropriate for the audience and purpose, with an emphasis on objective analysis and writing. This course has no prerequisites.

**Learning Objectives:** Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the structure of the American legal system, including the hierarchy of courts and of legal authorities, as well as the role of precedent and stare decisis in our common law system;
- Critically read and understand court opinions, statutes, and regulations;
- Write a succinct, accurate, and complete description of a case;
- Identify and synthesize rules from a body of law;
- Identify issues that require legal analysis from within a given set of facts;
- Use analytical reasoning, including factual analogies and distinctions, while applying law to a given set of facts;
- Effectively and concisely communicate an objective analysis of the application of law to a given set of facts;
- Prepare clear, organized, and professional written assignments with proper spelling, punctuation, grammar, and citation that comports with the conventions of legal writing while adopting a tone appropriate for the intended audience.

**Tentative Schedule:** The schedule below is a tentative schedule that may vary. We may spend more time on a topic that is listed below, and I may add topics that are not listed below.

**Part I:** In Part I of the course, which will last approximately the first month of the semester, we will cover the structure of the American legal system, including precedent and stare decisis. We also will cover case briefing, as well as analysis and synthesis of the law,
including both cases and statutes. We will conclude Part I of the course with a graded writing assignment in which you will prepare a summary of the law on a particular issue.

**Part II:** In Part II of the course, which will take up the rest of the semester, we will cover application of the law to a given set of facts, including using analogies and distinctions, in the context of objective analysis. We also will cover organization of legal analysis and elements of various types of legal writing. In addition, we will discuss the components of a formal legal memorandum, including the question presented, brief answer, statement of facts, and discussion sections. Finally, we will review the editing and polishing skills that you will need to prepare professional work product. To practice these skills, you will prepare an ungraded legal memorandum based on a closed set of cases, and then we will conclude Part II with a graded legal memorandum for which you will conduct your own research.

**Course Requirements:** To receive credit for this course, you must satisfactorily complete each of the assignments below. Failure to complete any assignment, graded or ungraded, will result in a grade of “Incomplete” for the course.

**Assignment**
1. Grammar diagnostic exam
2. Ungraded homework assignments
3. Resume and cover letter and meeting with Career Development Office counselor as scheduled
4. Part I graded summary of the law assignment
5. Ungraded closed memorandum
6. Part II graded open memorandum

**Grades:** Your grade will be calculated using the following formula:

- Part I graded assignment 30%
- Part II graded assignment 70%

In addition, your final grade may be raised or lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade based on satisfactory completion of all ungraded assignments, as well as your class attendance and participation.

**Professionalism Expectations:** This semester you will begin to develop your professional reputation as you interact with students and professors who later might become your colleagues in the bar. Thus, you will be expected to act as a professional in this course and in accordance with the expectations explained below.

- **Attendance and Participation:** Class will meet on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. in Class Room I. Attendance will be taken during each class meeting and may be considered in determining final grades. Anyone who misses more than four classes may be dropped from the course. You are expected to participate in class, which will include a significant amount of group and individual exercises, peer review, and classroom discussion.
- **Deadlines:** You are expected to comply with applicable deadlines.
• **Tardiness:** You are expected to come to class on time.

**Computer Use Policy:** Laptops, tablet computers, or other electronic devices must not be used in class unless you are directed to do so during specific classes. Cell phones, smartphones, and other wireless devices must be silenced or turned off prior to the beginning of class and may not be used during class. This class follows law school policy, which prohibits electronic recording of classes without prior written approval. [http://law.uga.edu/student-handbook-contents#part4](http://law.uga.edu/student-handbook-contents#part4).

**Honor Code and Other Policies:** All work done in this course is subject to the University of Georgia Law School Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy, and the University of Georgia Academic Honesty Policy, and the University of Georgia Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy. Students requiring accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact the Associate Director of Student Affairs, Alex Sklut, at [asklut@uga.edu](mailto:asklut@uga.edu).

**Office Hours:** I encourage you to visit my office (314 Rusk Hall) if you have any questions regarding the course material. My office hours for Fall Semester appear below. You may also arrange appointments with me at other mutually convenient times. Please contact me after class or by email to schedule an appointment outside of office hours.

- Tuesday & Friday: 2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
- Wednesday & Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**TA:** Nicole Nielly ([nnielly1@uga.edu](mailto:nnielly1@uga.edu)) is the TA for this course. Ms. Nielly will be available in the library on Mondays from 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.