

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 2908 J – Legal Studies Methods and Theory I
TERM:	Winter 2009-2010
PREREQUISITES:	LAWS 1000 AND HONOURS STANDING
CLASS:	Day & Time: Tuesday 6:05 – 8:55 pm Room: Please check Carleton Central for current room location
INSTRUCTOR: (CONTRACT)	Shelley Appleby-Ostroff
CONTACT:	Office: Loeb C476 (Contract Instructors' Office) Office Hrs: By appointment Email: Please use WebCT e-mail for this course

"Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary Letters of Accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible, but no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first test requiring accommodations. For further information, please see: http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/accom_policy.html . If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 16, 2009 for December examinations** and **March 12, 2010 for April examinations**.

For Religious and Pregnancy accommodations, please contact Equity Services, x. 5622 or their website: www.carleton.ca/equity

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to assist you in developing and applying legal research skills and techniques. Through class lectures, labs and small assignments, you will learn how to design a research question, create a research plan as well as find and critically evaluate the primary and secondary information sources available to legal researchers. You will also learn proper legal citation techniques. By the end of the course you will have the critical and technical ability to find, analyze and apply the information necessary to prepare a formal research proposal in legal studies.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Margaret Kerr et al., *Legal Research: Step by Step*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Emond Montgomery, 2009) [Kerr]; and

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

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Wayne C. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) [Booth]; and

Fitzgerald, Maureen F., *Legal Problem Solving: Reasoning, Research and Writing*, 4th ed. (Toronto: LexisNexis, 2007) [Fitzgerald]

All four texts are available for purchase at the Carleton University Bookstore and are on reserve in the library.

COMMUNICATION OUTSIDE OF CLASS

Communication outside of class will be through WebCT. Please check it regularly for information updates concerning lectures, labs, readings and assignments.

EVALUATION

(All components must be completed in order to get a passing grade)

There are five written assignments designed to develop your ability to research and present the results of your research in a coherent and convincing manner. You will also be graded on class attendance and participation. Spelling, grammar and style will also be evaluated. More detailed instructions about each of the assignments will be provided in class.

Evaluation for the course will be broken down as follows:

<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Date Assigned</u>	<u>Due date</u>
Research Topic and Abstract	10%	January 5	January 19
Annotated Bibliography	15%	January 19	February 2
Case Law Exercise	15%	February 2	February 23
Statute Exercise	15%	February 23	March 16
Final Research Proposal	35%	February 23	April 7
Class Participation	10%	Ongoing	Ongoing

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

EXTENSIONS

Extensions will not be granted unless there is a valid and documented reason, such as serious illness or other circumstances beyond your control. Appropriate documentation must accompany all extension requests. If you think that you will require an extension, and have a valid and documented reason, please get in touch with the course instructor as soon as possible BEFORE the applicable due date.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will be marked down by 5% for each day that the assignment is late (including holidays and weekends). Assignments that are submitted more than one week after the applicable due date will receive a failing grade. **Students submitting late assignments must leave a hard copy of the assignment in the Department of Law Drop Box and must notify the course instructor through WebCT that the assignment has been left in the Drop Box.**

POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT

The Department of Law's Policy and Procedure Statement is distributed with, and forms part of, this course outline. The Statement contains important information on topics such as the submission of assignments, due dates in course outlines, offences, writing skills and the use of language, prerequisites, course selection, responsibility for ensuring enrollment in classes and the review of grades. **Please ensure that you read the Policy and Procedure Statement carefully.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC OFFENCES

The University's policy concerning plagiarism and other instructional offences is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar and can be found at: <http://www.carleton.ca/calendars/ugrad/0910/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html> Please ensure that you understand this policy. In particular, you should note that it is an instructional offence to submit "substantially the same piece of work to two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructors from all courses involved. Minor modifications and amendments, such as changes of phraseology in an essay or paper, do not constitute a significant and acceptable reworking of an assignment." You should also note that it is an instructional offence to commit plagiarism, which is defined in the policy as "presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own."

All written work must be yours alone and any ideas you include in your work which are not original to you should be properly referenced. You should familiarize yourself with the department's policies on proper referencing and citation contained in the Department of Law's 'Legal Style Sheet for Term Papers' which can be accessed at: http://www2.carleton.ca/law/ccms/wp-content/ccms-files/legal_style_sheet.pdf

Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. Any suspected violations of the university's policies or regulations will be immediately reported to the Dean.

ASSIGNMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments must be handed in at the start of class on the due date and will be returned during class. Assignments submitted at the end of class will be considered one day late and will be assessed a late penalty. All assignments must be submitted in person and on paper. If you will not be present in class on the day an assignment is due, it **MUST** be deposited in the Law Department Drop Box at Loeb C473 by the beginning of class. Assignments submitted electronically, or slipped under the Contract Instructors' office door will not be accepted. Please keep a hard copy of all assignments submitted as a backup until your final grade is confirmed.

1. Research Topic and Abstract (10%)

This assignment will require you to identify a topic in Canadian legal studies that interests you and to provide a brief abstract of the topic. Topics should pose a theoretical question about Canadian law that can be researched from a variety of perspectives and disciplines. All topics and abstracts **MUST** be approved by the instructor as the topic will be used to complete the rest of the assignments in the course, including the final research proposal.

Assigned: January 5
Due: January 19 at the beginning of class

2. Annotated Bibliography (15%)

This assignment will require you to locate and analyze secondary sources relevant to the topic you chose in the first assignment, create a bibliography of those sources (with proper citation) and annotate at least five of them.

Assigned: January 19
Due: February 2 at the beginning of class

3. Case Law Exercise (15%)

This assignment will require you to locate at least four cases relevant to the topic you chose in the first assignment, prepare a table of cases (with proper citation) and a brief of one of the cases.

Assigned: February 2

Due: February 23 at the beginning of class

4. Statute Exercise (15%)

This assignment will require you to locate statutes, regulations and other government documentation relevant to the topic you chose in the first assignment and to prepare a table of statutes (with proper citation). You will also be required to describe and analyze the major legislation in your topic area.

Assigned: February 23

Due: March 16 at the beginning of class

5. Final Research Proposal (35%)

This assignment will require you to create an 8-10 page final research proposal (with proper citation) that incorporates and expands on all the research you have done throughout the semester. As part of the proposal, you will be required to refine your initial research question, reflect on how that question has changed as a result of your ongoing research and evaluate the relevance and importance of the various information sources you consulted. You will also be required to reflect on the interdisciplinary aspects of the research question and the effect this had on the way you formulated your question and structured your research. An evaluation of the viability of the proposed topic as a research project should also be included in your proposal.

Assigned: February 23

Due: April 7 in the Law Department Drop Box at Loeb C473 by 4:00 pm

Class Participation (10%)

This course is structured as a seminar. As a result, individual participation and attendance are important components. You are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to contribute to in-class discussions. You are also expected to present your research proposal either to the class or, individually, to the course instructor. Your participation mark is based on attendance in class and labs as well as your ongoing preparedness, participation and contribution to class discussions, exercises and presentations.

COURSE SYLLABUS

1. January 5 **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF COURSE**
- Readings None
- Assignments Assigned: Research Topic & Abstract (10%)
 Due date: January 19
2. January 12 **RESEARCH DESIGN AND INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL LITERATURE**
- Readings
- Required* Booth, cc. 3 & 4
 Kerr, c.1
 Fitzgerald, c. 4
3. January 19 **RESEARCHING SECONDARY SOURCES & INTRODUCTION TO CASE LAW**
- Readings
- Required* Kerr, cc. 4, 8 & 14
 Fitzgerald, c. 6
 McGill Guide, c. 6
- Recommended* Fitzgerald, c. 9
- Assignments **Research Topic & Abstract due**
- Assigned: Annotated Bibliography (15%)
 Due date: February 2
4. January 26 **RESEARCHING CASE LAW LAB (Westlaw & eCarswell)**
 Location: Room 102 in the MacOdrum Library
 Guest: Michelle Atkin, Reference Librarian
- Readings
- Required* Kerr, cc.11 & 17
 McGill Guide, c. 3
- Recommended* Fitzgerald, c. 9
5. February 2 **UNDERSTANDING AND ANALYZING CASE LAW AND SECONDARY SOURCES**
- Readings
- Required* Kerr, cc. 5 & 6
 Fitzgerald, c. 10
- Assignments **Annotated Bibliography Due**
- Assigned: Case Law Exercise (15%)
 Due date: February 23

- 6. February 9** **LEXISNEXIS LAB**
- Readings** None
- FEBRUARY 16** **NO CLASS – WINTER BREAK**
- 7. February 23** **LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES AND GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS**
- Readings**
- Required*** Kerr, cc. 2 & 3
 McGill Guide, cc. 2 & 4
- Recommended*** Fitzgerald, cc. 7 & 8
- Assignments** **Case Law Exercise due**
- Assigned: Statute Exercise (15%)
 Due date: March 16
- Assigned: Final Research Proposal (35%)
 Due date: April 7
- 8. March 2** **RESEARCHING LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS LAB**
Location: Room 102 in the MacOdrum Library
Guest: Michelle Atkin, Reference Librarian
- Readings** Kerr, cc. 9, 10, 15 & 16
- 9. March 9** **SYNTHESIZING AND ANALYZING INFORMATION**
- Readings**
- Required*** Booth, cc. 7, 8, 9 & 10
- 10. March 16** **PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL, CLASS PRESENTATIONS AND MEETINGS WITH COURSE INSTRUCTOR**
- Readings**
- Required*** Booth, cc. 12, 13 & 14
 Carleton Style Sheet for Term Papers, found at:
 http://www2.carleton.ca/law/ccms/wp-content/ccms-files/legal_style_sheet.pdf
- Statute Exercise due in class**
- 11. March 23** **WRITING YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL, CLASS PRESENTATIONS AND MEETINGS WITH COURSE INSTRUCTOR**
- Readings**
- Required*** Kerr, c. 21 (pp. 223-230 to end of ‘Some Rules of Good Writing’)
 Booth, c. 17
- 12. March 30** **COURSE REVIEW, CLASS PRESENTATIONS AND MEETINGS WITH COURSE INSTRUCTOR**
- APRIL 7** **FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE IN THE LAW DEPARTMENT DROP BOX AT LOEB C473 BY 4:00 PM**