Legal Writing and Drafting  
PLS 121W - 3 credits  
Doane College – Winter I Term  
October 25, 2012 to December 19, 2012

Description:  
A course focusing on the fundamentals of good writing and the effective use of English, both to inform and to persuade. Students develop these skills and apply them to the drafting of basic legal documents.

Location and Times:  
Doane College - Lincoln  
Thursdays, 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm

Instructor:  
Jason W. Hayes, Adjunct Professor  
Phone: (402) 304-9414  
E-mail: Jason@Hayes.org

Textbook Materials:  
Required:  
Hope Viner Samborn, Basic Legal Writing for Paralegals,  
Darby Dickerson, ALWD Citation Manual, a Professional System of Citation,  

Course Objectives:  
The student, after completing the course instruction should have a heightened awareness of the following subject materials:  
1. Practical techniques for writing to inform and persuade;  
2. Basic legal format for case citations and other legal sources;  
3. Writing with clarity and an organization structure; and,  
4. Format and draft basic legal documents according to court requirements.

Assessment of Student Performance and Grading:  
Students will be able to obtain a total of 300 points from assignments, discussions and examinations conducted during the course. The number of points that a student will be able to earn, is as follows:

Writing Assignments  250  
Class Participation  50
Summary of Examinations and Assignments:

Writing assignments will be assigned throughout the duration of the course that will test and refine the student’s legal writing skills. These assignments will vary from drafting a basic legal document, to the student preparing a legal memorandum.

Course Policies:

Attendance: Student attendance at all class meetings is expected. If a student will be unable to attend a class meeting, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor and perform any necessary makeup or additional assignments given to the student by the instructor. Students should obtain class notes from fellow classmates, and the absent student is responsible for all material covered on the day of the absence. Two or more unexcused absences may result in a failing grade.

Grading Scale: The grading scale is based on a nine point, A, B, C, D, F scale, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 – 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89 – 85</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 – 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79 – 75</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 – 70</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69 – 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64 – 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 – below</td>
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</tbody>
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Late Assignments: Assignments that are turned in late during the duration of the course prior to December 19, 2012 are downgraded by one letter grade. For each additional week the assignment is late, an additional letter grade is reduced off the original score given. All assignments must be completed and handed in by December 19, 2012 to receive any credit.

Academic Integrity: The College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests will represent your own work. Any use of others’ ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or the dean of graduate studies.

Format of Writings: All writing assignments to be completed outside of class should be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and using a font no larger than 12 pt. in Times New Roman, Arial or Courier. If you have any questions regarding this requirement please contact your instructor. Because this course is within the Paralegal Studies department, the format of writings is critical to the discipline.
Course Schedule and Readings:

Oct 25  Chapter 1.  Introduction to Legal Research  
          Chapter 2.  Legal Authorities and How to Use Them  
          Chapter 3.  Getting Ready to Write

Nov 1    No Class.

Nov 8    Chapter 4.  Clear Writing and Editing  
          Chapter 5.  Writing Basics  
          Chapter 6.  Case Briefing and Analysis  
          First Assignment Due.

Nov 15   Chapter 7.  The Legal Memorandum  
          Chapter 8.  Questions Presented and Conclusions or Brief Answers  
          Chapter 9.  Facts  
          Second Assignment Due.

Nov 22   No Class.

Nov 29   Chapter 10.  The IRAC Method  
          Chapter 11.  Synthesizing Cases and Authorities  
          Third Assignment Due.

Dec 6    No Class.

Dec 13   Chapter 12.  Outlining and Organizing a Memorandum  
          Chapter 13.  Persuasive Writing  
          Chapter 14.  In-House and Objective Client Documents

Dec 20   Chapter 15.  Letter Writing  
          Fourth Assignment Due.