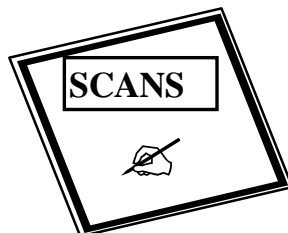




**HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
HOUSTON, TEXAS**

LEGAL RESEARCH

POFL 2305



SCANS COMPETENCIES INCORPORATED
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME (CO)

**HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COURSE SYLLABUS**

LEGAL RESEARCH- POFL 2305

(Computerized Version)



**SCANS Competencies Included
SEMESTER:**

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Instructor:</i> | | <i>CRN:</i> |
| <i>Phone:</i> | <i>Fax:</i> | <i>Time:</i> |
| <i>Office Hours:</i> | | <i>Sem/yr:</i> |

FINAL EXAM:

LAST DAY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE & STUDENT WITHDRAWALS:

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to guide paralegal students through the entire writing process--from the beginning stages to the final product and fundamental concepts and procedures of civil litigation with emphasis on the Paralegal's role. Exploration of legal issues utilizing current and emerging research techniques.

COURSE GOALS

- A) The student will be introduced to the main systems of U. S. governance.
- B) The student will introduced to questions presented, issues, brief answers and conclusions and the process for drafting documents, such as letters, memos, reports, etc.
- C) The student will demonstrate his ability to develop persuasive writing techniques and formatting skills about a variety of documents that they may write as paralegals with 70% minimum accuracy rate.

TEXT MATERIAL

BASIC LEGAL WRITING FOR PARALEGALS by Hope Viner Samborn and Andrea B. Yelin, 2nd Edition, Aspen Law & Business (Formerly published by Little, Brown & Company).
ISBN# 0-7355-0619-1

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME (CO)

- Students will exhibit the basics of the legal system for use of brief cases, outline and organize legal memorandum, questions presented or conclusion/or brief answers, and the IRAC method by writing a persuasive writings using research methods.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

Uniform System of Citation, Sixteenth Edition

Leslie, Louis A. And Kenneth B. Coffin. Handbook for the Legal Secretary. New York, New York: Gregg Division/MacGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968/

Kurtz, Margaret A., Dorothy Adams, and Jeanette Vezeau. 10,000 Legal Words. New York, New York: Gregg Division/McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971.

Texas Rules of Civil Procedure
Texas Government Code
Federal Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure

INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA

And True Presentment Make, J. J. D. Productions, Houston, TX.

Filing Procedures in Business (2nd ed.), Coronet Films, 65 East South Water Street Coronet Building, Chicago, IL 60601.

HCCS POLICIES

Students are responsible for adhering to and following College policies. The Student Handbook is an excellent source of information for the student concerning these policies. The link for the student handbook is located at <http://www.hccs.edu/students/handbook/HandbookHome2.html>

Students should familiarize themselves concerning class attendance, withdrawals, scholastic dishonesty, and college services.

STUDENT INFORMATION

A student handbook is available on the College website: <http://www.hccs.edu>. Look under the student subheading to get detailed information concerning students attending Houston Community College System (HCCS). Data such as withdrawal policies, refund policies, incomplete, late assignments, make-ups, extra credit, grading system, attendance requirements, and other details are included in the student handbook.

ADA POLICY STATEMENT

"Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at their respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office."

For questions, contact Dr. Becky Hauri at 713-718-7909. Also, visit the ADA web site at: <http://www.hccs.edu/students/disability/index.htm>

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled regularly. Class attendance is the responsibility of the student. It is also the responsibility of the student to consult with the instructor regarding an absence from a class. Class attendance is checked regularly by the instructor. A student may miss 12.5% of total class hours. ***Reports of excessive absence will be sent to the Veterans Administration, Social Security Office, and other agencies responsible for aid to the student when appropriate.***

DROP OR WITHDRAWAL POLICIES

A student may drop a course or withdraw from the college by following the procedure outlined by the Campus Director. Should circumstances prevent a student from appearing in person to withdraw, withdrawal may be completed by writing to the Registrar's Office. A drop or withdrawal request will not be accepted by telephone. A student who ceases to attend a class without officially dropping or withdrawing, will be given a grade of "F" for non-attendance. A semester-hour student who fails to attend classes by the twelfth class day of a regular term will be administratively withdrawn from the class roll. Students who officially withdraw from a course during the first twelve days of a regular term will not receive a grade and the course will not appear in their permanent records. Students withdrawing from a course after this period and prior to the deadline designated in the college calendar will receive a "W". A student may not withdraw from a course during the last two weeks prior to the final examination period.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty can result in a grade of **F** or **0** for the particular test or assignment involved, dropped, and/or expelled from HCCS. Please refer to the HCCS Student Handbook for further information regarding Academic Dishonesty.

MAKE-UP TEST/LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Assignments submitted later than the due date will not be accepted, unless the instructor is notified in advance, or with prior approval from instructor to take the make-up test or late project. All make-up tests and projects are subject to be changed from the original exam or project given.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS and MAKE-UP TEST POLICY

Students are expected to adhere to the weekly schedule of assignments printed in the course syllabus. Late assignments and make-up assignments will only be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. All assignments for each level are due at the end of the level assignments.

REPEATER POLICY

NOTICE: Students who take a course for the third time or more will face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your professor/counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test-taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available.

DEGREE PLAN

Students are encouraged to file a degree plan with a Counselor or the Business Technology Department for the certificate and/or degree plan. Please ask your instructor for Degree Plan information or contact the Business Technology Department at 713-718-7808 for information about filing a degree plan.

Job Connections Online Placement Services: <http://jobs.hccs.edu/>

Students and Alumni of the Houston Community College System can post resumes and search jobs online. Registration is free.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

HCCS Grading System

The Houston Community College grading system will be used to evaluate students' performance in this course.

| Grade | Score |
|--------------|--------------|
| A-Excellent | 90-100 |
| B-Good | 80-89 |
| C-Fair | 70-79 |
| D-Passing | 60-69 |
| F-Failure | 0-59 |

The following grading system will be used to evaluate your performance in this course.

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>Exams</i> | 50% |
| <i>Homework and Written Assignments</i> REPORTS RESEARCH ON CURRENT LAW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES | 35% |

| | |
|---|-----|
| <i>Attendance and Class Participation</i> FIELDS TRIPS TO LAW MAKING FACILITIES AND COURTS VIDEOS ON CORRESPONDING CHAPTERS | 15% |
|---|-----|

NOTICE:



Assignments/Exams/Final must be turned in to the instructor only, on the specified due dates.



Assignments/Exams/Final will not be accepted if turned in to other HCC faculty/staff members. Please see instructor if emergency arrangements must be made.



This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs.

NOTE TO STUDENT: If you have any questions or concerns about the course and/or course assignments, please come to me so that we can resolve any issues. If your concerns are not resolved, you are encouraged to meet with my supervisor, Ms. Willie Caldwell, Department Chair, at 713-718-7808 or Room E-119 Scarcella Building or willie.caldwell@hccs.edu

LEGAL RESEARCH - POFL 2305

POFL 2305

FINAL GRADE will include testing or researching on the following:

Civil laws and terminology (See Instructor)

Criminal laws and terminology (See Instructor)

Researching and correcting a legal citation

Project or Exercise on

- Discovery procedures
- Trial procedures
- Appellate processes and procedures
- Duties of a paralegal
- Duties of a legal secretary

Instructor: _____

**POFL 2305
ASSIGNMENT CALENDAR**

| WEEK | ACTIVITIES |
|-------------|---|
| 1 | Orientation <i>Text Chapters 1-3, 5</i> Introduction to Legal Writing Review of the Legal System, Research Techniques and Resources and Case Briefing Assignment: Case Briefs |
| 2 | <i>Chapters 5 and the Appendix</i> Citation and Case Briefing In-Class Citation Exercise |
| 3 | <i>Text Chapters 6-8</i> Overview of Legal Memoranda, Drafting Facts Statement, Conclusions and Issues Due: Case Briefs. Review Case Briefs Assignment: Case Briefs and Facts, Issues and Conclusions I and Citation Exercises |
| 4 | <i>Text Chapter 6-8</i> Review Facts, Issues and Conclusions Due: Facts I and case briefs Assignment: Facts I rewrite |
| | |
| 5 | <i>Text Chapters 9-10</i> Discussion and Analysis of Legal Problems in Written Memoranda organization, synthesis, application of law to facts, conclusion, IRAC Due: Facts I rewrite, case briefs Assignment: Facts 2 burglary, issues and conclusion |
| 6 | <i>Text Chapters 11 and Review of Other Chapters</i> Outlining and Organization Due: Facts 2 and issues and conclusion Assignment: Closed Memo Outline and Burglary Discussion |
| 7 | <i>Chapter 12 and Review of Other Chapters</i> Synthesis, Persuasive Writing and Review of Facts II Due: Burglary Discussion and Closed Memo Outline Assignment: Closed Memo 1 st Draft and Burglary Facts 2 Rewrite |
| 8 | Discuss Facts II, burglary Discussions and outlines, synthesis Due: Burglary Facts 2 rewrite Assignment: Burglary Discussion Rewrite and 1 st Draft Closed Memo |
| | |
| 9 | Synthesis, Organization, Outlining and Persuasive Writing Due: Closed Memo 1 st Draft and Burglary Discussion Rewrite Assignment: Final Memo (Outline due at class 10) |
| 10 | Review Closed Memos and Burglary Discussion Rewrites Due: Outline for Final Memo Assignment: Rewrite Closed Memo |
| 11 | <i>Text Chapters 11 and 13</i> |

| | |
|----|---|
| | Discuss Outlines, Organization and In-House Client Documents Due: Closed Memo Rewrite Assignment: Final and Deposition abstract and meeting summary |
| 12 | Review and Chapters 14 Discuss Closed Memo rewrite. Letter Writing Due: 1 st Draft of Final and deposition abstract and meeting summary Assignment: Final and Letter Writing Exercises |
| 13 | Text Chapter 4 Writing Fundamentals, Grammar, Clarity, Sentence Structure, Paragraphs, Active Voice, and Review 1 st Drafts of Finals Assignment: Final and grammar project |
| 14 | Text Chapter 14 Fundamentals continued. Review of Letter Writing Due: Final Rewrite Assignment: Letter Writing Assignment |
| 15 | Review for Final Due :Letter Writing |
| 16 | FINAL EXAM |



**HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

Student Questionnaire

| | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Last Name | First Name | MI | Social Security # |
| Address: | Street | Apt. # | Home Telephone | |
| City | State | Zip Code | Cell Telephone # | |
| E-mail address: | | | | |

Educational Plan

Have you determined your major? _____ Yes No _____

Have you filed a degree plan? _____ Yes No _____ (If no, please see your instructor or Business Technology Department Chair.)

Graduation Target Date: _____

(Must apply for graduation via the counselor's office in order to receive your certificate or degree)

Employment History

Are you currently employed? _____ Yes No _____

Is your employment _____ Part-time? or _____ Full-time?

If you are employed, please complete the following:

Employer _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____ Phone# _____

Comments:

If you have any questions, please call 713-718-7808, or Fax 713-718-6774 between 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

HCC seeks to provide equal educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Willie T. Caldwell, Department Chair
10141 Cash Road, N-109, Stafford Texas 77477



Student Success Organizational Stewardship Business Technology Department

STUDENT ADVISEMENT CHECKSHEET

When teaching Business Technology courses, it is a **requirement** for the professor to inventory and complete the below list of advisement items from each student.

Have you been informed about **degree plans** (contractual agreement)?

Yes No

Have you been made aware of the importance of completing an application for **graduation** in order to receive your certificate or degree? Yes No

Have you been given **job placement** information including:

- Job Placement Contact Person with
 - E-mail address
 - Telephone Number
 - Location
- Website address
 - Access instruction for website including directions on how to navigate the job placement website

Yes No

Name _____

Print "your" Name

I, _____, have been given

Student Signature

Information regarding the above listed items.

Date _____

Instructor Signature _____

This form will be returned to Willie Caldwell's office on date of completion.

LECTURE/LAB TEACHING DEMONSTRATION

CLASS/CAMPUS:

When teaching lecture/lab course, it is a requirement for the instructor to incorporate lab assignments while lecturing.

A GLANCE AT *THIS* COMPUTER (Example)

1. What is a CPU _____
On-off buttons—(demonstrate) Start vs Reset
Student Response _____ Student
Signature
2. Drives on this computer:
3 ½ inch disk (demonstrate disk) and/or USB Flash drive
CD Rom (demonstrate) Zip Drive (demonstrate)
Student Response _____ Student
Signature
3. Desktop (personally their desktop while on that computer)
⇒ If projects are stored on the desktop of the computer in the
classrooms and/or HCC open labs, those documents are erased at
the end of each day.

Name _____
Print "your" Name

I, _____, have been given
Student Signature

instructions on the use of "this" computer. *I was provided instruction in both the lecture and lab formats.*

Date _____

Instructor Signature _____

This form will be returned to Willie Caldwell's office, Scarcella Room N-109 or MC1638 on date of completion of all lecture/lab classes for the semester.

STATEMENT OF WORKPLACE AND FOUNDATION COMPETENCIES

Houston Community College is determined to prepare you with the knowledge and skill you need to succeed in today's dynamic work environment. Towards this end, the following workplace competencies and foundation skills have been designed into the curriculum for **POFL-2305—Legal Research**.

COMMON WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES

Manage Resources: Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources

Students in POFL-2305--Legal Research have to be able to appropriately allocate their time in order to complete class assignments in a timely fashion. They must be able to budget their time and perform class-related activities through a ranking process which allows them to meet self-determined goals.

Interpersonal: Works with others

Students in POFL-2305—Legal Research at times work together in groups. Many times these groups are randomly selected, thus giving the students an opportunity to interact with different types of students. Students must learn to use leadership skills, learning skills, negotiating skills, and evaluating skills as they work together to accomplish common goals.

Information: Acquires and uses information

Students in POFL-2305—Legal Research must acquire the proper information in order to successfully complete the course. Sources include classroom lectures, the text, the Internet, and reference books available in the classroom. Most importantly, students must use computers to process this information and to perform various tasks.

Technology: Works with a variety of technologies

Students in POFL-2305—Legal Research must apply technology to specific tasks, determining what application to use to obtain a specific outcome.

FOUNDATION SKILLS

Students in POFL-2305—Legal Research must demonstrate basic skills: read, write, listen and speak. The student must learn to locate, understand, and interpret written information in documents such as manuals graphs and schedules.

Students in POFL-2305—Legal Research must demonstrate thinking skills: think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualize, know how to learn, and reason.

Students in POFL-2305—Legal Research must also demonstrate personal qualities: display responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity and honesty.

EFFECTIVE JOB PERFORMANCE: *The Skills Employers Want*

FIVE COMPETENCIES

Resources: Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources

- A. *Time*—Selects good relevant activities, ranks them, allocates time, and prepares and follows schedules
- B. *Money*—Uses or prepares budgets, makes forecasts, keeps records, and makes adjustments to meet objectives
- C. *Material and Facilities*—Acquires, stores, allocates, and uses materials or space efficiently
- D. *Human Resources*—Assesses skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance and provides feedback

Interpersonal: Works with others

- A. *Participates as Member of a Team*—contributes to group effort
- B. *Teaches Others New Skills*
- C. *Serves Clients/Customers*—works to satisfy customers' expectations
- D. *Exercises Leadership*—communicates ideas to justify position, persuades and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies
- E. *Negotiates*—Works toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolves divergent interests
- F. *Works with Diversity*—works well with men and women from diverse backgrounds.

Information: Acquires and uses information

- A. *Acquires and Evaluates Information*
- B. *Organizes and Maintains Information*
- C. *Interprets and Communicates Information*
- D. *Uses Computers to Process Information*

Systems: Understands complex inter-relationships

- A. *Understands Systems*—knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively with them
- B. *Monitors and Corrects performance*—distinguishes trends, predicts impacts on system operations, diagnoses deviations in systems' performance and corrects malfunctions
- C. *Improves or Designs Systems*—suggests modifications to existing systems and develops new or alternative systems to improve performance

Technology: Works with a variety of technologies

- A. *Selects Technology*—chooses procedures, tools or equipment including computers and related technologies
- B. *Applies Technology to Task*—understands overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment
- C. *Maintains and Troubleshoots Equipment*—prevents, identifies, or solves problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies

A THREE-PART FOUNDATION

Basic Skills: Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens and speaks

- A. *Reading*—locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules
- B. *Writing*—communicates thought, ideas, information, and messages in writing; and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts
- C. *Arithmetic/Mathematics*—performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- D. *Listening*—receives, attends, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues
- E. *Speaking*—organizes ideas and communicates orally

Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn, and reasons

- A. *Creative Thinking*—generates new ideas
- B. *Decision Making*—specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternatives
- C. *Problem Solving*—Recognizes problems and devises and implements plan of action
- D. *Seeing Things in the Mind's Eye*—organizes, and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information
- E. *Knowing How to Learn*—uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills
- F. *Reasoning*—discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it when solving a problem

Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity and honesty

- A. *Responsibility*—exerts a high level of effort and perseveres towards goal attainment
- B. *Self-Esteem*—believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self
- C. *Sociability*—demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in-group settings.
- D. *Self-Management*—assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress, and exhibits self-control
- E. *Integrity/Honesty*—chooses ethical courses of action

