

# Advanced Legal Research & Writing Certificate Course – Online

## About This Course

Advanced and specialized approaches to utilize the legal resources available in a law library, and elsewhere, will be examined. The conceptual differences between computer-assisted legal research and hard copy research will be taught. You will also learn how to formulate **WESTLAW** search queries and effectively and efficiently use **WESTLAW** and other online legal research methods as timesaving devices in legal research and legal writing. Coursework in Advanced Legal Research and Writing is equivalent to 50 clock hours of study.

This course is designed to examine more thoroughly advanced and specialized approaches to utilizing the legal sources available in the law library and online.

## Course Objectives:

After successfully completing the tests and assignments for course, students will be able to:

- Conduct manual legal research
- Conduct electronic legal research
- Find, interpret and use various types of legal authorities
- Demonstrate how to Shepardize legal authorities
- Write a legal analysis
- Prepare a Memorandum of Law
- Brief case opinions
- Demonstrate various types of legal writing

## Expectations

You will be expected to spend approximately 9 hours per lesson reading and completing writing assignments. 70% is the minimum passing score on all tests and assignments for this course. Please note that extensions will not be granted for this online course. Students may consider working ahead in the curriculum if they have the time.

## Prerequisites

Successful completion of Paralegal Certificate Course, Part I (Paralegal 1 & 2), or the equivalent, or law office experience.

## Course Books

### Required textbooks for this course:

- *Legal Research, Analysis and Writing*, 4th edition by William H. Putnam
- *Legal Research Methods*, 2nd Edition by Michael D. Murray and Christy H. DeSanctis
- **WESTLAW**, online legal research access, available for the duration of the course for only \$89.00. [Order Online](#)

For more information, call The Center for Legal Studies at 888-407-5138, or visit our [Online Store](#) to order.

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## Highly Recommended Legal Resources:

- *Oran's Dictionary of the Law*, 4th Edition, by Daniel Oran. Clifton Park: Delmar Cengage Learning

## Reading Assignments for Lesson Topics:

### Lesson One: Legal Authorities and Citations

- Read Chapters 1 – 6 in *Legal Research, Analysis and Writing* (herein referred to as Putnam)
  - Read Chapter 1 in *Legal Research Methods*, 2nd edition (herein referred to as Murray)
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### Lesson Two: Legal Analysis

- Read Chapters 9-13 & 17 in Putnam
  - Read Chapters 2 & 3 in Murray
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### Lesson Three: WESTLAW® Online Legal Research

- Read Chapters 7 & 8 in Putnam
  - Read Chapters 4 & 5 in Murray
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### Lesson Four: Legal Memoranda

- Read Chapters 16 & 18 & review Chapter 17 in Putnam
  - Read Chapters 6 & 7 in Murray
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### Lesson Five: Legal Research – The Process

- Read Chapter 8 in Murray
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### Lesson Six: Types of Legal Writing

- Read Chapter 15 & Review Chapter 13 in Putnam
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## Practical Application Exercises:

You will complete five 30 point legal research and writing practical application exercises utilizing WESTLAW online legal research.

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## **Writing Assignments:**

You will complete three 100 point legal writing assignments: a Legal Analysis, a Case Brief, and a Memorandum of Law.

## **Bulletin Board Assignments:**

You will also post your responses to six class participation assignments each worth 10 points. These assignments are referred to as Bulletin Board Submissions and will be submitted by either selecting Bulletin Board Submission from within the lesson material, or by selecting 'Forums' under Activities on the Left Hand Block.

All lesson objectives and assignments can be found in the Lesson Materials.

## **Grading**

Your grade will be based on your completion of six tests, two exams, and class participation/Bulletin Board Submissions. The exams and tests can be accessed from within the lesson material, or by selecting 'Assignments' under Activities on the Left Hand Block. You will have the opportunity to engage in "class participation" by using the Bulletin Board tool to respond to the bulletin board assignments throughout the course. Also, participating in the bulletin board assignments will enhance your understanding of the reading material.

## **Your final grade will be figured as follows:**

- The five practical application exercises comprise 40% of your grade.
- The three writing assignments comprise 40% of your grade.
- Your participation in class participation assignments comprises 20% of your grade.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Students may drop the course with a full tuition refund less a non-refundable \$15 administrative fee if written notice is sent to The Center for Legal Studies by email at [info@legalstudies.com](mailto:info@legalstudies.com) by the Wednesday before class begins. Students may drop the course with a 50% tuition refund if written notice is sent to The Center for Legal Studies by email at [info@legalstudies.com](mailto:info@legalstudies.com) anytime from the Thursday before the course begins until the first Thursday of class. After the first Thursday of class, no refunds will be issued.