I. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**
A five credit introduction to legal research and writing.

II. **GOALS:**
A. The students will learn, upon being given a specific issue or a general fact pattern containing a legal issue, to research the various reporters and services in order to determine the current state of the law with respect to the issue before them.

B. The students will also learn, upon being given a specific issue or a general fact pattern containing a legal issue, to draft a specified document. Legal writing skills will be developed through in class practice and other assignments.

III. **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**
Students will learn the fundamentals of legal research and writing so that, as paralegals, they will be able to accurately communicate to their employer attorneys the current state of the law with respect to an assigned or implied legal issue.

IV. **COURSE ARRANGEMENTS:**
The class will consist of students’ written analysis of assigned issues as well as oral presentations on the assigned topic. There will be written projects to be completed, both in class and away from class. References to and reliance on Federal, State and regional reporters as well as on-line services will be common.

The in-class writing assignments are designed to improve students’ grammatic, philologicial, logical and semantic skills, not so much as the drafting of specific legal documents, which is taught in other classes. Some writing assignments will be individual effort; some will be collaborative. This will enable the students to compare and contrast critical thinking approaches and perspectives.

V. **REQUIRED LITERACIES:**

**Critical Literacy:** Students will, from a set of given facts, formulate the appropriate legal issue and research applicable legal materials to determine the applicable legal principles and rules, then apply those principles, in written form, to the facts in order to reach a reasonable legal resolution of the issue.

**Civic Literacy:** Students will understand the interrelationship between legislative, administrative and case law.

**Computer Literacy:** Students will learn how to formulate queries and to research issues on-line using *Westlaw* and other computer based services.
VI. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**
Students are to read all assigned material, including handouts & supplements, as well as to use the resources in IV, *supra*, to prepare for presentation of assigned materials. There will be no examinations, grades will be based on the cumulative score of in-class and assigned projects.

VII. **COURSE TEXTS:**
C. *The Bluebook, A Uniform System of Citation, 17TH Ed.*, Columbia Law Review Assn. et. al., 2000

VIII. **CLASS MEETING SCHEDULE:** -TO BE DETERMINED (Estimate of 16 class periods averaging 2.5 hours each, two periods per week for eight weeks)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Period</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative matters, Course Preview, U.S. Constitution, Legal lexicon. Writing Exercise - initial evaluation</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tour of Law Library at SCC and Gonzaga Law School. Writing exercise - brevity, verbs (The specific goal is to teach students that brevity, through precise word choice, generally produces a more accurate and readable document. It will also teach them that active voice is generally preferable to passive voice and that the subjunctive mood is to be avoided, as it usually suggests personal beliefs and fuzzy thought)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Authorities - Federal; Introduction to WestLaw. Writing exercise - citations, adjectives ((The specific goal is to teach students that accurate citations are the <em>sine qua non</em> of legal writing and that adjectives generally do not add to the precision, therefore the accuracy, of the document.)</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Primary Authorities - State &amp; Regional (Emphasis on WA.). Writing Exercise - sentences, word choice. ((The specific goal is to teach students that precise word choice, coupled with short sentences produces a more compelling legal document.)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary Authorities - ALR=s, Treatises &amp; Restatements. Writing exercise – paragraphs. (The specific goal is to teach students that proper use of paragraphs focuses the reader to a specific subject as well as produces a more readable document.)</td>
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Shepardizing & Key Citing. Writing exercise - Briefing a case. (The specific goal is to teach students how to extract the legal proposition set forth in a case as well as how to present the holding and reasoning of a case in a format generally accepted by the legal profession.)

Issue formulation, Research strategy. Writing exercise - intra-office memorandum. (The specific goal is to teach students how to prepare an impartial and analytical memorandum for intra-office use.)

Case Analysis, Proof of Facts, Distinguishing cases. Writing exercise - Memorandum of Authorities. (The specific goal is to teach students how to write a persuasive and accurate memorandum which advocates a client’s legal position.)

Court Rules, Evidence. Writing exercise - Client letter. (The specific goal is to teach students how to write a letter to a client which explains the law as it applies to the facts of the client’s circumstances, i.e., a letter which aids the client in making an informed decision.)

Legislative History.

Administrative Law & Resources. Writing exercise - Client letter (Admin Law issue)

State Constitutions & Case Law. Assign final project

Motions & Memoranda at Trial Level, Trial Briefs

Appellate Research & Writing

Unresolved issues/Review/Questions Regarding final project

Turn-in final project

IX. CLASS POLICIES:

Attend class. Excused absences must be arranged in advance if at all possible.

Excused Absences: Recognizing that students in this program are, for the most part, working parents, I realize things come up which necessitate an occasional absence. If you must be absent, you will file a motion for Order of Excused Absence with the instructor at least 24 hours in advance (filing may be done by personal service, fax, e-mail or mail). A Motion will not be considered to be filed unless the instructor has personally received the Motion at least 24 hours prior to the class from which the student wishes to be excused. The motion will be in the format provided with this syllabus. It will typed or printed (not handwritten!), will identify the student as the petitioner, will provide a brief and thorough reason for the necessity for the excused
absence and will be signed by the student. (A sample is provided on pages 4 and 5.)

Participate in class. Be prepared. Class participation (oral and written presentations) will constitute a significant portion of your grade. Content, Analysis and Expression will be noted.

Pay attention to the details. This is a writing class. Spelling and grammar count. Invest in a dictionary. Divest yourself of the thesaurus. Bring pen & paper to class; we will be writing in every class.

Academic Honesty. Don’t cheat or plagiarize. There is an SCC Code of Conduct for faculty and students; I expect everyone to adhere to it and to anticipate its enforcement.

X. GRADING POLICY:

Written Projects 75%
Class Participation 25%

Grades based on points and relative standing in class.

A = 90 - 100%
B = 80 - 89%
C = 70 - 79%
D = 60 - 69%
F = 59% - below

XI. ACCESS TO PROFESSOR:

My office is at W. 1309 Dean Ave. in Spokane. My number is 327-7080; fax is 323-1858; e-mail is beeglemichaelc@qwest.net. Feel free to call. You may get my answering machine. If I am in, I will answer; if not, please leave a message with a number at which I can reach you, either work and home (or both). I will return all calls and e-mail from students in a timely manner.

I am willing to come in early or to stay late if requested. Please let me know your needs so we may work together in getting you the maximum benefit from this course.

(FORMAT FOR MOTION AND DECLARATION FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE)

IN THE CLASS OF LEGAL WRITING
COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF SPOKANE
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

In Re: )
Student=s Name, )
Petitioner ) No. ________________

SYLLABUS, LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING - 4
TO: Michael C. Beegle, Instructor, Legal Research

COMES NOW THE PETITIONER, _____________________, and moves the Class for an Order Excusing the Petitioner from attending the class on ___________________________. This motion is based on the files and records herein and on the attached declaration (and exhibits, if applicable) of the Petitioner.

Signed this ____ day of ______________, 2007.

__________________________________________
Petitioner

County of Spokane )
) ss.
State of Washington )

DECLARATION OF PETITIONER

__________________________________________
avers and declares that the following is true to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

I am the petitioner in this matter. I am unable to attend class on ___________________________ for the following reason. (Give a brief but thorough reason. Corroboration attached as exhibits will be helpful, e.g., appointment slips.)
Therefore, the petitioner respectfully moves the Class for an Order Excusing my
Absence on that date.
Signed this ________ day of ________________, 2007.

________________________________________

________

Petitioner

ORDER:
The Petitioner=s Motion is __________________________.

Signed this ________ day of ________________, 2007.

________________________________________

________

Instructor