

**TULANE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES
PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM
(Updated May 2007)**

LEGAL RESEARCH SYLLABUS

PARA 302

Semester Hours: 3 credit hours

Day/Time:

INSTRUCTOR:

Joseph Aguilar: (H) 504-394-7301 Email: aguilar@tulane.edu

Office Hours: before or after class & on request

TEXTS:

Legal Research, Analysis and Writing, William H. PUTNAM *[required]*

Electronic Legal Research: An Integrated Approach, Stephanie DELANEY
[required]

Citation at a Glance or ALWD Speed Cite *[recommended; not required]*

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to the law library and the process of legal research, including computer assisted methods.

OBJECTIVES:

The general purpose of the course is to develop an understanding of the fundamentals of legal research and some analysis. Emphasis will be on research. There will one hour discussion of legal ethics and of professionalism. The student will learn the following competencies:

1. Understand the organization of a law library
2. Locate cases, statutes, and constitutions [Federal and State]
3. Brief a case for use in legal inquiry
4. Become familiar with legal citation norms
5. Attain ability to obtain relevant legal information from legal digests to enhance basic research
6. Attain ability to obtain relevant legal information from secondary legal authorities to enhance basic research
7. Become familiar with electronic legal research tools, including Lexis and other online research

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS USED:

Methods & Procedures: one or more of the following: lectures, class discussions, group projects, writing assignments, library assignments, quizzes and exams, pop quizzes, and supplementary readings. Some quizzes and parts of exams may be oral.

COMMUNICATION: To access Blackboard, log on to <http://www.blackboard.tulane.edu>

GRADING:

Your final grade is based on the total score earned during the semester:

In-Library/ Homework/ Quizzes	40%
Computer Research Work	20%
Mid Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

NOTE: IF professor does not have a mid-term, the final exam is worth 40%

INSTRUCTOR'S POLICIES:

Attendance is mandatory and part of your grade. **Assignments** must be turned in timely. Late turn in will be docked one letter grade for each class period not turned in. Put NAME, DATE, and ASSIGNMENT NUMBER or identity (e.g. special assignment) on upper RIGHT-HAND corner of first page. PREPARE 2 COPIES: ONE FOR HANDING-IN AT START OF CLASS & ONE FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK. Keep participation copy for your records. **Make-up Exams, Assignments, etc.** - Per Instructor's discretion.

HONOR CODE:

All student work is governed by the Tulane University Honor Code <http://college.tulane.edu/honorcode.htm> Only those projects specifically designated as group projects may be worked on together. All other work must be performed **solely** by the individual student. Any violations will be reported to the Honor Board for review.

DISABILITY ACCOMODATION:

Tulane will make available reasonable accommodations IAW section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any student with specific questions about Office of Disability Services (ODS) procedures and policies should contact the Director of ODS for additional information or view the ODS website at "<http://www.tulane.edu/~erc/disability>"

COURSE OUTLINE:

Assignments will be assigned at least one week prior to due date. More detailed outlines and handouts will be distributed during the class periods. Prior to FIRST CLASS, please read Chap 1 from Putnam textbook. Prior to FIRST COMPUTER: to be announced.

CLASS #1	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Chapter 1:</u> Intro. to Legal Principles and Authorities and organization of law library [pages 2 thru 24].
CLASS #2	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Chapter 2:</u> Intro. to Legal Research and Analysis [pages 25 thru 44]. Library Tour (organization of law library) and In Class Assignment [one hour] <u>Chapter 8:</u> Legal Citation [pages 256 thru 296] This chapter and legal citations will be discussed.
CLASS #3	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Chapter 3:</u> Statute, Constitutions, Admin Law, and Court Rules. [lecture for half of class; in-library assignment for other half [pages 47 thru 94].
CLASS #4	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Chapter 4:</u> Case Law -- Research and Briefing [lecture on court system; elements of opinions; briefing a case [one hour lecture; two hours in library] [pages 97 thru 130].
CLASS #5	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Chapter 5:</u> Secondary Authority -- Digests, Shepard's, and ALRs [lecture for one hour; two hours in library [pages 146 thru 181].
CLASS #6	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Mid Term Exam</u>
CLASS #7	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Computer Class:</u> Assignments To Be Announced
CLASS #8	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Computer Class:</u> Assignments To Be Announced
CLASS #9	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Computer Class:</u> Assignments To Be Announced
CLASS #10	<i>3 Hours</i>	<u>Computer Class:</u> Assignments To Be Announced
CLASS #11	<i>3 Hours</i>	Chapter 6: Secondary Authority -- Periodicals, Restatements, Uniform Laws, Dictionaries, Legislative History, and Other Secondary Authorities [lecture for one hour; library work for two hours] [pages 132 thru 146 & 183 thru 218]
CLASS #12	<i>3 Hours</i>	Discussion of Ethical Rules and Professionalism [one hour lecture; one hour review; one hour library work]
CLASS #13	<i>3 Hours</i>	Legal Research Review of all chapters in preparation of Final Exam. If Final is to be a take-home exam, it should be distributed during this class. one to two hours; remaining time in law library]

CLASS #14 *3 Hours* **FINAL EXAM**

Assignment # 1: DUE the second class

- 1. READ: Chapters 1 and 2 [pages 2 thru 22 AND 25 thru 44]**
- 2. COMPLETE: Chap 1 Exercises: Assgnmnts 3 and 4 on page 23 of the Textbook
[TO BE TURNED IN AT START OF CLASS].**
- 3. Write two short paragraphs: one about yourself and one stating why you want to
take this course.**