

**PLS 52 Course Outline as of Fall 2019****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: PLS 52                      Title: LEGAL WRITING  
 Full Title: Legal Writing  
 Last Reviewed: 5/14/2018

Units	Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks		Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	6	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade Only

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly:

**Catalog Description:**

Students use legal research skills to draft legal correspondence, case briefs, legal memoranda, pleadings, motions, and other documents. The course emphasizes construction of clear, concise, and well-organized legal instruments.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:**

Course Completion or Current Enrollment in PLS 50, PLS 51 and BGN 71

**Recommended Preparation:****Limits on Enrollment:****Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: Students use legal research skills to draft legal correspondence, case briefs, legal memoranda, pleadings, motions, and other documents. The course emphasizes construction of clear, concise, and well-organized legal instruments. (Grade Only)

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Course Completion or Current Enrollment in PLS 50, PLS 51 and BGN 71

Recommended:

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU Transfer:</b>	Transferable	Effective: Spring 2010	Inactive:
<b>UC Transfer:</b>		Effective:	Inactive:

### **CID:**

### **Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Major Applicable Course

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Apply effective legal writing mechanics and drafting techniques.
2. Employ accurate grammar, spelling, and punctuation in preparing legal documents.
3. Draft documents such as case briefs and legal office memoranda, motions and legal correspondence, while citing legal resources and laws.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Compose demand letters.
2. Compose general legal correspondence.
3. Draft pre-trial, trial, and discovery motions.
4. Prepare Memoranda of Points and Authorities.
5. Draft case briefs and legal memoranda.
6. Organize writing to produce an effective product.
7. Review, revise, and proofread documents effectively.

### **Topics and Scope:**

#### I. Mechanics of Writing

- A. Grammar
- B. Spelling
- C. Punctuation

#### II. Writing Strategies

- A. Prewriting
- B. Precision
- C. Clarity
- D. Readability
- E. Brevity
- F. Order

- G. Drafting techniques
- III. Legal Correspondence
  - A. Elements of letters
  - B. General correspondence
  - C. Demand letters
  - D. Opinion letters
- IV. Case Briefs
  - A. Case reading strategies
  - B. Format
  - C. Writing content
- V. Legal Memoranda
  - A. Objectives
  - B. Format
  - C. Writing content
- VI. Drafting Motions
  - A. Types of motions
  - B. Elements of motions
  - C. Memoranda of Points and Authorities
  - D. Writing content
- VII. Post-Writing Steps
  - A. Proofreading
  - B. Reviewing and revising
  - C. Polishing the document
- VIII. Internet Resources for the Legal Writer

**Assignment:**

1. Read textbook and outside sources of approximately 50 pages per week
2. Study and memorize legal terminology
3. Draft general correspondence, demands, and opinion letters
4. Write citations to resources found
5. Compose case briefs
6. Compose legal memoranda
7. Draft elements of motions
8. Draft Memoranda of Points and Authorities
9. Midterm and Final Exam

**Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:**

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Written homework composed of legal writing	Writing 60 - 80%
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**Problem Solving:** Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

Research procedural and substantive law	Problem solving 5 - 20%
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**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None

Skill Demonstrations  
0 - 0%

**Exams:** All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Midterm and final

Exams  
10 - 20%

**Other:** Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Attendance and participation

Other Category  
5 - 15%

**Representative Textbooks and Materials:**

Legal Research and Writing for Paralegals, by Deborah Bouchoux, Aspen Publishing, 7th edition, 2014.

California Style Manual, by Edward W. Jessen, West Publishing, 4th edition, 2000 (classic in field).