

**University of Arkansas - Fort Smith**  
**5210 Grand Avenue**  
**P. O. Box 3649**  
**Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649**  
**479-788-7000**

### **General Syllabus**

## **LEGL 1103 Legal Research and Writing I**

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 2

LaboratoryHours: 2

Prerequisites or corequisites: LEGL 1043 Introduction to Law and ENGL 1203  
Composition I or ENGL 1233 Honors Composition

Effective Catalog: 2018-2019

### **I. Course Information**

#### **A. Catalog Description**

Development of the fundamental skills needed to conduct efficient and accurate legal research in the preparation of legal documents. Taught both on campus and in the Sebastian County Law Library where both self-guided and directed legal research and writing activities will be conducted.

#### **B. Additional Information**

This is an introductory course which provides a thorough exposure to the UAFS Boreham Library and Sebastian County Law Library and introduces the students to the skills they need for legal research and writing. Emphasis will be placed on self-teaching, at-site assignments, proper use and formatting of legal citations in legal documents and many classes will be conducted at the library.

### **II. Student Learning Outcomes**

#### **A. Subject Matter**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Name the types of legal materials that are available in the county law library and the UAFS Boreham Library.
2. Give a citation and place it in standard "Bluebook" format.
3. Distinguish between mandatory and persuasive authority as well as between primary and secondary authority.
4. Conduct basic legal research on any given topic.
5. Locate any reported case or Arkansas or Federal statute.
6. Locate the legislative history of a particular Arkansas or federal statute.

7. Shepardize any case or statute.
8. Access Lexis and find materials related to any given legal topic.

## **B. University Learning Outcomes**

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

### **Communication Skills (written and oral)**

Students will prepare routine legal documents, such as demand letters, cease and desist letters, etc. that contain properly formatted legal citations. Students will communicate using correct legal terminology in legal research.

### **Analytical Skills**

**Critical Thinking Skills-** Students will identify legal issues being raised in a case or fact pattern as well as identify the rules that are relied upon to resolve the issues.

### **Ethical Decision Making**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues inherent in the practice of law.

## **III. Major Course Topics**

- A. Overview of legal resources
- B. Overview of library system and electronic services
- C. Finding cases and statutes; proper citation format
- D. Digests
- E. Finding constitutional and administrative law
- F. Use secondary sources
- G. Shepardize
- H. Use Lexis
- I. Proper formatting in legal writing
- J. Letter writing