Course Syllabus: CJS 413 Legal Research, Fall 2017

This is the course syllabus and it contains important information. Be sure to read the entire syllabus and contact me if you have difficulty understanding what is required for your successful completion of this course. I reserve the right to make adjustments in the syllabus as needed depending upon the progress of the class.

Instructor

Mrs. Karren S. Price
Office: Liberal Arts North, Room 133
Phone: (936) 468-2685, or you may phone Ms. Joy at ext. 4408
Email: priceks@sfasu.edu

Office Hours
TTH: 11:00-12:15, Wed: 9:00-12:00
Other hours available by appointment

Course Related E-mail Guidelines
All emails to me concerning class issues should include your name and course number reference.
All emails to you concerning class issues will be directed to your SFASU email address. You are responsible for checking your assigned SFASU email in box for messages. Likewise, your emails to me should be made through the SFASU email system to insure delivery.
You are responsible for reading all announcements, course documents and emails relating to this course.

Classroom and Schedule
Room Ferguson 471. 2:00-3:15 TTH

Textbooks
Legal Research and Writing for Paralegals, 6th Edition, Yelin

Course Objectives
You will have the opportunity to learn to conduct legal research for statutes, rules, cases in reporters, and journals
Specific issues research
Shepardizing
Researching legislative history and intent
Primary authority and Secondary authority
Legal citation style
Legal writing in the form of legal memoranda
The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the fundamentals of legal research and writing. Students will learn to use and locate primary and secondary authorities. The
course will include a general overview of the federal and state court systems. Students will learn the elements of a court decision, how to locate cases through the use of digests, and how to brief a case. The course reviews the techniques of legal writing customarily taught in law school; citation form; cite checking; the methods of compiling legislative histories; administrative and international legal research; and the writing of legal memoranda.

**Program Learning Outcomes:**
The student will demonstrate critical reasoning, problem solving abilities, communications skills and technology skills.
The student will demonstrate an understanding of the court system in the United States in terms of structure, constitutional issues and historical precedents.

**Student Responsibility**
You retain the responsibility to regulate your behavior in a manner that will be conducive to learning and attaining a passing grade for this course. You are expected to comply with the general rules of civility:
You are expected to attend class regularly, on time and PREPARED for discussion of the assigned material
No cell phone, ipod
No hats, caps
No bare midsections
No visible underwear

You are REQUIRED to participate in class discussions, and while you are free to express your personal views, you must also respect the views of others. I retain the right to terminate any discussion that is becoming disruptive to the learning process. You retain the responsibility to make notification of special needs and/or circumstances to the University, department chair, and to me.
Because you are an adult, I will not discuss your class business with your parents or guardians.
Failure to submit required assignments may result in an overall failing grade.
Experience reflects that those students who attend class regularly and come to class prepared to participate achieve higher class scores.

**Course Presentation**
This course requires weekly research exercise completion, a presentation, textbook reading/understanding requirements and a Final paper. Completion of the research exercises in collaboration with other members of the class is not considered cheating; however, if you pay, or charm someone into doing the research for you that is cheating. Additionally, each of you will be assigned to present one chapter from the textbook. You may use any necessary tools, including a power point for same. **It shall be 30 minutes in length.** On that project you will be graded on professionalism, knowledge, content of the presentation, length, forensics and engagement of the class. Because the requirement is 30 minutes, a shorter presentation will be penalized.

**Assessment Methods:** **500 total possible points**
Each week will be a chapter presentation. I will assign your chapter and advise of presentation time during the first week of classes.

Textbook research assignments are due at the beginning of class. The research assignments follow each chapter. You are to do both the assignments located there for each chapter we study.

**Paper**

The Legal Memoranda assignment is found at the end of chapter 17 in the textbook. The memoranda is no less than 10 pages double-spaced, citations excepted; and using Bluebook citation. In other words, the body of the paper is to be 10 pages in length. The citations, index to authorities, statement of the case DO NOT COUNT toward the 10 page requirement. From your “issues presented” forward counts against the 10 page requirement. The format is demonstrated in your text as well. Additionally, I have many examples in my office which you may come by and look at, check out, etc. to use as a guide. I will also bring some examples to class at the appropriate time.

Many of our students use this paper as a foot in the door when job hunting, so keep in mind this paper may affect your employability. Further, it is not unusual for graduates to ask for letters of reference when looking for work. Please remember this paper and this presentation will likely be my last impression of you and your work.

**Presentation Assignments:**

**CAUTION:** Each must include power point, you must be dressed professionally on the date of your presentation and it must be 30 minutes in length!!!
Missed Assignments
You are required to provide excuses in order to turn in late work. Missed research assignments must be turned in within 3 days of the date missed. Those assignments will be penalized a letter grade each day. Late is defined as after the class period has ended. Missed presentations will be made up during the last week of class on 12/5 and 12/7/12. Any such presentations will be penalized by a letter grade.

Acceptable Student Behavior
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to:
(1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class;
(2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise, and/or
(3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.
Plagiarism is presenting the words of ideas of another person as if they were your own.
Examples are:
  (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another
  (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source, and
  (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.
Any such occurrences will be dealt with according to University policy, provided to you in your student handbook. (A-9.1) Specifically, we will first meet together to discuss same in my office where you will be given the opportunity to explain your position. If it is determined that academic dishonesty has occurred, I will then make a decision as to the penalty therefor. Penalties may include reprimand or no credit for the assignment or exam, or re-submission of the paper, or make-up exam, or failure of the course. I will then refer the incident to the Chair of the Department and the Dean of the College. This Report of Academic Dishonesty form, along with supporting documentation shall be made a part of the student’s record and remains on file with the Dean’s office for at least four (4) years. A second or subsequent offense shall be referred to the Committee on Academic Integrity pursuant to policy.
Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Withheld grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and /or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004(TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disability service/.