

**BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**DIVISION OF BUSINESS, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL STUDIES**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Email:

Office:

**COURSE TITLE:** LGL-103 Legal Research and Writing

**CREDITS & HOURS:** 3 credits, 4 hours

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** LGL- 103 Legal Research and Writing is an introduction to legal practice. Topics covered include law office systems, legal research, legal forms, pleadings, motion practice, and briefs.

**TEXTBOOKS:**

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. Legal Research and Writing for Paralegals:  
Bouchoux, Aspen Pub, 7th edition, (or most recent)
2. Bluebook: Uniform System of Citation, 2010, 19th  
edition, Harvard Law (or most recent edition)
3. Rules of Court, 2014, Pressler/Verniero, Gann Law Books.  
(paperback).

**PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS:** Case Briefing, Legal Memoranda and Legal Briefs on current and varied legal issues; research and analysis of primary and secondary authority.

**Supplemental Materials:** Professor shall provide supplemental handouts during the semester to supplement course textbooks.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. To provide the student with the ability to analyze facts, identify legal issues through primary and secondary legal sources, including legal commentary and practice aides.

Measure: Students will take submit projects during intervals during the course. These projects will relate to analysis of the New Jersey State and Federal Court Systems and the processes and procedures required by the respective components of the New Jersey Judiciary. Students will utilize traditional legal research methods and resources and the same shall be integrated and supplement computer assisted legal research methods in upcoming semesters.

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on the projects. Projects will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced. Homework assignments will be required specifically addressing this course objective.

2. To provide the student with the ability to perform manual legal research projects as it relates to federal, state, municipal and municipal courts and administrative law practice. Focus will also relate to the legislative, executive, administrative regulations, court rules and treaties.

Measure: Students will take submit projects during intervals during the course. These projects will relate to analysis of the New Jersey State and Federal Court Systems and the processes and procedures required by the respective components of the New Jersey Judiciary. Students will utilize traditional legal research methods

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on the projects. Projects will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced. Homework assignments will be required specifically addressing this course objective.

3. To provide the student with an understanding of how to appropriately identify which Legal Research projects which are uniquely suited for conventional research methods versus those projects uniquely suited for computer assisted legal research. To use the resources and update the law through the use of citator services, advance sheets, pocket parts and other updating methods.

Measure: Students will submit projects during intervals during the course which will require the utilization of conventional methods of legal research only and those which projects that will require the consideration of legal research methods with computer assisted legal research skills. Projects will include legal memoranda, legal briefs, use of forms and appropriate practice aides. Students will be required to utilize their legal research and writing skills. Emphasis will also be placed on legal ethical concerns and the use of Shepards Citations, advance sheets, pocket parts, law journals and other methods to update the law.

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on these examinations and projects. Projects will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced. Homework assignments will be required specifically addressing this course objective.

3. To provide the student with an understanding of how legal research relates to the New Jersey System of Legal Ethics NJ Rules of Court, the Court System and to New Jersey Legal Actions through analysis of particular rules, advisory opinions, use of forms, hypotheticals and examination of case studies.

Measure: Students will submit projects during intervals during the course which will have required ethical considerations. The ethical considerations will relate to analysis of the New Jersey State and Federal Court Systems and the processes and procedures required by the respective components of the New Jersey Judiciary.

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on these homework assignments and projects. Projects and homework assignments will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced.

4. To provide the student with an understanding of how and where to access conventional research tools and to identify what is needed to perform effective

conventional legal research. Cost effective legal research will also be considered.

Measure: Students will submit projects and homework assignments which will have components requiring the student to locate specific legal resources electronically and to utilize the resource cost effectively. This will include in school and off-site computer assisted legal research. Research consideration will relate to legal and factual issues as it pertains to our court system, system of ethics and its application to particular case studies. Proper citation and communication of legal authority is reinforced.

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on the projects. Projects and homework assignments will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced.

5. To provide the student with an understanding of how to prepare objective and persuasive legal documents including the drafting of the legal memoranda, legal briefs (trial and appellate). Attention will also be provided to letter writing, arbitration statement and preparation of settlement proposals. Consideration and instruction will also be provided as to proper citation format.

Measure: Students will submit projects and homework assignments which will have components requiring the student to locate specific legal resources and to utilize the resource effectively. This will include in school and off-site legal research. Research consideration will relate to legal and factual issues as it pertains to our court system, system of ethics and its application to particular case studies. Proper citation and communication of legal authority is reinforced.

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on the projects. Projects and homework assignments will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced.

6. To provide the student with effective written and oral communication skills necessary for the presentation of the legal work product.

Measure: Students will submit projects and homework assignments which will have components requiring the student to locate specific legal resources and to utilize the resource effectively. This will include in school and off-site legal research. Research consideration will relate to legal and factual issues as it pertains to our court system, system of ethics and its application to particular case studies. Proper citation and communication of legal authority is reinforced.

Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive an average grade of “70” or better on the projects. Projects and homework assignments will be reviewed with students and concepts reinforced.

COURSE CONTENT:

<u>Session</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Chapter(s)</u>
(4 hrs.) 1	Introduction to legal research and citation systems and primary sources of law, legislature sources, judicial preliminary sources	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.1
(4 hrs.) 2	Court System, Primary Sources of Law, Civil and Criminal Procedures in U.S., Case Briefing	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.2, 3 & Ch. 4
(4 hrs.) 3	Appellate Procedure in the United States and State of New Jersey, basic legal reasoning authority and precedent	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch. 2, 3 & 4 N.J. Rules of Appellate Practice
(4 hrs.) 4	Basic steps in legal research, process organization of legal matters in law library, legal citations and malpractice, ethical components of legal research, Case Briefing	Research Exercise on Assigned Problem	Bouchoux, Ch.4, 5 and 13 <u>plus</u> N.J. Supreme Court System of Citation  Bluebook Generally and NJ Section
(4 hrs.) 5	Overview of publication and research of primary and secondary legal research sources using the index and topic methods, Case Briefing	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.4 & Ch. 5
(4 hrs.) 6	Publication and citation of secondary authority and annotation and shepherds, special research issues	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.6 & Ch. 7, 9,10
(4 hrs.) 7	Legal Writing – the basics and Strategies of effective writing	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch 14, 15, 16
(4hrs) 8	The Legal Memorandum and Citation	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.8, 17 NJ Supreme Court Citation Requirements & Bluebook
(4 hrs.) 9	Legal Research at Law Library	TBA	Lecture – Lab
(4 hrs.) 10	Shepards and the use of Citators	TBA	Bouchoux Ch 9 Handouts

(4 hrs.) 11	Legal Writing – Brief Preparation	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch. 18
(4 hrs.) 12	Continuation of Legal Writing	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.13
(4 hrs.) 13	Legal Writing I – Memos contd	Writing Exercise	Bouchoux, Ch.14 & Ch. 18
(4 hrs.) 14	Legal Writing II – including post writing steps	TBA	Bouchoux, Ch.15, 16 & 17
(4 hrs.) 15	Legal Research: Summary of Total Legal Research System Review of course – project reviews	Lecture	Bouchoux Ch. 13

Note: The content of the course is cumulative. The emphasis on ethics, citation, memo and brief presentation, proper case briefing and analysis, research and writing in this course is critical to your progress in the field of law and will be emphasized each and every class session. It is important that if you do not understand a concept that you seek assistance from your professor immediately. The content in this course provides the foundation for other courses throughout the Paralegal Studies and Legal Nurse Consultant Curricula.

#### EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Homework .....	40%
Participation.....	10%
Midterm Project (legal memo).....	25%
Final Project (legal brief).....	<u>25%</u>
	100%

**SUBMISSION OF LATE PROJECTS SHALL BE ASSESSED A QUARTER GRADE PENALTY FOR EACH DATE THAT THE PROJECT IS LATE, UNLESS PRIOR PERMISSION IS OBTAINED OR AN EMERGENCY ARISES. ALL PROJECTS (INCLUDING HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS) MUST BE SUBMITTED BY SEMESTER’S END FOR THE STUDENT TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE COURSE. IF ALL PROJECTS ARE NOT SUBMITTED BY THE FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE, STUDENT SHALL RECEIVE AN “F” GRADE FOR THAT ASSIGNMENT WHICH HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED.**

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION WILL BE REQUIRED FOR COURSE CREDIT AS ASSIGNED AND REQUIRED BY THE PROFESSOR.**

**ATTENDANCE SHALL BE TAKEN AT EACH CLASS SESSION AND SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE RULES OF THE COLLEGE. ANY STUDENT NOT ATTENDING CLASS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NOTIFYING THE PROFESSOR. PREFERABLY PRIOR TO CLASS, AND FOR OBTAINING THE MATERIAL FROM A FELLOW STUDENT AND/OR THE PROFESSOR. ATTENDANCE IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING THE MATERIALS PASSING THIS COURSE AND HABITUAL UNEXCUSED ABSENSE (DEFINDED AS MORE THAN TWO UNEXECUCED ABSENCES) OR TARDINESS WILL RESULT IN PENALTY AND/OR LOSS OF COURSE CREDIT.**

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: TO BE PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR IN BOOKLET AND HANDOUT FORM. EACH STUDENT SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING A COPY OF THESE MATERIALS AND THE COMPREHENSION OF THESE MATERIALS.**

CELL PHONES: CELL PHONE USE IS NOT PERMITTED IN CLASS AND SHOULD BE TURNED OFF OR ON VIBRATE MODE.

FACULTY ABSENCE: A daily listing will appear in the glass case located in the front lobby of the main building (administrative wing), which will indicate all classes which are canceled. Another listing will appear in the glass case adjacent to the Hotel/Restaurant bulletin board in the E Building and the Bergen Community College website. Students can consult these bulletin boards and the website before going to class. If such a class does not appear on the day's cancellation notice, this information may be conveyed either to the Evening & Saturday Office (L-113) or the Department Office (A-306C).