

**TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW**

Legal Research	§	Class No.:	LAW 900
A Component of Lawyering Process	§	Sec: No.:	6 & 9 (SOFIDIYA)

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**FALL 2017 SYLLABUS**

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**A. LEGAL RESEARCH PROFESSOR ASSIGNMENTS**

<u>Lawyering Process Section(s)</u>	<u>Legal Research Instructor</u>	<u>Class Day / Time</u>	<u>Room</u>
§ 6	SOFIDIYA	Tuesday 1:00 PM - 1:50 PM	TMSL-L 126
§ 9	SOFIDIYA	Tuesday 2:00 PM - 2:50 PM	TMSL-L 126

**II. REQUIRED BOOKS:**

THE BLUEBOOK: A UNIFORM SYSTEM OF CITATION (Columbia Law Review Ass'n et al. eds., 20th ed. 2015). ("The Bluebook") (NOTE: You need this book in the practice of law.)

AMY E. SLOAN, BASIC LEGAL RESEARCH: TOOLS & STRATEGIES (6th ed. 2015). ("Sloan")

**III. RECOMMENDED BOOK:**

AMY E. SLOAN & STEVEN D. SCHWINN, BASIC LEGAL RESEARCH WORKBOOK (rev. 4th ed. 2015).  
For your convenience, a copy of this book has been put on reserve. This book will not be referred to in class.

**IV. OFFICE HOURS**

Tuesday: 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM (Law Library Room 119)  
& By appointment

**V. LEARNING OUTCOMES**

When done with this course, students will be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Generate legal search terms from a given fact pattern;
- B. Create a research plan;
- C. Interpret contemporary legal citations;
- D. Understand court structures, hierarchies, and jurisdictions;
- E. Evaluate the type and weight of a given legal authority in a given legal problem;
- F. Given a legal topic, identify valuable secondary sources for researching that topic;
- G. Given a citation to a contemporary U.S. case, statute, or federal regulation, locate the current full text of that case, statute, or federal regulation;
- H. Given an annotated statute, use the annotations to locate cases interpreting the statute;
- I. Given a case, determine if a holding of the case is still good law;
- J. Interrelate legal resources in a jurisdiction using the topic and key number and headnote systems;

- K. Discuss the strengths, weaknesses, and use of legal finding tools and methods, including electronic search terms, indexes, and annotations; and
- L. Given a case, statute, regulation, periodical, book, or constitution, either in hardcopy or electronic format, create a correct Bluebook citation for that work.

## VI. ATTENDANCE

- A. **Attendance is required in this course.** Two (2) absences are allowed for the Legal Research portion of Lawyering Process.
- B. **There are no excused absences.** See *Student Rules of Matriculation* p.22, § 9.
- C. **Beginning with the third (3rd) absence,** I reserve the right to reduce the Legal Research portion of your final grade in accordance with the *Student Rules of Matriculation* cited above.

## VII. MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE

- A. The grade that you receive in Legal Research is worth 20% of your final Lawyering Process grade.
- B. The final grade for each student in Legal Research is based on five criteria for a total of 200 points.
  - 1. **Five Research Assignments:** (100 points)
    - a. Five (20) points per assignment
    - b. The legal research assignments cover the following:
      - 1. The Bluebook (Citations)
      - 2. Secondary Source Research
      - 3. Case Research
      - 4. Statutes
      - 5. Shepards/Keycite and Administrative Law
  - 2. **One Multiple Choice Exam:** (50 points)
  - 3. **Two Assessments :** (20 points)
    - a. Beginning of year Assessment **TO BE DETERMINED \*\*\*\*\* Times and dates may change please check the class page for any updates.**
    - b. End of year Assessment **Post-test opens: Monday, November 27 at 7:00 AM & closes on Tuesday, November 28 at 5:00 PM. \*\*\*\*\* Times and dates may change please check the class page for any updates.**
  - 4. **Class Participation:** The participation grade will consist of in class participation, group and possible Pop Quizzes. (5 points)
  - 5. **Teachers Choice:** Listed below (25 points – Completion Grade)
    - a. 5 points each. This grade may consist of Lexis Learn, ICW, in class assignments, extra homework, and Pop Quizzes. **ALL TO BE DETERMINED AS THE SEMESTER PROGRESSES.**

## VIII. ASSIGNMENTS

- A. **Format Requirements** - To help insure fair and equitable grading, all assignments must be:
  - Typed directly into the Word document downloaded from Lexis web courses.
  - **12 point Times New Roman font**
  - Left margins justified only
  - Double space between answers
  - **Submitted as a .pdf file**

- B. **Required Heading** - The following information is required at the indicated place on each assignment. If no place is indicated, then place this information at the top left. **DO NOT USE TITLE PAGES.**
- Name
  - Section
  - Date
- C. **Required Statement** – The statement “*I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid*” must appear on each assignment. Assignments without this statement are incomplete.
- D. **Submissions** – All assignments must be turned in by **11:59 PM CST Tuesday** on the week they are due.
- E. **Process Questions** – Any question calling for you to describe your process is a short essay question. The answer should be grammatically correct and unambiguous. Like a recipe, it should describe each step taken in the process. These questions are graded by following exactly the process you describe. If I cannot get to the answer you got using the process you provide, the answer is incorrect.

## **IX. COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

- A. This course will be placed in the LEXIS “Web Courses” course management system (hereinafter “CMS”). Students are required to enroll in the appropriate section for this course and are expected to regularly check the course page for updates, announcements, and changes.
- B. All important course documents and information will be posted to the CMS and updated as needed. Students should assume that versions of documents, including this one, on the CMS are the most current versions of those documents.
- C. All assignments will be posted on the CMS after they are given.
- D. Copies of PowerPoint slides used in class lectures will be posted to the CMS as .pdf files.
- E. Additional helpful resources may also be posted to the CMS for your optional use.

## **X. RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS AND PENALTIES**

- A. Lawyers are always working against deadlines; therefore, extensions on due dates will NOT generally be granted. All requests for extension must be made in writing by 4 PM on the day BEFORE the assignment is due (in other words, by 4PM Monday). If you do not receive your extension in writing, assume that the assignment is due as scheduled.
- B. I expect all work to be executed to professional standards of quality.
- C. The practice of law is a computerized profession; students are expected to be able to perform certain functions with their computer platforms of choice, including, but not limited to:
- i. Make special characters with their word processors including: §;
  - ii. Convert their word processing files into .pdf files; and
  - iii. Take and insert screenshots into their word processing files.
- D. Late assignments will NOT be accepted. They will receive a zero.
- E. There will be point penalties for omitting any required information the first time. The second time, the assignment will be deemed incomplete.
- F. All answers must be arrived at independently, and the work submitted must be your own unless otherwise instructed. Failure to abide by this rule will be considered an Honor Code violation.

## **XI. MOBILE DEVICE POLICY**

Mobile devices are an important part of the practice of law. However, courts have rules about their use and so do I. All your devices shall be silenced or turned off while you are in the class. Mobile devices shall be stowed. The exception is if you use your laptop instead of the desktop to take notes or for other class purposes.

Respectfully submitted,

*Itunu Sofidiya Esq.*

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SOFIDIYA – Legal Research Syllabus 2017

<b>SOFIDIYA FALL 2016 LEGAL RESEARCH SCHEDULE</b>				
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>READING</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT GIVEN</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
<b>Week 1:</b> 8/21/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction &amp; purpose</li> <li>• Court structure</li> <li>• Weight of authority</li> </ul>	Sloan – Chapter 1 <b>Handout:</b> Syllabus <b>Handout:</b> Examsoft <b>Handout:</b> Court Structure	<b>In Class:</b> Register for Lexis Learn Bloomberg Law O’Connors Online Cali <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 1 Online Basics: Navigation, Document Retrieval and Source Selection</i> <i>LL Module 02 - Constructing an Effective Search</i>	Pre-Legal Research Modules 1-5
<b>Week 2:</b> 8/28/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal research</li> <li>• The <i>Bluebook</i></li> <li>• Generating and evaluating search terms</li> </ul>	Sloan – Chapter 2, 3, & 11 <i>The Bluebook</i> – pp. 1-2 Tables 1, 6-7, 10 <b>Handout:</b> Formula for Citing Federal Cases	<b>In Class:</b> ICW <b>Assignment 1:</b> <i>The Bluebook</i> (Citations) ICW: Case Names 1-10 <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 05 - Finding the Best Cases for Your Research</i>	<b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 1 Online Basics: Navigation, Document Retrieval and Source Selection</i> <i>LL Module 02 - Constructing an Effective Search</i>
<b>Week 3</b> 9/4/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case research I</li> <li>• Citators</li> </ul>	Sloan – Chapter 5 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B10 & Rule 10 <b>Handout:</b> Case Citation <b>Handout:</b> Research Log <b>Handout:</b> Fact Pattern	<b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 07 - Finding More Authority From a Case</i>	<b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 05 - Finding the Best Cases for Your Research</i>
<b>Week 4:</b> 9/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case research II</li> <li>• Citators</li> </ul>	Sloan – Chapter 6	<b>Assignment 2: Case Research</b> <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 04 - Finding the Right Statutes and Statutory Interpretation</i>	<b>Assignment 1 Due</b> <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 07 - Finding More Authority From a Case</i>
<b>Week 5:</b> 9/18/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory research I</li> <li>• Legislative history</li> </ul>	Sloan – Chapter 7 & 8 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B12, B13, & Rules 12 & 13	<i>LL Module 09 - Legislative History</i>	<b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>LL Module 04 - Finding the Right Statutes and Statutory Interpretation</i>
<b>Week 6:</b> 9/25/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory research II</li> <li>• Legislative history</li> </ul>	Sloan – Chapter 7 & 8 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B12, B13, & Rules 12 & 13	<b>Assignment 3: Statutory Research</b>	<b>Assignment 2 Due</b> <i>LL Module 09 - Legislative History</i>

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<p><b>Week 7:</b> 10/2/2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic legal research</li> </ul>	<p>Sloan – Chapter 10 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B18 &amp; Rule 18</p>	<p><b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 03 - Why Start Your Research with Secondary Sources?</i></p>	
<p><b>Week 8:</b> 10/9/2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary Sources</li> </ul>	<p>Sloan – Chapter 4 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B15, B16, &amp; Rules 15 &amp; 16</p>	<p><b>Assignment 4:</b> Secondary Sources</p>	<p><b>Assignment 3 Due</b> <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 03 - Why Start Your Research with Secondary Sources?</i></p>
<p><b>Week 9:</b> 10/16/2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary Sources</li> </ul>	<p>Sloan – Chapter 4 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B15, B16, &amp; Rules 15 &amp; 16</p>	<p><b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 08 - Researching Administrative Law Issues</i></p>	
<p><b>Week 10:</b> 10/23/2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal administrative law</li> </ul>	<p>Sloan – Chapter 9 <i>The Bluebook</i> – B14 &amp; Rule 14</p>	<p><b>Assignment 5:</b> Administrative Law Research <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 11 - Briefs, Pleadings and Motions</i></p>	<p><b>Assignment 4 Due</b> <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 08 - Researching Administrative Law Issues</i></p>
<p><b>Week 11:</b> 10/30/2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simulated Research Assignment</li> </ul>		<p><b>In Class:</b> What ? <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 10 - Drafting Documents for Transactional Practice</i></p>	<p><b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 11 - Briefs, Pleadings and Motions</i></p>
<p><b>Week 12:</b> 11/6/2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forms</li> </ul>		<p><b>In Class:</b> Drafting Documents Using Either ProDoc, Oconnor's online, forms manual, or Lexis Forms</p>	<p><b>Assignment 5 Due</b> <b>Lexis Learn:</b> <i>Module 10 - Drafting Documents for Transactional Practice</i></p>
<p><b>Week 13:</b> 11/13/2017</p> <p><b>EXAM REVIEW</b></p>	<p><b>EXAM REVIEW</b></p>	<p><b>EXAM REVIEW</b></p>	<p><b>EXAM REVIEW</b></p>
<p><b>Week 14:</b> 11/20/2017</p> <p><b>Happy Thanksgiving No Class</b></p> 			
<p><b>Week 15:</b> 11/27/2017</p>	<p><b>*** EXAMINATION during class (<i>Bluebook</i> allowed) ***</b></p> <p><b>&amp;</b></p> <p><b>*****Mandatory Post-test: Post-test opens: Monday, November 27 at 7:00 AM &amp; closes on Tuesday, November 28 at 5:00 PM. *****</b></p>		

\*\*\*\*\*All portions of this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.