

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 3907 B
PREREQUISITES:	Any two of LAWS 2003, LAWS 2004, or LAWS 2005 and Honours standing
TERM:	Fall 2007
CLASS: Day & Time:	Mondays 8:35 am – 11:25 pm
Room:	SA 309
INSTRUCTOR:	Michelle DeVidi
CONTACT: Office:	Carleton University Library Room 206
Office Hrs:	Mondays 3:00 – 5:00pm or by appointment
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Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations in this course are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary *letters of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first class or ITV test. This is to ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary accommodation arrangement. Please note the deadline for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations is November 6, 2006 for December examinations and March 9, 2007, for April examinations. With regard to accommodations for religious obligations and pregnancy, please see <http://www.carleton.ca/law/accommodations.htm>.

Course Overview:

The purpose of this course will be to introduce you to a variety of information sources available to legal researchers. It will allow you to develop the following:

- Legal research skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Writing skills (legal citation)

Assignments:

The theme of this course is **Information Policy** and is divided into three streams:

- ***Freedom of Expression & Censorship***
- ***Intellectual Property***
- ***Access to Information & Privacy***

Students will select one of the above streams to develop their own research topic which they will refine (in consultation with the instructor) for their final paper. All topics **must** first be approved by the instructor.

During weeks III - VII we will examine each of these three streams in greater detail, selecting an issue each week to demonstrate a particular legal research skill (i.e. finding cases, debates, legislation, etc.). Lab time will allow students to develop their research skills to find materials on their own topics. Classes will typically wrap up with a group discussion on the issue of the day. Where all of these themes are broad, I will specifically choose examples that have not been selected as final research paper topics, out of fairness to all student researchers.

A series of six take home lab assignments will provide students with the knowledge, the skills and all the materials necessary to complete their final research paper. Please note, that although labs are take home, students should be able to complete the majority of their lab assignments in the second half of the class.

The final research paper will synthesize and analyze the relevant journal articles, case law, statutes, regulations and government documents that the student has collected during the semester. Papers will be twelve pages in length, plus bibliography.

Grading Scheme:

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
Short Assignments	
Journal Articles	10
Case Comments and Law Journals	10
Cases	10
Government Documents	10
Statutes and Regulations	10
Bills and Debates	<u>10</u>
	60%
Individual Paper	30%
Class Participation Grade	<u>10%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of one letter grade per day (i.e. A to A-), unless appropriate documentation is received (i.e. doctor's note).

Required Text:

Canadian guide to uniform legal citation. 6th ed. McGill Law Journal, eds. Scarborough, ON: Carswell, 2006.

Additional readings are available on Course Reserve in the Library.

Week Course Schedule:

- I. **September 10**
Introduction to course and overview
-Information Policy as an area for conducting legal research

- II. **September 17**
From Topics to Questions
-Developing your area of interest
-Narrowing your focus
-Creating a research question
-From research questions to specific problems
-Research strategy and timeline preparation.
Form discussion groups.

Read: *The Craft of Research*. Ch. 3 & 4
Available on Course Reserve in the Library

III. September 24

Freedom of Expression & Censorship

Discussion Questions / Debate

In class Lab Finding Journal Articles (**Lab due Oct. 1 in class**)

Read: Moon, Richard. *The Constitutional Protection of Freedom of Expression*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000. Ch.1.
Available on Course Reserve in the Library

Topic sign up at the end of class today!

IV. October 1 (Class & Lab in Library room 102)

Hate Speech and Obscenity: A look at the Charter of Rights

Discussion Questions / Debate

Lab - Finding Case Comments, Law Journals: Westlaw eCarswell & Quicklaw

(Lab due Oct. 15 in class)

Read: Sumner, L.W. *The hateful and the obscene: Studies in the Limits of free Expression*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. Ch. 5.
Available on Course Reserve in the Library

Website: *Freedom to Read*.

http://www.freedomtoread.ca/censorship_in_canada/index.asp

V. October 8 Thanksgiving Holiday – no class**VI. October 15 (Class in regular Classroom 11:30 - 1:00)**

Access to Information & Privacy

Lab – Finding Government Documents (**Lab due Oct. 22 in class**)

Discussion Questions

Read: *Legal Research and Writing*: Ch. 3
&

Schmitz, Cristin. "Information czar asks Ottawa to end 'culture of secrecy,'" in *The Lawyers Weekly*. October 22, 2004, vol. 24, no. 23
Available on Quicklaw

Website: Office of the Privacy Commissioner

http://www.privcom.gc.ca/index_e.asp

VII. October 22 (Class & Lab in Library room 102)

Intellectual Property

Discussion Questions

In class Lab Finding Cases (**Lab due Oct. 29 in class**)

Read:

Vaver, David. "Canada's Intellectual Property Framework: A Comparative Overview," *Intellectual Property Journal*, February, 2004
Available on Westlaw eCarswell

Website: *Canadian Intellectual Property Office*

http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc_mrksv/cipo/welcome/welcom-e.html

VIII. October 29 (Class & Lab in Library room 102)

Lecture & Lab – Intro to Statutes and Regulations (**Lab due Nov. 5 in class**)

Read: *Legal Research and Writing*: Ch.3
Available on Course Reserve in the Library

IX. November 5 (Class & Lab in Library room 102)

Lecture – Parliamentary Process

Lab - Finding Bills and Debates (**Lab due Nov. 12 in class**)

Website: Law: Finding Bills and Statues
http://www.library.carleton.ca/subjects/findbills_statutes.html

X. November 12

Synthesizing and Analyzing Information

-Writing your paper

-Academic language, format and citation

Group Exercise – In groups of five, students will discuss their topics and how they plan to shape their papers.

Read: *The Craft of Research*: Ch. 7
Available on Course Reserve in the Library

XI. November 19

Conducting Legal Research

-Conducting additional research as necessary

-Revising and re-working sections

Working in pairs, students will address their progress in preparing their final papers. Questions regarding content, context, purpose, audience, organization, support and design will be addressed in this team exercise.

XII. November 26

Course Review

-Reviewing what we have done throughout the term

-Why this type of research matters

Group Exercise – Sharing your own experience with conducting this kind of research

Course evaluation.

XIII. December 3

Paper due in class.