

## Course Outline

**COURSE:** LAWS 2908 E– Legal Studies Methods and Theory I

**TERM:** Fall 2008/09

**PREREQUISITES:** LAWS 1000 and Honours standing

**CLASS:** Day & Time: Monday - 6:05-8:55  
Room: 303 SA (Southam Hall)

**INSTRUCTOR:** Lisa Micucci  
**(CONTRACT)**

**CONTACT:** Office Hrs: By Appointment  
Telephone: 613-957-4691  
Email: [lisacarletonclass@sympatico.ca](mailto:lisacarletonclass@sympatico.ca)

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"Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your letter of accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by November 7, 2008, for December examinations, and March 6, 2009, for April examinations." With regard to accommodations for religious obligations and pregnancy, please see [http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/accom\\_policy.html](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/accom_policy.html)

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:**

This course is designed to provide students with the basic tools, knowledge and skills necessary to conduct legal research. Both legal and social science resources will be explored using traditional and electronic sources. Students will be introduced to various aspects of the research process, such as finding cases, journal articles, legislation etc., through lectures and labs.

Students will choose their own research topic that will culminate to a final research paper. A list of topics will also be made available to assist any student and all topics must be approved by the instructor. In arriving to that final research paper, students will have three (3) take home assignments: to describe the research topic, to prepare an annotated bibliography and to refine the research methodology. Those three assignments will provide students with the knowledge, the skills and all the material necessary to complete their final research paper.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

McGill Law Journal, *Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation*, 6th ed. (Scarborough, Ontario: Carswell, 2006)

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS:**

1. Wayne C. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, 3<sup>RD</sup> ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).
2. Margaret Kerr et al., *Legal Research: Step by Step*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Emond Montgomery, 2006).

Other readings will include articles placed on reserve in the library or as provided on WebCT. It is expected that students will be checking WebCT on a regular basis for course updates and assignments.

## **EVALUATION SCHEME**

All of the following course components must be completed in order to obtain a final grade:

### **A. Short written assignments (total value of 60%)**

Three (3) short written assignments worth 20 % each for a total of 60 % of the final mark:

1. research topic description (20%)

This written assignment will require students to identify a topic in the Canadian legal context that they are interested in and to provide a page describing the topic chosen. This topic will be used by the student to complete the other assignments in this course and will form the basis of the final research proposal. Therefore, all topics must be approved by the instructor.

This assignment is due at the beginning of the class of **October 20, 2008**.

2. annotated bibliography (20%)

This written assignment will assess a student's ability to research, cite and discuss journal articles, case comments, legislation etc. relevant to the topic chosen.

This assignment is due at the beginning of the class of **November 3, 2008**

3. refining the research methodology (20%):

This written assignment allows students to refine their research methodology related to their chosen topic. This written assignment will be a maximum of four (4) pages.

This assignment is due at the beginning of the class of **November 17, 2008**

All assignments must include a cover page with the course code and section, the student's number and the instructor's name. All citations are required to be in accord set out in the *Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Further details regarding the assignments and their format will be provided in class.

### **B. Final research paper (30%)**

Students will find, analyze and apply the information gathered (ie. relevant journal articles, case law, statutes and government documents) to produce a final research paper.

The final research paper will be a maximum of twelve (12) pages in length, plus bibliography. It is to be submitted in class on the last day of class, **December 1, 2008**. The final research paper must include a cover page with the course code and section, the student's number and the instructor's name. All citations are to follow the *Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Further details regarding the final research paper and its format will be provided in class.

### **C. Class and Lab participation (10%)**

Since this course is conducted as a seminar, class and lab participation is an important component of the course and forms part of the final mark. The participation mark will be provided for class and lab attendance and for contribution to in-class and lab discussions.

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of one letter per day (i.e. A to A-) including weekend days, unless appropriate documentation is received (i.e. a doctor's note). Students submitting late assignments must submit a hard copy of the assignment to the Department of Law drop-box and must email the instructor notifying her that the assignment has been left in the drop box.

**Class schedule and Readings** will be provided the first day of class.