

**The George Washington University Law School**

**LEGAL RESEARCH & WRITING  
PROGRAM MANUAL  
FALL 2017**



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION,  
PROGRAM COMPONENTS,  
POLICIES & GUIDELINES**

## ABOUT THE COURSE

Welcome to the GW Legal Research and Writing (LRW) Program. The Program consists of two courses: *Legal Research and Writing* in the fall and *Introduction to Advocacy* in the spring. Each semester, students meet in small groups once per week for 75 minutes with an LRW Professor, generally a DC-area legal practitioner with demonstrated superior writing skills. In addition, students meet once per week for 50-55 minutes with one or more Dean's Fellows, 3L student(s) with strong legal research and writing skills and an interest in teaching and mentoring.

The course is rigorous, and most students report that its full value is only truly realized in hindsight. If you can appreciate the experience in the moment, you will likely find it all the more rewarding. The assignments are designed not only to introduce important skills, but to prepare students for their summer jobs and internships – which we accomplish exceptionally well. In fact, employers consistently tell us that *GW students are better writers on account of the superior quality of our Program*. These are a few *actual* emails of countless that we received in recent years from former students:

I am a 1L at GW, so I just finished the LRW program. Today I had an interview . . . and I received great feedback on my writing sample I submitted, [the office memo]. My interviewers said that the quality was much better than students from other schools and the topic was much different and more complex than many other schools' first year assignments. They were very impressed with the LRW program, and I told them I would pass on the compliment and feedback!

I just wanted to drop you a note to say - thank you - for giving me such a solid foundation in legal research and writing. Now that I'm actually practicing, I'm aware, more than ever, of just how fundamental good research and writing skills are to success. Nearly every day at work someone asks me to research an issue and write up something - a summary, an outline of an argument, a section of a brief, a parenthetical - and I find myself right back in your class, trying to condense facts, frame law and construct an argument. Last night I was going through my files and I found my Summary Judgment brief from 1L year, and reading through it, I smiled. The foundation is all there - everything I would do differently now is just due to experience and judgment.

I have been thinking of you because I am doing a great deal of writing at work, and thus far have gotten incredibly positive feedback from the attorneys on it. I work at the [XYZ Organization], and my job is essentially to read incoming files, analyze [them], and write a "TREAT" for the attorneys before meeting with them and deciding whether or not to take the case. The writing now comes second nature to me; could not have done it without you!!

I am working on drafting an opinion on a summary judgment motion [for Judge X], . . . and, I must say, LRW prepared me very well for this kind of work. The problem I have could easily have been a problem assigned to us for an LRW memo. . .

Just touching base to let you know that I got my mid-summer feedback yesterday that my memo was one of the best intern memos my clerk had ever read! Thanks for your awesome guidance!

After working these past few weeks, I truly realize that you weren't kidding when you said LRW is THE most important law school class!

## ABOUT THIS MANUAL

The materials enclosed here should be read in advance of your first LRW class; they provide a wealth of important information and offer a window into what you can expect. Your LRW Professor and Dean's Fellow(s) will supplement this basic information with any section-specific information.

## INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

### **TWEN PAGES**

You **must** join the TWEN page for your LRW section as soon as you receive and register your Westlaw ID. Your section's TWEN page will house assignments, and many professors use TWEN for all class communication and resources.

### **LRW PROFESSORS**

There are approximately 40 sections of LRW. The LRW Program employs four full-time professors who are members of the law faculty. Christy DeSanctis is the Director of the Program, and can be reached at [cdsanctis@law.gwu.edu](mailto:cdsanctis@law.gwu.edu). In addition, the Program employs approximately 35-40 adjunct professors, many of whom are GW alumni and former Dean's Fellows (DF) and Writing Fellows (WF). These professors bring a wealth of practice experience to the classroom. They come from private law firms, public interest organizations, various state and federal government agencies, the Department of Justice, the State Department, and the Department of Defense. They teach legal writing because they believe in the strength of the Program and have experienced first-hand how excellent oral and written skills translate to success in practice.

Each professor approaches the materials differently. The major assignments, due dates, and course requirements are uniform, but each professor brings something different to the classroom.

**Therefore, you should not expect to have the exact same experience in LRW as someone with a different professor, but you should all expect that, if you satisfy the course requirements, you will complete the year with the tools necessary to approach any research and writing assignment you receive in your summer jobs and beyond with an exceptionally high level of preparedness.**

### **FALL CURRICULUM**

**Predictive Writing.** The fall LRW syllabus is founded on the concept of legal writing as a problem-solving mechanism. When you are asked to complete a legal writing project, you must not merely describe the state of the law, but *solve a legal problem*. Although a typical "office memorandum" contains an explanation of the law, your ultimate goal is to "predict" the outcome of the question you have been asked to address. Accordingly, the fall semester focuses on rule-based legal reasoning – teaching you the process of identifying the relevant rules, applying them to a new set of facts, and explaining the conclusion you have drawn.

**IRAC / TREAT Demystified.** As you will learn, there is an entrenched paradigm for presenting legal analysis to a law-trained reader. This paradigm is derived from the logical structure of the deductive reasoning process and is most often referred to generically as "IRAC." IRAC is an acronym denoting the application of information from a known proposition to a new set of circumstances to reach a conclusion. Or: what is the Issue, the Rule, the Analysis/Application, and the Conclusion?

IRAC has many offspring (CRAC, CREAC, CIRAC, TREAT, BARAC, etc.), *but these are all variations on the same theme*. In fact, the steps could be referred to as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 – see below. Our textbook uses the acronym "TREAT" to mark these steps, but *all* of these acronyms are just letters that signal pieces of the process of deductive reasoning.

So, are all of these acronyms really marking the exact same analytical steps? YES, absolutely. What is important is that you understand the steps themselves. That said, to refer to these standard steps we use *vocabulary* that we think is more meaningful for what you are trying to achieve. Stated simply, we find it more useful to ask: “Do you have a Thesis sentence?” than “Do you have a “Step 1”?” But the *answer* should be the same. The five steps can be translated as follows:

- (1) What is your prediction for the outcome of this issue? (T, or “Thesis”)
- (2) What is the primary legal rule or principle governing your analysis? (R, or “Rule”)
- (3) What else about the legal landscape should I know at the outset? (E, or “Explanation”)
- (4) What happens in our situation given the facts you know about? (A, or “Application”)
- (5) OK, now I think I get what you were saying! (T, reminder)

**Two Fall Writing Assignments.** The first assignment, the Legal Issue Analysis, assesses basic analytical skills learned in the first few weeks of the semester; it is based on a series of cases that your professor will provide; no research is conducted for this assignment. Though your answer easily could be crafted in the format of a traditional office memorandum, you are going to be working only on the Analysis or Discussion section of such a document for this assignment. (Chapter 7 of the textbook has examples of a completed document, or Office Memorandum.)

For the remainder of the semester, you will work on a more formal and more detailed open research Office Memorandum that is submitted in several stages, though only the last one is graded. In addition, there are a number of smaller research and writing assignments that you will learn more about from your LRW Professor and Dean’s Fellow(s) as the semester progresses.

**Required Fall Textbooks.** The required fall LRW textbooks are:

- *Legal Writing and Analysis*, 2d edition. ISBN# 978-1-60930-245-0. Authors: Murray and DeSanctis. Published by Foundation Press (2015). ***This is a new edition.***
- *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, 20<sup>th</sup> ed. (Harvard University Press). Students may purchase the online version, but only the print version may be used on the Citation Test.

**Recommended/Optional Resources.** Though **not required**, we also recommend following:

- *Legal Research Methods*, 2d edition. (published by Murray/DeSanctis, Foundation Press, 2015). ***This text will be on reserve in the Library.***
- A grammar and usage manual, such as Strunk & White: *Elements of Style*; Richard C. Wydick’s *Plain English for Lawyers*, Bryan A. Garner’s *The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style*, or *Core Grammar for Lawyers*, available online at [www.coregrammarforlawyers.com](http://www.coregrammarforlawyers.com). This is priced separately for one, two and three years, at \$38, \$60, and \$75 depending on which version you decide.
- **TeachingLaw.com.** Students who have used it rave about it. It has three sections – Legal Research, Legal Writing, and Grammar & Citation (so you likely do not need it in addition to, e.g., Core Grammar.) The cost is \$35.00. TeachingLaw contains study aids, quizzes, self-assessments, annotated sample documents, video testimonials, and other interactive material to teach students legal research strategies and writing techniques.

## COURSE EVALUATION METHOD

LRW is graded on a traditional A-F scale. The major writing assignments are graded with a **numerical score** rather than a letter grade; given the scale used, you *cannot divide the numerator by the denominator to generate an accurate or estimated score out of 100 points*. Instead, you will receive feedback on all major assignments and homework assignments so that you can translate your score into meaningful information about your progress in the course.

You should understand the following about the LRW grading system:

- Your individual professors are the sole evaluators of your work for purposes of assigning scores.
- There is no inter-section comparison of interim scores; rather, the professors are obligated simply to abide by the appropriate grading “rubrics,” *which you should receive and review in advance* of an assignment’s due date so that you know what you are being scored on.
- Your individual professors report score totals and recommended grades at the end of each semester to Program administrators. At that point, and because the curve for LRW is higher than it is for other 1L classes, we look for (and take) every opportunity to raise grades that fall at the margin of a scoring range to the higher available grade. All decisions are made in conjunction with the individual professors.
- The curve allows for 33.3% A-range grades and an overall mean of 3.35 (above a B+) for the entire 1L class. Through years of experience, we find that these standards generally hold true for most individual sections within the class as well, though there is some room for deviation in a particularly strong section. These parameters are exceptionally favorable as compared to other 1L classes and other LRW programs.
- Though major assignments are graded “blind” (by number rather than name), this should have no bearing whatsoever on the level of individualized feedback that you receive.

Your professors can explain these parameters in more detail; if you do not understand them, ask for more information!

Each semester, there are several mandatory, Program-wide assignments. Three assignments comprise the final grade. They are as follows:

<b>Legal Issue Analysis</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Open Research Memo</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Professionalism and Participation</b>	<b>5%</b>

In addition, there are several ungraded assignments each semester. In the fall, these include a research plan (or equivalent), an annotated outline or annotated case list, and a draft portion of the Open Research Memo. As well, your LRW professor and Dean’s Fellow may assign additional ungraded, interim assignments that are not specified on the syllabus included in this Manual.

## **YOUR DEAN'S FELLOW(S)**

Your DFs are upper-class mentors available to help you navigate both LRW as well as your first year of law school. Many students form lasting relationships with their DFs. DFs are mentors, but they also have a role in assisting you in developing research and citation skills. Toward this end, the DFs teach weekly throughout the semester. You will undoubtedly find your DF to be a critical part of your LRW – and law school – experience.

You will likely find that your DF is almost always available to respond to your questions or concerns. That said, keep in mind that DFs are students, too. They have class responsibilities and many have work or internship responsibilities during the year. If you are ever concerned that your DFs' availability is problematic or your DFs are not fulfilling the responsibilities identified in the syllabus, please get in touch with Professor DeSanctis, who administers the DF curriculum and program.

## **THE "R" IN LRW: RESEARCH**

### **RESEARCH INSTRUCTION**

GW's approach to teaching research is multi-faceted. Through a combination of LRW Professor instruction, Librarian input or instruction, electronic services training opportunities, Dean's Fellow classes and – most importantly – the assigned research and writing assignments, you will begin developing your legal research skills. Though there are similarities, legal research is not the same as your typical undergraduate and even graduate research experiences. You will benefit greatly from taking advantage of all opportunities to expand your research learning. Employers want students with strong research skills and the ability to research in a variety of contexts. While critically important, the Lexis, Westlaw, and Bloomberg services are not the only ways to research a legal issue. There are numerous free services available on line and through the Library.

The research components of our syllabus are carefully crafted to work as a whole; missing one component can interrupt your learning going forward. There are several components:

- (1) Dean's Fellow Instruction.** The Dean's Fellows will cover research basics in their weekly classes, including walking you through in class research exercises and going over several homework assignments that you will complete on your own.
- (2) Electronic Services Trainings.** Trainers from Westlaw and Lexis will be available for live session trainings throughout the semester; schedules for these trainings will be announced separately. In addition, the various trainers are available on-site for one-on-one assistance.
- (3) Other Sessions.** If other live or recorded sessions by research librarians or the Inns of Court Program are scheduled, your DF will tell you about those relevant for your section.

## CITATION INSTRUCTION

You are likely familiar with some system of citation from your undergraduate or graduate writing experience. In legal writing, there are two main systems for citation: The Bluebook and The ALWD (Association of Legal Writing Directors) Manual. Although the ALWD Manual is often billed as easier to use, both systems are quite similar. We continue to use The Bluebook because the many law journals at GW use it for the journal competition and in their protocol beyond that, and The Bluebook system is the one more generally recognized in practice. To that end, you will learn how to use The Bluebook through a series of exercises assigned by your Dean's Fellow.

Keep in mind that many practitioners do not use The Bluebook at all, but instead use a system that is loosely based on it, as citation practices can vary from office to office. In addition, citation and formatting guidelines often vary by court. Even though many practitioners do not follow The Bluebook to the letter (and that may include your LRW Professor), it is always a safest to use proper Bluebook format in citation for legal documents unless you are instructed otherwise.

The Bluebook is a *manual*; do not feel pressured to memorize its rules. Instead, get familiar with the rules by regular consultation to the index and table of contents, even after you think you have mastered the rules of citation. Similar to the research instruction, you will not experience all types of citation instruction each week. Some weeks have multiple exercises assigned, but other weeks have none. Consult the syllabus to make sure you are on track throughout the semester. The citation instruction is planned around your writing assignments; you will first learn basic case citation, which you will use for the first writing assignment, and then move on to more advanced citation, which is needed for the second writing assignment.

## THE GW LAW WRITING CENTER

For help with your LRW assignments, we encourage you to turn to the GW Law Writing Center, a unique and highly-regarded supplement to the 1L LRW curriculum. A component of the LRW Program, the Writing Center offers one-on-one writing conferences, multi-person workshops, videos, tip sheets, and other resources to legal writers of any class year and ability. For more information, please visit: [www.law.gwu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.law.gwu.edu/writingcenter). GW Law is unique in its offering of this type of resource. You should use the Writing Center as often as you can, even in the early stages of the process and before you've started writing! It is far more useful as an analytical resource than it is a proofreading one.

### ONE-ON-ONE WRITING CONFERENCES

The Writing Center is staffed by roughly 40 Writing Fellows, who are upper-level law students with strong writing and analysis skills. Writing Fellows are trained to work with writers at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming and outlining, to developing the structure of a legal analysis, to publishing a near-finished product. The goal of each writing conference is to help student writers become skilled and critical readers of their own writing.

**Why to Go:** Writing Fellows listen, brainstorm, diagnose, and advise: they do not “fix” your paper! They do not spell-check, grammar-check, cite-check, or proofread. Instead, they help students develop strategies for recognizing global problems in their work.

Note: *Students must attend at least six writing conferences to be eligible for the Dean's Certificate for Professional Development.*

**Where to Go:** The Writing Center's conference rooms are located in B416, B419, and STU423. While walk-in appointments are permitted, you are encouraged to schedule a conference in advance so that the Writing Fellow can read your draft and prepare her feedback before your session.

**How to Go:** For scheduled appointments, you must submit a draft to your Writing Fellow no later than 24 hours in advance of your conference. You must also include an agenda in which you explain what the Writing Fellow should focus on as she reads your draft. While you are limited to one *scheduled* conference in any 7-day period, there is no limit to the number of walk-in appointments you can have. To schedule a conference, visit: [www.law.gwu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.law.gwu.edu/writingcenter).

### FALL WORKSHOP SERIES

The Writing Center hosts a **Fall Workshop Series** keyed to specific LRW topics as well as to critical skills such as outlining and exam prep. Space at each workshop is limited and attendance is first-come, first-served. More information about the series will be available on the **LRW Program 1L TWEN page** as well as on the **Writing Center website** and on the **Writing Center bulletin board** on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Burns.

The Series is co-hosted by the Inns of Court and is a formal part of the Foundations of Practice Program. *Students must attend at least two workshops to be eligible for the Dean's Certificate for Professional Development.* More information will be made available on the Writing Center website, through Inns of Court materials, and on the Writing Center bulletin board on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Burns.



## **OTHER UNIVERSITY WRITING RESOURCES**

If you are seeking help with basic writing mechanics, please visit the main **GWU Writing Center**, located in Gelman Library. You are encouraged to visit both the law school writing center and the main university writing center, as they provide different types of feedback and support. To make an appointment with the university writing center, visit: [www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/](http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/). If you are a non-native English speaker and are seeking help with your writing assignments, please visit the **GWU Language Center**, which is located in Phillips Hall. To learn more and to make an appointment, visit: [www.gwu.edu/~language/](http://www.gwu.edu/~language/).

## LRW POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

*These policies and guidelines are in effect in all LRW sections.*

### ATTENDANCE

Students are *required* to attend both the LRW Professor's class and the Dean's Fellow's class in accordance with the attendance policy stated in the Law School Bulletin and your professor's course policies. **Any student who is shown by the LRW Professor or Dean's Fellow to be deficient in class attendance (including repeated tardiness) will not receive credit for the course, and will be required to retake Legal Research and Writing.** Attendance issues also have an effect on a student's grade in the class; failure to attend classes (either or both the LRW prof's and DF's) may result in lowering a grade a step or more depending on the number of absences.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All work produced by students in the LRW Program must conform to The George Washington University Law School Policy on Academic Integrity and The George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. For non-blind graded assignments, students should sign their name following the statement of the Pledge of Honesty. For blind-graded assignments, including all major writing assignments submitted to the LRW Professor or Dean's Fellow, students must include the following Pledge of Honesty **using the student's anonymous identifier**. (Note: this is accomplished electronically with assignments submitted via TWEN).

*On my honor, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received improper aid in its completion.*

---

Anon. Identifier  
(or name, if not a graded assignment)

### SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

#### 1. Timely Submissions

Students must submit all work assigned by their LRW Professor or Dean's Fellow. Ordinarily, students must submit work electronically through the Assignment Drop Box on TWEN (see next rule).

*The LRW Professor or Dean's Fellow may specify additional methods or means for submission. For example, students may be required to submit assignments by hand delivery to the LRW Professor or Dean's Fellow at the beginning of the class in which it is due.*

**Blind Grading.** All major writing assignments are blind-graded (*which means simply*: without names on papers). Students must not include any personally identifying information on these assignments. Students must use an anonymous numerical identifier through TWEN, or as otherwise directed by their LRW Professor or Dean's Fellow.

**Feedback.** The blind grading policy *does not in any way* affect the provision of individualized feedback, either before or after an assignment is scored. For example:

- Students may seek individualized guidance prior to submitting the final product. Indeed, the submission of a partial draft of the Open Research Memo is required, and feedback will be provided. Neither of these exchanges is subject to anonymity.
- After all scores have been assessed, submitted, and approved for a particular assignment, Professors may match papers to students and meet with students at their discretion.
- After receiving comments and a score on an assignment, students may approach the LRW Professor and seek individualized attention.
- At least once per semester, a one-on-one conference is required, during which time the LRW Professor and/or Dean's Fellow will necessarily know the grade on the paper being discussed.

## 2. TWEN Deadline

Graded assignments must be submitted to TWEN following the instructions provided by the LRW Program (by assigned ID and without identifying information). Graded assignments are due in accordance with the LRW syllabus (dates specified therein). NOTE: Graded assignments are due on TWEN **before 5:00 p.m.** This means that 4:59:59 is the cutoff, and even something marked 5:00:00 **will be considered late.** (Note that TWEN tends to operate much more slowly on a date when an LRW assignment is due!). There is no wiggle room; one second late counts as late.

## 3. Late Submissions / Extensions

A student who fails to submit any graded writing assignment at the proper time and place will receive a mandatory 10% reduction in her score (which is based on the total number of points available, not the number of points earned) on that assignment for each 24-hour period or portion thereof that it is late. This percentage is based on the total numerical value of each assignment, which varies throughout the semester. E.g., if the LIA (which has a total point value of 24) is late, the point deduction is 2.4 points for each 24 hour period that the assignment is not submitted. This means that if a student's score would have been a 19 if the assignment were timely submitted, a single-day late penalty (for submitting even a minute late) would be 2.4 points, not 1.9.

**Please note that none of following is a justifiable excuse for a late assignment: failure to submit the correct version; failure to attach a readable document; Internet or computer difficulties.**

A student who knows that he or she cannot, for good cause, submit an assignment on time must

- notify the Dean's Fellow** in advance of the deadline that the assignment will be late,
- specify the date on which the student expects to submit the assignment, and
- coordinate with the Dean of Students Office, **not the professor or the DF, if seeking an extension without late penalty.***

A student who fails to submit any major writing assignment may receive a grade of F for the semester and earn No Credit for the course.

## FORM OF ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. Content

As noted previously in this Manual, the fall semester of LRW focuses on writing traditional office memoranda, though not every assignment will require you to complete all forma memo

components, so follow the instructions in the assigning memo and from your professor. For example, for the first fall assignment, the Legal Issue Analysis, you will only be completing a Discussion (or Analysis) section of a formal memo.

*Legal Writing and Analysis*, Chapter 7, discusses the most basic components of a completed, formal office memo, which are: (1) a caption; (2) a statement of questions (or issues) presented; (3) a brief statement of the answers (or conclusions); (4) a statement of the facts; and (5) a discussion (or analysis) section. (See pages 188-89 for a brief description of each component, and 211-36 for annotated examples.)

## **2. Basic Formatting Guidelines**

Unless your LRW Professor specifies otherwise, you should follow these general guidelines for formatting your assignments:

- Use 1-inch margins on all sides and a font that approximates Times New Roman 12.
- Use double-spacing for all text except for point headings, block quotes, and footnotes.
- Number the pages at the bottom, except do not number the first page of the document.
- Use left-margin justification.
- Avoid widows and orphans.
- If you are printing a hard copy, *staple* the various pages in the upper-left corner (and ask your professor whether he or she prefers double- or single-sided printing).

*There are no hard page length requirements or caps for the fall assignments, though your professor will give you a sense of the expected and appropriate length for each assignment.* (Note, though, that there will be word count limits for all major assignments in the spring).

## **COLLABORATION**

### **1. In class**

The LRW syllabus provides students with in-class opportunities to review each other's work. Your LRW professor may, at her discretion, execute additional peer review exercises in class.

### **2. Outside of class**

- a) Subject to the guidelines and limitations discussed in (b) – (e) below, students may request and receive assistance on any exercise or any assignment related to LRW from the following people:
- the student's LRW Professor or any other member of the LRW faculty;
  - the student's Dean's Fellow or any other Dean's Fellow;
  - the Writing Fellows who staff the GW Law Writing Center;
  - the tutors who staff the GWU Writing Center;
  - the staff of the GWU Language Center;
  - members of the GW Law Library staff;
  - members of the Gelman Library staff; and
  - reference attorneys staffing the Lexis and Westlaw help lines.

**b) Discussing cases and theories**

Students may discuss legal theories and analytical approaches with **other first-year students** during **any stage of any writing assignment**. Students must conduct their own research (unless instructed otherwise), but they may refer to specific legal authorities while they are discussing theories and analysis.

**c) Sharing written work product**

Although students may continue to discuss theories and analysis with other first-year students while they are engaged in the outlining or writing process, **students must perform all actual writing independently, without assistance from anyone other than the people listed in section 2(a) above**. That means that students cannot receive assistance on any actual writing from any other first-year student, any upper-level student, any student from another law school, or any other person for any reason, including organizing ideas, editing, or proofreading.

**d) Research materials and sources**

The Jacob Burns Law Library publishes a “Library Guide.” This Guide is incorporated by reference into these Rules, and the regulations set forth within the Guide should be followed at all times by students in the LRW Program. In general, students may use all computer research tools available in the Burns Law Library, as well as via other accessible Internet sites, without restriction.

Students may consult library staff members for help locating or using library resources but may not ask for assistance in **interpreting** research materials or in approaching a problem from a strategic perspective (*e.g.*, which headings to use to find relevant cases). Students may contact the reference attorneys on the Lexis or Westlaw help lines, and may discuss all assignments with the people listed in section **2(a)** above.

**e) Citation services**

Students may not use any service or product that creates, constructs, corrects, or checks a legal citation on any writing assignment, research exercise, citation exercise, or on the Citation Competence Test.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** May students share LRW class notes?

**A:** Yes, absolutely.

**Q:** May students participate in class discussions and/or in-class exercises that reveal their thinking about research, analysis, or organization of a writing assignment?

**A:** Yes, absolutely (class time should be collaborative).

**Q:** May students share in-progress written drafts outside of class?

**A:** No; sharing actual writing is the only thing prohibited unless it is shared for purposes of an in-class exercise.

- Q:** May students share writing assignments with each other after the assignment has been turned in for a grade?
- A:** Yes, any time.
- Q:** May students discuss potential arguments with other 1Ls?
- A:** Yes; they are encouraged to.
- Q:** May students mention specific cases during these discussions?
- A:** Yes.
- Q:** May students ask a non-GW student to proofread a paper?
- A:** No; only the LRW prof, DF, and any WF (or University writing tutor) should see a paper in advance of completion.
- Q:** Does “blind grading” inhibit a student from showing work to or asking specific Q’s of the LRW Prof. or DF in advance of submitting an assignment?
- A:** No, absolutely not. The course depends on feedback, and nothing about the grading system should get in the way of that. Understandably, professors will resist requests to “advance grade” a draft, but nothing about the fact that assignments are blind graded should interfere with individual or class-wide feedback.
- Q:** Do Writing Center appointments fill up quickly, and what should I do if I cannot get an appointment before an assignment is due?
- A:** The Writing Fellows naturally have a limited schedule in that they offer a finite number of conference hours each week (though these hours are increased the week before a 1L assignment is due). Our best advice is to schedule WC appointments early. You do not even need a draft before meeting with a Writing Fellow. Appointments during the week that a 1L assignment is due can and will get filled. If, however, you are willing to see a Writing Fellow ten or more ore days before an assignment is due, you should be able to get an appointment.
- Q:** Are there valid reasons for submitted a graded assignment late?
- A:** Any requested extension for a graded assignment must be submitted to the Dean of Students’ Office as soon as the reason becomes known. Reasons that are not valid include:
- Internet access issues
  - TWEN access issues / TWEN running slowly
  - Submission of the wrong document (earlier draft, wrong version)