Overview. This course introduces international lawyers to the structure of the legal system, the modes of legal analysis, the methods of legal research, and the form of legal writing in the United States. The goals for this class are three-fold: (1) to gain an appreciation of the relative roles that federal and state law play in the U.S. legal system, (2) to learn how to conduct basic legal research, primarily using online tools, and (3) to establish a writing process to evaluate and construct common law arguments. Throughout the semester, students will be asked to perform a series of discrete legal assignments designed to mimic the representation of a client in the context of a U.S. legal practice. Students will be asked to analyze the client’s legal position, perform individual legal research, and write a legal memorandum that will address the client’s concern. In addition, students will give oral presentations of their research findings. Students will receive feedback on both their written and oral work.

Total Credits: 2 credit hours

Instructor: James Bickford

Office Hours. By appointment. Please email me and we will find a time.

Grading. This course will be graded Honors, Pass, Fail/No Credit. The grade will be based 25% on class attendance and participation, and 75% on the written work submitted.

Textbook: United States Legal Discourse: Legal English for Foreign LLMs, by Craig Hoffman and Andrea Tyler

Attendance Policy. Regular and punctual attendance and participation in all class sessions is required. A student who has not regularly attended, participated, or otherwise met class requirements may be subject to any of the following:

• The student may be withdrawn.
• The student may be excluded from attending class sessions.
• The student may be excluded from submitting a final paper (with the same consequences as a failure to submit a final paper).
• The student may receive a lowered or failing grade in the course.

A student who has not properly registered for a course may not take the final examination or receive any credit for participation in the course.
Topics and Assignments for Each Class

Unit One: Introduction to United States Legal Discourse

WEEK 1  Monday, August 29

Topics: Introduction to the U.S. Legal System

Assignment for Today: None

Assignment for Next Class: Read United States Legal Discourse: An Introduction to Legal English for Foreign LL.M. Students (Textbook), Chapter 1, including the following accompanying texts, which are available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site:

- U.S. Constitution, Article III
- 28 U.S.C.A. 1652
- *Exit Consents in Sovereign Bond Exchanges*

WEEK 2  Monday, September 5: NO CLASS

WEEK 3  Monday, September 12

Topics: Legal English vs Legal Discourse; Common Law Argumentation; Relationship between Federal and State Law; Analyzing and Creating a Client Intake Memo

Assignment for Today: Read Textbook, Chapter 1, including the following accompanying texts, which are available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site:

- U.S. Constitution, Article III
- 28 U.S.C.A. 1652
- *Exit Consents in Sovereign Bond Exchanges*

Assignment for Next Class: Post Client Intake Memo to the Assignment Drop Box by 6:00 PM on Sunday, September 18, 2016.

Read Textbook, Chapter 3 and *Katz v. Oak Industries, Inc.*, which is available on the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site.
The law review article, *Writing a Student Article*, is optional reading.

**WEEK 4  Monday, September 19**

Topics: Beginning Research for a Legal Problem

Assignment for Today: Post Client Intake Memo to the Assignment Drop Box by 6:00 PM on Sunday, September 18, 2016.

Read *Textbook*, Chapter 3 and *Katz v. Oak Industries, Inc.*, which is available on the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site. The law review article, *Writing a Student Article*, is optional reading.

Assignment for Next Class: Read *Textbook*, Chapter 4, and *Metropolitan Life Insurance Company v. RJR Nabisco, Inc.*, *Van Gemert v. Boeing Co.*, and *Geren v. Quantum Chemical Corporation*, which are available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site.

**WEEK 5  Monday, September 26**

Topics: Judicial Discourse as the Law

Assignment for Today: Read *Textbook*, Chapter 4, and *Metropolitan Life Insurance Company v. RJR Nabisco, Inc.*, *Van Gemert v. Boeing Co.*, and *Geren v. Quantum Chemical Corporation*, which are available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site.

Assignment for Next Class: Read *Sample Legal Discussion with Comments*, which is available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site.

**Monday through Friday, September 26 to 29:** Sign up for Westlaw sessions

**WEEK 6  Monday, October 3**

Topics: Making Legal Arguments Using Prior Cases as Support

Assignment for Today: Read *Sample Legal Discussion with Comments*, which is available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site.
Assignment for Next Class:  Comment on Close Reading Exercise 1 with Suggested Comments, Part 2, which is available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site. Post your Comments to the TWEN site by 6:00 PM on Sunday, October 9, 2106.

WEEK 7  Class Meets on Tuesday, October 11

Topics:  Law Firm Discourse Predicting a Likely Legal Outcome

Assignment for Today:  Comment on Close Reading Exercise 1 with Suggested Comments, Part 2, which is available in the COURSE MATERIALS on your TWEN site. Post your Comments to the TWEN site by 6:00 PM on Sunday, October 9, 2106.

Assignment for Next Class:  Email to the Partner. Post your Email to the Partner to the TWEN site by 6:00 PM on Sunday, October 16.

Unit Two:  Writing about a New Legal Problem

WEEK 8  Monday, October 17

Topics:  Meeting a New Client; Beginning your Legal Research

Assignment for Next Class:  Write an Executive Summary of the new client’s case and post it to the TWEN Assignment Drop Box by 6:00 PM on Sunday, October 23, 2016. Bring a hard copy of your Executive Summary to class on October 24, 2016.

WEEK 9  Monday, October 24

Topics:  Organizing your Arguments: Writing a First Draft

Assignment for Today:  Write an Executive Summary of the new client’s case and post it to the TWEN Assignment Drop Box by 6:00 PM on Sunday, October 23, 2016. Bring a hard copy of your Executive Summary to class on October 24, 2016.
Assignment for November 6: Write a First Draft of the Discussion Section of your Memorandum and post it to the TWEN Assignment Drop Box by 6:00 PM on Sunday, November 6, 2016.

WEEK 10  Monday, October 31
Topics:   Presenting Concise Oral Arguments
Assignment: Oral Presentations

WEEK 11  Monday, November 7: NO CLASS

WEEK 12  Monday, November 14
Topics:   Individual Conferences

WEEK 13  Monday, November 21
Topics:   Re-Writing a First Draft
Assignment: Re-Write your First Draft and post your Final Draft to the TWEN Assignment Drop Box by 6:00 PM on Sunday, December 4, 2016. Bring a hard copy of your Final Draft to class on December 5, 2016.

WEEK 14  Monday, November 28: NO CLASS

WEEK 15  Monday, December 5
Topics:   Refining a Final Draft