

**GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS FULFILLING
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS
COLLEGE OF LAW
ADVANCED WRITING REQUIREMENT**

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I. Description of the Task

Before graduation, every student at Loyola College of Law must submit a piece of legal writing in which the student exhibits his or her ability to critically perform legal analysis. The type of piece shall be dictated by the supervising professor. Typically, though not exclusively, students will be asked to draft “law review-type” articles, research memoranda, or briefs. This set of guidelines focuses on the former, which includes pieces in which students critically examine and comment on an area or topic of law.

The article differs from an interoffice memorandum in which the writer researches an area of law to evaluate a case and predict the outcome of the application of that law to that case. It differs from a memorandum to a court and an appellate brief, which are written to advocate a particular client’s position and persuade the court of a certain outcome. The article traditionally does one or more of the following:

1. Suggests changes in the law and/or comments on discrepancies and inconsistencies in the law;
2. Provides in-depth analysis of the law;
3. Includes empirical data or other “non-traditional” information;
4. Compares the laws from more than one jurisdiction and considers the theories behind the laws;
5. Traces the history of the law; and
6. Recognizes differences in the application of the law by different courts and recommends a uniform application.

The article must be of suitable length and must earn the student a grade of C or better. Footnotes should be used for citations and should conform to A Uniform System of Citation (the Blue Book) and its guidelines for law reviews, unless the supervising professor requires some other format.

Other guidelines, suggestions, or requirements may be given or imposed by the supervising faculty member.

II. Selecting a Topic or Defining the Issues to Be Addressed

Selecting a good topic or defining the issues to be addressed is one of the most important steps you can take to ensure that you produce a strong piece of legal writing. Before selecting a topic or defining the issues, consider the following:

1. Any requirements placed upon you by the supervising professor, such as writing in a particular area of the law because the piece is being written in conjunction with a class;
2. Areas of particular interest to you because of your personal experience, educational or work background, or desire to practice, teach, or work in a particular area in the future;
3. Evolving areas of law in which the scholarship on a particular topic is not well-developed;
4. Recent developments in the law;
5. Laws that may not be accomplishing what they were intended to accomplish;
6. Areas of law in which lower and appellate courts have rendered conflicting decisions and the Supreme Court or the state supreme court has not yet ruled; and
7. The suggestions and comments of professors and practitioners who work in your area(s) of interest.

If you are writing an article, once you have some ideas for topics, consult the *Current Index to Legal Periodicals*, Westlaw, LEXIS, Bloomberg Law, or a specialty index in your area of research, such as *The Index to Tax Articles*, to determine what has been written on your potential topic(s) in the last five years. You may not duplicate what someone else has already done. Provide your supervising faculty member with a description of your topic, a preliminary outline of what you intend to cover in your article, and a preliminary bibliography, which should include a description of and citation to any articles already written that parallel your topic.

III. Researching and Organizing

To research thoroughly for an article, consider primary and secondary authorities. Due to the number of sources you will consult, you should formulate a research plan before you begin researching and you should modify this plan as you conduct your research. A plan should simply identify what sources you plan to consult and in what order. Additional information that may be helpful is a note about why you are consulting a particular source, how you think it might be helpful, and how you are considering using the source in your article. Although you may not be required to produce a written research plan, a written plan may prove helpful to you as a checklist and barometer of your research progress and may help you to keep your research focused and on track.

Organize your material as you research. You will be reviewing many sources; consider using file folders or tabbed sections in a binder(s) to store your research as you collect it, or the equivalent organizational system online. Otherwise, you will end up with a large file of information that will need to be catalogued before you can even begin to work with it. Color code, number, tab, separate, put in folders—do whatever it takes to make final assimilation of the material easier when you begin to outline and write.

Further, as you work through the material uncovered by your research, always consider how you will organize your article. Each article will have its own organizational scheme, which will be dictated in large part by the material to be conveyed to the reader. Typically, articles begin with an introduction that sets out the author's thesis or theory and provides a roadmap of the article's organizational scheme. A section or more provides background information and law the reader needs to understand the analysis and discussion of the issue. The analysis/discussion section is the section in which the article fully develops and supports the article's thesis. Additionally, most articles end with a brief conclusion section.

IV. Writing

Just do it! Many of us put off writing and get caught up in researching. Prolonging research time allows us to feel that we are actively working on the piece when what we frequently are doing is avoiding the sometimes more difficult task of assimilating our ideas and committing them to paper. If you have organized well, start with the section of your article with which you feel most comfortable and begin to write. The task of writing becomes much easier once your paper is no longer blank. Also, do not add pressure to the process by feeling as if what you are writing is your final draft. Rough or somewhat polished, what is critical is that you get a draft down on paper; revising an existing document is usually easier than trying to create a perfect first draft.

Footnote as you write. Even if you will need to go back and "Bluebook" the form of the footnotes at a later time, document your sources while you are writing. If you do not, you will spend valuable time later on in the writing process retracing your steps, trying to determine exactly where you got a particular idea or quote.

Spend a major portion of your time revising your work. After you have your ideas down on paper you will inevitably see new relationships between ideas that you had not considered earlier; you may change your opinion on some issues; you may see a need to restructure part or all of your article; or you may see a need to gather additional information on a certain point. Legal analysis and understanding is a continual process that does not stop simply because you have committed some ideas to paper. Do not discard the knowledge you will gain while writing; reserve time to incorporate this knowledge into your article.

Edit and proofread your work. You are a professional, and your work must reflect that fact. Lack of attention to the details of editing and proofreading may cause the reader to question your attention to the details of researching and analyzing.

V. Plagiarism

"Plagiarism" is defined as [t]he act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his writings, or the ideas of language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind." *Black's law Dictionary*. Plagiarism is expressly prohibited by the Loyola College of Law Honor Code, which provides:

It shall be a violation of the honor code to plagiarize the work of another. No student shall claim or submit as his or her own original work the research, ideas or writings of another without acknowledging and clearly identifying such

material in an appropriate manner. Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of authorship is a form of plagiarism.

Paraphrasing is the close restatement of another's idea using approximately the language of the original

The Honor Code ¶ IV (B).

To avoid plagiarism, you must cite all sources from which you have quoted, paraphrased, paraphrased, or obtained unique ideas. Gray areas may arise in which an idea may not be particularly unique to any one source. In those cases, you will need to use your discretion, but you should err on the side of giving attribution to the authority or authorities. Keep in mind that citation to authority strengthens legal writing, rather than weakening it.

VI. Texts to Assist in Researching and Writing

Below is a short list of several sources that may assist in researching and writing. Some of the sources listed may already be familiar to you. You should also review some published law review articles to become more familiar with what the finished product will look like.

Mary B. Ray & Jill J. Ramsfield, *Legal Writing: Getting it Right and Getting it Written* (West any edition) (see specific sections on scholarly writing as well as sections on various style and grammar issues).

Elizabeth Fajans & Mary R. Falk, *Scholarly Writing for Law Students* (West).

Eugene Volokh, *Writing a Student Article*, 48 J. Leg. Educ. 247 (1998). (Volokh has also published a book on scholarly writing based on this article).

A Uniform System of Citation (most recent edition).

Texas Law Review Manual on Usage & Style.

Bryan A. Garner, *The Elements of Legal Style*.

Bryan Garner, *The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style*.

Mary Garvey Algero, *Louisiana Legal Research* (Carolina Academic Press).

Mary Garvey Algero, et al., *Federal Legal Research* (Carolina Academic Press).

VII. Excerpt From the Law School bulletin on the Writing Requirement and Policy for Law 898 Legal Research

As a requirement of graduation, each student must submit a piece of legal writing in which the student exhibits the ability to perform legal analysis, in addition to the writing done in the Lawyering I and Lawyering II classes. No paper will fulfill the upper-level writing requirement unless it has been preceded by a bibliography, outline, and at least one rough draft. Any faculty member supervising the paper must give the student feedback on at least one draft.

Guidelines for preparing a paper that satisfies the writing requirement are available from the Law Records Office or online at <https://law.loyno.edu/student-resources/academic-affairs>. The writing requirement is satisfied when a paper receives a grade of C or higher and the professor who grades the paper indicates on LORA or to Law Records the paper met the writing requirement standard. Students must tell the professor at the beginning of the project the paper will be used to satisfy the writing requirement. Students must attach the [writing requirement form](#) to the paper when the paper is submitted for grading. The form instructs professors to indicate on LORA or report to Law Records the writing requirement was satisfied by the student's paper.

Papers written in the following courses, when taught for at least 2 hours, may be used to satisfy the writing requirement:

LAW L782 - Law and Poverty Seminar
LAW L802 - Law and Education Seminar
LAW L809 - American Legal History Seminar
LAW L813 - Evidence/Procedure Seminar
LAW L816 - Comparative Law Seminar (2- or 3-hour credit assignment)
LAW L819 - Construction Industry Law Seminar
LAW L826 - Advanced Torts Seminar
LAW L827 - Contracts/Commercial Law Seminar
LAW L831 - European Union Law Seminar
LAW L834 - Environmental Justice
LAW L846 - Seminar in Scholarly Writing
LAW L853 - Family Law Seminar
LAW L855 - Child Advocacy Seminar
LAW L859 - Regulation of Sports Industry Seminar
LAW L862 - Criminal Law Seminar
LAW L865 - Juvenile Law Seminar
LAW L877 - Constitutional Law Seminar
LAW L883 - Dialogues in Law and Ethics
LAW L884 - International Law Seminar
LAW L885 - Gender Law in Practice
LAW L886 - Environmental Law Seminar
LAW L887 - Federal Taxation Seminar
LAW L890 - Regulation of Entertainment Industries Seminar
LAW L892 - Law Review Seminar
LAW L893 - Public Interest Law Journal Honors Tutorial (only for comment)
LAW L894 - Public Interest Law Journal Seminar
LAW L898 - Legal Research (2-hour credit assignment)
LAW L905 - Advanced Legal Writing
LAW L910 - Law and Religion Seminar

Any new seminar, course, or existing course, which is at least 2 credit hours and in which a paper of suitable length and quality is either required or offered by the instructor is an option.

In accordance with ABA standard 303, a student may not use one course to satisfy both the Writing Requirement and the Experiential Requirement, although the Law Bulletin may identify some courses as eligible to satisfy both because of the nature of the courses. If the Law Bulletin classifies a course as satisfying both of these requirements, a student must choose the requirement the student plans to satisfy by enrolling in and completing the course and must notify the professor at the beginning of the semester or as soon thereafter as is required by the professor. If no designation is made the course will be treated as satisfying the Experiential Requirement.

Policy for LAW L898 Legal Research

1. A student interested in registering for the *LAW L898 - Legal Research* course must submit a detailed topic proposal (written outline of the topic along with a preliminary bibliography) to the supervising faculty member, with a copy to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, indicating whether the course will be taken for one or two hours credit and whether the course is intended to fulfill the student's writing requirement. The supervising faculty member shall review and approve in writing the proposal. Any faculty member may supervise a student for *LAW L898 - Legal Research* for a total of no more than four credit hours.
2. A student must be in good academic standing to register for this course.
3. A two-credit hour project shall require work equivalent to that required in a two-hour seminar and equivalent in length and quality to a law review comment, with a suggested minimum length of 30 double-spaced typed pages. A one-credit hour project shall require work equivalent in length and quality to a law review case note, with a suggested minimum length of 20 double-spaced typed pages. This course cannot be taken for more than 2 credit hours.
4. The supervising faculty member and the student shall establish a regular schedule of consultation for the entire semester. The final written project shall conform to *A Uniform System of Citation* to the extent it is applicable. The supervising faculty member may impose requirements, in addition to the above, at the time he or she agrees to supervise the project. These additional requirements shall be incorporated in the proposal approved and signed by the supervising faculty member.
5. *LAW L898 - Legal Research* contemplates original research and is not to be based on modifications of work done for other courses, for employers, or be simply a compilation of work done by others.
6. An incomplete grade may only be given upon presentation of written evidence of a medical or other handicap or compelling reason preventing the timely completion of the project. Incomplete grades must be approved by the faculty member supervising the credit and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs must be notified that the incomplete grade is being given.