Class objectives:

This year-long course is designed to help prepare students for the linguistic and intellectual demands of LL.M. study at a law school in the U.S. The course focuses on enhancing students’ language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with particular emphasis on developing language skills for understanding and producing legal academic texts. Throughout the academic year, students will work closely with course instructors and receive extensive, individualized feedback on their skills development.

The following objectives represent the linguistic and intellectual skills that students will work on in this class during the academic year.

**Listening skills:** By the end of the academic year, students will have improved their ability to
- listen to and understand a lecture in English while taking notes;
- understand and respond to professors’ and classmates’ questions; and
- understand legal vocabulary in context.

**Speaking skills:** By the end of the academic year, students will have improved their ability to
- speak in an informed manner during academic discussions (whole-class and small group);
- participate in Socratic discussions about legal cases assigned for homework;
- participate in and facilitate seminar-type discussions about legal topics;
- use accurate grammatical structures while contributing to a discussion; and
- use accurate pronunciation of individual sounds as well as stress, rhythm, and intonation to convey information.

**Reading skills:** By the end of the academic year, students will have improved their ability to
- manage a substantive reading load that includes legal cases, law review articles, and other secondary sources;
- recognize how texts such as legal cases and law review articles are structured;
- read and extract key information from legal cases (e.g., facts, issues, holding, reasoning, etc.);
- make connections across written texts (e.g., analogize and distinguish between multiple cases);
- understand hypotheticals and fact patterns in exams; and
- read and understand legal concepts.

**Writing skills:** By the end of the academic year, students will have improved their ability to
- draft legal academic texts (i.e., scholarly papers and law school exams);
- craft interpersonal texts (i.e., email messages) following appropriate conventions;
- write persuasively and analytically under time pressure (e.g., exams) and setting their own deadlines (e.g., scholarly papers);
- organize the content of writing assignments, using a central thesis, document headings, and other writing techniques;
- provide support for assertions and claims;
- paraphrase, summarize, and integrate sources into written pieces;
- use legal “terms of art” and academic vocabulary;
- use accurate grammatical structures;
- cite sources by using Bluebook conventions to avoid plagiarism;
- revise the content of written work to produce high quality legal academic texts; and
- self-edit the grammar and style of written work to produce clear and precise texts.
Texts:


• **Unbillable Hours** by Ian Graham. ISBN-13: 978-0692214305. (Referred to as UH)

• **Freedom for the Thought that We Hate: A Biography of the First Amendment** by Anthony Lewis. ISBN-13: 978-0465018192. (Referred to as Freedom)


• **A planner**

Other course readings, as assigned (accessed from the Canvas course site) or handed out in class.

Course requirements:

1. Attend all classes.
2. Prepare and complete all listening, speaking, reading, and writing assignments. Assignments include:
   a) three papers (for each: first drafts and revised drafts);
   b) legal case readings, case briefs, and two exams (one practice exam and one midterm exam);
   c) written assignments on grammar and style;
   d) speaking and listening assignments related to pronunciation;
   e) reading and preparation for whole-class and seminar-type discussions;
   f) vocabulary assignments (word lists with online quizzes); and
   g) timed, in-class writing assignments.
3. Participate in all class activities including individual work, small group work, and class discussions.
4. Work with the instructors to identify the student’s individual linguistic needs and to enhance their English language skills.

Class assignments and important dates:

Papers: Students will write three academic papers (4-6 pages, double spaced), submitting a first draft (the full paper in rough form) and a final draft via the Canvas course site by 12 am (midnight) on the due date. Between the submission of the first draft and final copy, there will be individual student conferences to discuss the student’s writing and revision strategies.

   a) A narrative paper: First draft due on Thursday, 9/15
      Final draft due on Thursday, 9/29

   b) A concept paper: Topic brainstorming due on Tuesday, 10/4
      Outline due on Thursday, 10/6
      First draft due on Thursday, 10/13
      Final draft due on Thursday, 10/27

   c) A cause/effect paper: Outline due on Thursday, 11/3
      First draft due on Thursday, 11/10
      Final draft due on Tuesday, 11/22

Students will receive formatting guidelines for papers during the first or second week of classes.

Legal cases & case briefs: Every one or two weeks students will receive a pair of torts cases to read and brief for homework. Students will submit these briefs to the Canvas course site at some point before an in-class discussion about the cases (exact due dates TBD). Students will be responsible for actively participating in these discussions.

Exams: Students will take two exams during the semester. These exams will be based on torts cases assigned for homework, which will be the subject of prior class discussions. Although the exams will test students on their knowledge of law, the primary aim of the exams is not to assess students’ mastery of torts, but rather to develop students’ ability to engage with case law and to draw on cases to effectively answer law school examination questions.

   a) Torts practice exam: Wednesday, 10/5
   b) Torts final exam: Monday, 11/21
Grammar & style assignments: Written homework on grammar and style will be assigned throughout the semester. Students will be responsible for completing these assignments before class.

Pronunciation assignments: Speaking and listening homework on pronunciation will be assigned throughout the semester. Students will be responsible for completing these assignments before class.

Vocabulary: For most weeks we will review vocabulary from law review articles and other texts. Students must look up the definitions of each word/phrase, which will be given to them in the form of a vocabulary list before class. During class, we will review the pronunciation of the words/phrases and any questions about their meanings and use. By Sunday evening, students will complete an online, open book quiz using the vocabulary words, which will be approximately one hour in length.

Discussion facilitation: Throughout the semester, students will be responsible for closely reading the books *Unbillable Hours (UH)* and *Freedom for the Thought that We Hate (Freedom)*, and then facilitating and participating in discussions about these books. Students who are facilitators will prepare questions in advance of the discussions they are leading, while students who are participants will read and review relevant chapters prior to discussions. Each student will facilitate a few discussions. Students will receive feedback on their oral communication skills.

Grading policy:
Papers and exams receive letter grades that are the equivalent of law school grades (A, B, C, D, F). All other work is marked “complete” or “incomplete.”

Law school transcript grades for the course are “honors,” “pass,” or “fail.” If a student receives a low pass in the Fall semester, he or she will meet with the Director of the program before the Spring semester begins. Because this is a skills development class, students will not be penalized for mistakes they make with the English language early in the semester; however, grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors will be factored into students’ grades as the year progresses. Students’ grades will be based on their submission of all assignments, the quality of their submitted work, whether they are consistently motivated to learn and improve, and attendance and participation in classes.

Electronics policy:
Unless otherwise instructed, **laptops, tablets, and cell phones are strictly prohibited during class sessions.** If your family has an emergency while you are in class, tell them to call Ryan Coleman, Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant, at [contact information]. He will send someone to class to get you.

Academic integrity:
Any instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism or cheating) may result in a grade of F.

Students with disabilities:
If you have a disability that you believe may require an accommodation in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services (http://www.law.georgetown.edu/campus-life/disability-services/). Accommodations will be granted, but only if they are arranged through ODS.
# Topics week by week

(This schedule is subject to change.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topics covered</th>
<th>Assignments DUE*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Aug. 29 | Introduction to course & diagnostics (M/T):  
- Welcome! Review course syllabus and schedule  
- Diagnostic writing exercise  
- Expectations & study habits in a U.S. law school  

Academic reading, writing & vocabulary (T):  
- Organization of legal academic writing  
- Begin discussion of narrative writing in the law: *As I read, I weep: In praise of judicial narrative* (accessed on Canvas)  

Legal reading, writing & discussion (W):  
- Introduction to case reading, annotating, and briefing  
- Preview Socratic dialogue  
- Discussion of legal case 1: *Andrews v. United Airlines*  
- Canvas (course website) tour  

Academic speaking & listening (Th):  
- Introduction to discussion facilitation and participation skills  
- Introduction to pronunciation program  

*NOTE: Oral assessment interviews in the afternoon*
| Sept. 5 | NO SCHOOL Monday 9/5 (Labor Day holiday) | - Look up vocabulary words  
- Read and/or review article  
- Read and brief case(s) |
|---------|-----------------------------------------|------------------|
| Sept. 12 | Academic reading, writing & vocabulary (M):  
- Vocabulary Unit 2  
- Narrative writing and *As I read, I weep* (cont’d)  
- Transitions in academic writing and narration  

Grammar & legal style (T):  
- Verbs: verb tense review  
- *Style Lesson 3*  

Legal reading, writing & discussion (W):  
- Feedback on first case briefs  
- Discussion of legal case 2: *Bethel v. NYC Transit Authority*  

- Look up vocabulary words  
- Read and/or review article  
- Complete grammar and style assignment(s)  
- Read and brief case(s)  
- Read and prepare for discussion of *UH*  
- Submit first draft of narrative paper by midnight, Thursday 9/15 |

*Note that the lists of assignments provided in this column are not exhaustive. You may have additional assignments announced in class sessions.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 19</td>
<td>NO CLASSES MONDAY 9/19, TUESDAY 9/20, AND WEDNESDAY, 9/21: Individual conferences over first draft of narrative paper</td>
<td>- Read and prepare for discussion of UH - Complete pronunciation assignment(s)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| | Academic speaking & listening (Th):  
• Feedback on first discussion facilitation activity  
• Discussion facilitation and participation skills practice (UH)  
• Pronunciation practice | |
| | *NOTE: Mandatory Microsoft Word training at 2 pm on Friday, 9/23* | |
| Sept. 26 | Academic reading, writing & vocabulary (M):  
• Vocabulary Unit 3  
• Writing effective paragraphs | - Look up vocabulary words - Complete grammar and style assignment(s) |
| | Grammar & legal style (T):  
• Clauses: independent vs. dependent; comma splices; fragments; common errors  
• Style Lesson 3 (cont’d) | - Read and brief case(s) - Read and prepare for discussion of UH - Complete pronunciation assignment(s) |
| | Legal reading, writing & discussion (W):  
• Law school exam preparation & exam taking strategies  
• Preparing for practice exam with a fact pattern | - Submit final narrative paper by midnight, Thursday 9/29 |
| | Academic speaking & listening (Th):  
• Discussion facilitation and participation skills practice (UH)  
• Pronunciation practice | |
| Oct. 3 | Academic reading, writing & vocabulary (M/T):  
• Vocabulary Unit 4  
• Writing about concepts: Catching the Unique Rabbit: Why Pets Should be Reclassified as Inimitable Property Under the Law (accessed on Canvas)  
• The writing process  
• Concept paper assignment | - Look up vocabulary words - Read and/or review article - Complete grammar and style assignment(s) |
| | Grammar & legal style (T):  
• Clauses: independent vs. dependent; comma splices; fragments; common errors (cont’d)  
• Gerunds & infinitives diagnostic | - Study for practice exam - Submit topic brainstorming by midnight, Tuesday 10/4 - Submit outline of concept paper by midnight, Thursday 10/6 |
| | Legal reading, writing & discussion (W):  
• Torts practice exam (Wednesday, October 5)  
• Conferences about concept paper topics | |
| | Academic speaking & listening (Th):  
• Discussion facilitation and participation skills practice (UH) | |
| Oct. 10 | NO SCHOOL Monday 10/10 (Columbus Day holiday) | - Look up vocabulary words - Read and/or review article - Complete grammar and style assignment(s) |
| | *NOTE: Tuesday 10/11 follows a Monday schedule* | - Read and brief case(s) - Submit first draft of concept paper by midnight, Thursday 10/13 |
| | Academic reading, writing & vocabulary (T):  
• Vocabulary Unit 5  
• Concept writing and Catching the Unique Rabbit (cont’d) | |
| | Grammar & legal style (W):  
• Gerunds & infinitives study plan  
• Final draft of narrative paper in-class editing | |
| | Academic speaking & listening (Th):  
• Watch Mario’s Story documentary | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oct. 17</th>
<th>NO CLASSES MONDAY 10/17, TUESDAY 10/18, and WEDNESDAY 10/19: Individual conferences over first draft of concept paper</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic speaking &amp; listening (Th):</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussion facilitation and participation skills practice (Freedom)</td>
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<td>• Pronunciation practice</td>
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<td>- Read and prepare for discussion of Freedom</td>
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<td>- Complete pronunciation assignment(s)</td>
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<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>Academic reading, writing &amp; vocabulary (M):</td>
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<td>• Vocabulary Unit 6</td>
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<td>• Concept writing and Catching the Unique Rabbit (cont’d)</td>
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<td>- Look up vocabulary words</td>
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<td>- Read and/or review article</td>
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<td>- Complete pronunciation assignment(s)</td>
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<td>- Submit final concept paper by midnight, Thursday 10/27</td>
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<td>Oct. 31</td>
<td>Academic reading, writing &amp; vocabulary (M):</td>
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<td>• Vocabulary Unit 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Writing about causes and effects: The private enforcement of immigration laws (accessed on Canvas)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Look up vocabulary words</td>
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<td>- Read and/or review article</td>
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<td>- Complete grammar and style assignment(s)</td>
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<td>- Complete pronunciation assignment(s)</td>
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<td>- Submit outline of cause/effect paper by midnight, Thursday 11/3</td>
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<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>Academic reading, writing &amp; vocabulary (M):</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Unit 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Writing about causes and effects and The private enforcement of immigration laws (cont’d)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Submit first draft of cause/effect paper by midnight, Thursday 11/10</td>
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<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>NO CLASSES MONDAY 11/14, TUESDAY 11/15, AND WEDNESDAY 11/16: Individual conferences over first draft of cause/effect paper</td>
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<td>Academic reading, writing &amp; vocabulary (Th):</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Writing about causes and effects and The private enforcement of immigration laws (cont’d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>- Read and/or review article</td>
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Legal reading, writing & discussion (M):
- Torts final exam (Monday, November 21)

Academic speaking & listening (T):
- Watch Shouting Fire documentary

NO SCHOOL Wednesday, 11/23 to Sunday, 11/27 (Thanksgiving holiday)

- Study for final exam
- Submit final cause/effect paper by midnight, Tuesday 11/22

End of semester wrap-up
- Institutional TOEFL exam
- Final torts exam feedback
- Final draft of cause/effect paper in-class editing
- Introduction to the Transnational Legal Skills Workshop
- Course & program evaluations

*NOTE: The Transnational Legal Skills Workshop runs from Monday, December 5 to Friday, December 9. All students must attend.*

Skills Daily Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Focus</th>
<th>Mondays</th>
<th>Tuesdays</th>
<th>Wednesdays</th>
<th>Thursdays</th>
<th>Fridays</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Academic Reading and Writing:</td>
<td>Grammar &amp; Legal Style:</td>
<td>Legal Reading, Writing, &amp; Discussion:</td>
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<td>Academic Reading, Writing &amp; Vocabulary</td>
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<td>Legal Reading, Writing &amp; Discussion;</td>
<td>Facilitation &amp; Discussion Skills;</td>
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<td>Exam taking</td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
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<td>Required Books</td>
<td>- Articles handed out in class (also on Canvas)</td>
<td>- Style</td>
<td>- Judicial opinions handed out in class</td>
<td>- Book for the Course—either UH or Freedom</td>
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<td>- Your Planner</td>
<td>- Chartbook</td>
<td>(also on Canvas)</td>
<td>- Clear Speech</td>
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<td>- Your Planner</td>
<td>- Your Planner</td>
<td>- Your Planner</td>
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