LIS5417 – Introduction to Legal Resources
SECTION(S)
TERM 20XX, COURSE MEETING DAY/TIME, COURSE MEETING LOCATION
MODE OF INSTRUCTION:

Instructor:
Email:
Office:
Phone:
Course Location/Website:
Office Hours (in office, online or via phone):
Teaching Assistant:
Email:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Students are introduced to legal resources and their use for legal research. Upon completion of this course, the student will understand how legal information is organized and structured, and be able to retrieve laws and regulations from many sources. This course is designed to enable a student to function effectively as an information management professional in any type of legal setting, including a law library.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
At the end of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Locate pertinent materials of both a law and law-related nature, and recognize their importance and relevance to the issue at hand;
2. Understand the relationships among branches and levels of governance in terms of both the substance and procedural aspects of law;
3. Develop a thorough understanding of the processes by which law is created and applied to a given problem or situation;
4. Demonstrate some knowledge of the legal professions and the public to appropriately address the legal information needs of the population being served;
5. Develop a working vocabulary of legal terminology, and a facility with legal citation and abbreviations;
6. Develop knowledge of the literature of the law in its various formats; and
7. Facilitate the use and dissemination of information in ways that are both ethical and legal, and in keeping with generally accepted professional standards and practices.

COURSE MATERIALS:

- Stephen Elias & Susan Levinkind, Legal Research: How to Find & Understand the Law. 14th edition.
- Other free/open websites and materials to be made available by the professor.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:
- **Discussions**, as described below
- **Tests and Quizzes** that will will be administered via the course website. These will consist of easily administered/graded question types, such as true/false, multiple choice, and fill- in-the-blanks.

The course will be a mix of lectures, class discussion, and periodic assignments to measure comprehension. I will provide a framework for understanding the readings at the beginning of each section, and I will discuss the key concepts and terms that are important to understand. All students will meet in the Elluminate chat room for the first hour. In the second hour, students will retreat to their Blackboard team rooms where they will: (1) Discuss the weeks readings, (2) discuss the practice questions given.

For your second hour of group work, each team will select a leader on a rotating basis. Each team leader will be responsible for starting the recording function in the team's chat room. Other members should remind the team leader if s/he forgets. This is a good area in which to discuss the quizzes and your individual experiences answering them. Also, you can use this space (in addition to the teams discussion board and the general discussion board) to discuss the end of chapter exercises in the textbook, as well as any Questions for Discussion. If there are non-textbook readings (all of which will be available online), then each team should also be prepared to discuss this reading as well.

Finally, each team leader should post their answers to the Blackboard discussion board as a REPLY to my question, NOT as a new thread. Team members should not read or consult other team's answers before posting their own.
For the first few weeks, Class Discussions will not be graded, but they will be evaluated and given feedback. After that, Class Discussions will be graded pass/fail, in order to stimulate interesting conversation.

GRADE CALCULATION:

Class Participation/Discussions	40%
First Quiz	10%
Second Quiz	10%
Final Test	40%
Total	**100%**

GRADING SCALE:
A 93 - 100
A- 90 – 92
B+ 87 – 89
B 83 – 86
B- 80 – 82
C+ 77 – 79

C 73 – 76
C- 70 – 72
D+ 67 – 69
D 63 – 66
D- 60 – 62
F 0 – 59

Weekly Schedule (Please note, the following schedule and readings are subject to change.)

1. Introduction
2. Overview of Law
3. Overview of Legal Research
4. Case Reporters
5. Understanding Case Law
6. Finding Case Law
7. Confirming Case Law
8. FIRST QUIZ; Legislative Information and Statutory Law
9. Statutory Law Continued
10. Regulations
11. SECOND QUIZ
12. Secondary Legal Resources
13. Secondary Legal Resources Continued
14. Legal Research Online: Westlaw, Lexis-Nexis, and the Internet
15. Final Test Review

Copyright Statement:
Some of the materials in this course are possibly copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for instructional activities associated with, and for the duration of, the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the *Technology, Education, And Copyright Harmonization* (TEACH) Act (refer to the 3/7/2001 TEACH Act at www.copyright.gov/legislation/archive/).

Sexual Harassment Policy:
It is the policy of the University that its employees and students neither commit nor condone sexual harassment in any form. http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/university_notices.htm

iSchool Hardware and Software Requirements:
A list of all hardware and software requirements for students participating in the School of Information (iSchool) courses can be found at the following location:
http://ischool.cci.fsu.edu/academics/online/requirements/

Student Eligibility for an Incomplete Grade:
Incomplete ("I") grades will not be assigned, except in the case of exceptional unforeseen circumstances that occur within the last three weeks of the semester and your work has otherwise been satisfactory (C average).

University Attendance Policy:
Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy:
The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy.)

Americans With Disabilities Act:
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:
(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
(2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.
This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

Syllabus Change Policy
"Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice."