

LGST 103
Legal Research & Writing I
3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County
Common Course Outline

Description

LGST 103 – Legal Research & Writing I: enables students to identify legal issues and generate a research strategy to solve them. Students locate and use primary and secondary legal sources, perform legal research, and validate legal sources. Students apply research findings to hypothetical fact situations to reach legal conclusions. Students also learn legal citation methods for primary and secondary authority.

Pre-requisites: ACLT 053 or (ESOL 052 and ESOL 100)

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. explain the purpose of legal research and its general use;
2. identify tone, required format, and structure of a specific legal writing task based on the audience of the work product;
3. explain the structure and organization of a legal opinion including majority, concurring, and dissenting opinions, and the importance of the procedural posture of the case on the court decision;
4. identify the source, location, organization, and use of various legal authorities;
5. identify the processes by which various sources of law are updated and revised;
6. distinguish between primary, secondary, mandatory, and persuasive legal authorities;
7. utilize computerized legal resources to properly update and validate primary legal authority;
8. analyze basic legal problems by identifying and applying the appropriate legal resources;
9. utilize appropriate computer software in the drafting of documents commonly used in the practice of law;
10. utilize appropriate computer software in conducting accurate and complete legal research;
11. prepare an inter-office memorandum analyzing legal issues with accurate use and citation to relevant legal authority; and
12. draft a legal case brief of a court opinion.

Major Topics

I. Sources of Legal Authority

The Common Course Outline (CCO) determines the essential nature of each course.
For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

- a. Primary Authority
 - b. Secondary Authority
- II. Citation of Legal Authority
- III. Validation of Legal Authority
 - a. Case Law
 - b. Statutory Law
- IV. Legal Analysis
- V. Legal Research
- VI. Legal Writing
- VII. Appropriate Legal Technologies

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- four written case briefs
- five research assignments
- one written memorandum of law analyzing and applying relevant legal authority to a fictional client scenario
- three written assignments on legal citation
- one assessment of legal research skills, such as Lexis Paralegal Student mastery series

Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

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