SYLLABUS

U.S. LEGAL RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, AND WRITING

LAWG 844 10

Course Description: This class introduces foreign-education LL.M. students to U.S. legal resources, research methods, and analytical paradigms. 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.

Course No.: LAWG 844 10

Total Credits: 2 credit hours

Instructor: Greta Gao, Esq.
Commodity Futures Trading Commission
Trial Attorney

Quarter: Fall 2016

Day and Time: Tuesday, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Classroom: McDonough 156

Textbook: United States Legal Discourse: Legal English for Foreign LLMs, By Craig Hoffman and Andrea Tyler
Class Attendance: Pursuant to the 2016-17 Student Handbook of Academic Policies, “[r]egular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is required of each student. Student participation is expected in all courses. A student who, even though registered for a course, has not regularly attended, participated, or otherwise met class requirements may be subject to any of the following, at the professor’s option:

- The student may be withdrawn.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

Absent extraordinary circumstances, if you miss more than 4 classes, you will be deemed withdrawn from the class.

Grade: Grades for this class will be awarded using the High Pass/Pass/Fail metric. Your final grade will be based on the final legal memorandum you submit. Class participation will be rewarded but will not factor negatively into your final grade.

Office Hours and Email: I do not have an office on campus and therefore do not have regular office hours. However, I encourage you to contact me by email if you have any questions. If you would like to meet with me in person, a meeting can be arranged at mutually agreeable time before or after class.
TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR EACH CLASS

UNIT ONE: INTRODUCTION TO U.S. LEGAL DISCOURSE

WEEK 1  Tuesday, August 30

Topics: Introduction to the U.S. Legal System; Legal English v. Legal Discourse

Assignment Due Today: 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 indicated in the Chapter:

- Erie v. Tompkins, 304 U.S. 64 (1938).
- U.S. Constitution, Article III
- 28 U.S.C.A. 1652

Assignment for Next Class: Read Textbook, Chapter 2, including the following accompanying text, which is indicated in the Chapter:

- (Law Review Article) Exit Consents in Sovereign Bond Exchanges

WEEK 2  Tuesday, September 6

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

Assignment Due Today: Read Textbook, Chapter 2 with accompanying text

Assignment for Next Class: Post Client Intake Memo to Canvas by 9:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9, 2016

Read Textbook, Chapter 3

WEEK 3  Tuesday, September 13

Topics: Scholarly Discourse about the Law
Assignment Due: Client Intake Memo, posted to Canvas site by 9:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9, 2016; Read Textbook, Chapter 3

Assignment for Next Class: Read Textbook, Chapter 4; Read Georgetown Law Plagiarism Policy

WEEK 4

Tuesday, September 20

Topics: Judicial Discourse as the Law; Proper Attribution

Assignment Due Today: Read Textbook, Chapter 4; Georgetown Law Plagiarism Policy

Assignment for Next Class: Close Reading of Cases (to be assigned)

WEEK 5

Tuesday, September 27

Topics: Making Legal Arguments Using Prior Cases as Support; Introduction to Online Legal Research; Presentation by GULC Law Librarian

Assignment Due Today: Close Reading of Cases (to be assigned)

Assignment for Next Class: Read Textbook, Chapter 5

WEEK 6

Tuesday, October 4

Topics: Law Firm Discourse Predicting a Likely Legal Outcome

Assignment Due Today: Read Textbook, Chapter 5

Assignment: Close Reading Exercise due at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 9, 2016.

***************NO CLASS ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11***************

UNIT TWO: WRITING THE MEMORANDUM

WEEK 7

Tuesday, October 18
Topics: Beginning the Case: Meeting a New Client; Beginning your Legal Research

Assignment Due Today: None

Assignment for Next Class: Write an Executive Summary of the new client’s case and post it to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 23, 2016.

WEEK 8  Tuesday, October 25

Topics: Understanding the Law: Writing the Legal Summary

Assignment Due Today: Post the Executive Summary of the new client’s case to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 23, 2016

Assignment for Next Class: Write a short summary of the law as it applies to your client’s case and post it to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 30, 2016.

Review Textbook: Chapter 5

WEEK 9  Tuesday, November 1

Topics: Organizing your Arguments: Writing a First Draft

Assignment Due Today: Write a short summary of the law as it applies to your client’s case and post it to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 30, 2016.

Review Textbook: Chapter 5

Assignment for Next Week: Write a First Draft of the Discussion Section of your Memorandum and post it to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 6, 2016.

Please bring a hard copy of your First Draft of the Discussion Section to class with you on November 8, 2016.

WEEK 10  Tuesday, November 8
Topics: Individual Conferences. Please email me to sign up for 15 minute time slots.

Please bring a hard copy of your First Draft of the Discussion Section to your individual conference on November 8, 2016.

Final Assignment: Re-Write your First Draft and post your Final Draft of the Memorandum to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 27, 2016.

WEEK 11  Tuesday, November 15

Topics: Re-writing a First Draft

Assignment for Next Week: Oral Presentations

Final Assignment: Re-Write your First Draft and post your Final Draft of the Memorandum to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 27, 2016.

WEEK 12  Tuesday, November 22

Topics: Making Concise Oral Arguments: Presenting your Analysis

Assignment Due Today: Oral Presentations

Assignment for Next Week: Re-Write your First Draft and post your Final Draft of the Memorandum to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 27, 2016.

Please Bring a Hard Copy of your Final Draft to Class with you on November 29, 2016.

WEEK 13  Tuesday, November 29

Topics: Refining a Final Draft; Final thoughts

Assignment Due Today: Post your Final Draft to Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 27, 2016.
Please Bring a Hard Copy of your Final Draft to Class with you on November 29, 2016.