Legal Research & Writing PROGRAM OUTLINE



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Legal research and writing are essential skills for effective paralegal work. Blackstone's Advanced Legal Research & Writing course provides a solid foundation in researching legal issues, evaluating legal authorities, and preparing clear, accurate, and professional legal documents.

The course begins with an introduction to legal research and writing, the U.S. legal system, legal authorities, research methods and resources, legal databases, and the procedural and ethical rules that guide legal research. Students then develop practical legal writing skills through case briefing, legal memoranda, the IRAC method, synthesis of legal authorities, outlining and organization, and professional legal correspondence.

Through writing assignments and practical exercises, students apply the research and writing skills developed throughout the course and gain experience communicating legal information clearly, accurately, and professionally.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Lesson 1 | Legal Research, Part I

Lesson 2 | Legal Research, Part II

Lesson 3 | Legal Research, Part III

Lesson 4 | Legal Writing, Part I

Lesson 5 | Legal Writing, Part II

Lesson 6 | Legal Writing, Part III

Legal Research, Part I

LESSON 1



Lesson 1 introduces the fundamentals of legal research and writing, including the role of paralegals, the U.S. legal system, and different types of legal authorities. Students learn how to find relevant federal and state case law, use legal research tools such as digests and indexes, and validate cases through Shepardizing to ensure the law is current and reliable.

Legal Research, Part II

LESSON 2

This lesson explores secondary authorities, constitutional provisions, statutes, legislative history, and administrative rules and regulations as important resources for legal research. Students also learn how to locate and use these authorities effectively and gain an introduction to legal research databases such as Lexis and Westlaw.

Legal Research, Part III

LESSON 3



Lesson 3 focuses on the procedural and ethical rules that guide legal research, along with additional resources such as formbooks, checklists, and continuing legal education materials. Students apply the research skills developed throughout the course through step-by-step techniques for conducting effective and accurate legal research.

Legal Writing, Part I

LESSON 4

The fundamentals of legal writing are introduced in this lesson. Students learn how to plan writing projects, establish goals, create outlines, draft and revise written work, and apply effective editing techniques. The lesson also examines the elements that contribute to clear, effective, and professional legal writing.

Legal Writing, Part II

LESSON 5



Key legal writing skills are the focus of this lesson, including the case briefing process and the components of an effective case brief. Students learn how to draft legal memoranda, with particular attention to questions presented, conclusions, and statements of legally significant facts.

Legal Writing, Part III

LESSON 6

Students learn how to apply the IRAC method, synthesize legal authorities, and organize legal memoranda. The lesson concludes with basic legal correspondence, including status, demand, and opinion letters, as well as professional communication through email, text, and social media. Students complete legal writing assignments that provide an opportunity to practice and demonstrate their legal research and writing skills.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Identify and distinguish between primary and secondary authorities, including their roles in legal research

Apply basic legal research strategies to locate relevant legal authorities and verify the validity of case law using citators

Analyze cases, statutes, and other legal authorities to identify relevant legal principles and synthesize information applicable to a legal problem

Draft a basic legal memorandum using the IRAC method, incorporating a statement of facts, legal issues, applicable rules, analysis, and conclusions

Prepare clear, professional legal correspondence and research documents using appropriate legal citation, grammar, organization, and proofreading techniques



Blackstone Career Institute

info@blackstone.edu 800-826-9228