

To: Incoming UB Law Students  
From: Prof. Pamela Newell  
Date: August 2023  
Re: Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research Course

Welcome to UB Law! I'm looking forward to meeting you at our first Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research ("LAWR") class on Tuesday, August 22. Before our first class, please do the following:

**1. Purchase the required books for the course:**

- Christine Coughlin et al., *A Lawyer Writes* (3d ed. 2018)
- Richard Wydick & Amy Sloan, *Plain English for Lawyers* (6th ed. 2019)
- *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (21st ed. 2020)
- Pamela Newell & Timothy Peterkin, *The Journey to Excellence in Legal Writing* (2011)
- *Interactive Citation Workbook for The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (2023 ed.)
- Any thesaurus
- Any legal dictionary

These books are available at the North Campus Bookstore or from other retailers. Please ensure that you have purchased the correct editions, and please be aware that counterfeit versions of *The Bluebook* sometimes circulate and may contain errors. Paper copies of these texts are on reserve at our law library for you to review.

Alternatively, you may choose to use the UB Law Library's free e-book versions of *A Lawyer Writes* and *Plain English for Lawyers*. I will post the links to these resources on our UB Brightspace course page. While the library does not offer an e-book format of *The Bluebook*, you can purchase an online subscription at <http://www.legalbluebook.com>. However, since many students use *The Bluebook* throughout law school and as practicing lawyers, I recommend purchasing a paper copy rather than a time-limited online subscription.

As you decide whether to buy, rent, or borrow these books, please note that all three will be useful to you throughout your legal career. We will be using *Plain English*

*for Lawyers* and *The Bluebook* during the bridge/spring semesters as well. *A Lawyer Writes* will continue to be a helpful reference, even though I will assign a different primary text next semester.

## **2. Enroll in Core Grammar for Lawyers (“CGL”).**

We will be using an online program throughout the semester to teach and practice grammar. Please follow these instructions to enroll in the program, making sure to use the discount code provided. I will provide more information about how we will use CGL in the syllabus and in class.

### *Core Grammar for Lawyers*

- i. Go to <https://coregrammar.com/getcgl>.
- ii. Complete the form, selecting “NY” for your state and “University at Buffalo School of Law” for your school.
- iii. On the payment page, enter “BUFF2023” in the Access Code field. Your discounted price will appear immediately.
- iv. Enter your credit card information, verify the purchase, and continue to create your CGL account.

## **3. Take the Core Grammar for Lawyers Pre-Test.**

Once you’ve enrolled in Core Grammar for Lawyers, log into your account and click on your Bookshelf. At the top you will see the Pre-Test. You must complete the Pre-Test by Monday, August 28. You should allot approximately one hour to take the test, though of course this will vary.

Completing the Pre-Test is a required component of your course grade, but the test itself is not individually graded. Rather, it is designed to evaluate your grammar skills at the outset of the semester and to focus your attention on the areas you most need to improve. As you’ll see in the syllabus, you will be required to complete the CGL lessons throughout the semester and conclude by taking the Post-Test (which will be graded). You may test out of certain lessons depending on your performance on the Pre-Test. Please note that some questions on the Pre-Test are specific to legal citation methods that you may not yet be familiar with; not to worry, we will spend class time learning these concepts. In short, please just try your best on the Pre-Test.

## **4. Review the syllabus.**

I will post our fall syllabus on UB Brightspace under Course Information a few days before orientation begins. We will discuss the syllabus during our first class, when I’ll provide you with paper copies.

## **5. Read the materials assigned for the first day of class.**

Before our first class on August 22, please read the Introduction and Chapter 1 in *A Lawyer Writes*, as well as the two articles that have been posted along with this letter: “Putting Law School Into Practice” and “Ten Tips for Transitioning to Legal Writing.” Also, please see our UB Brightspace site for other helpful articles in the Course Documents folder. I suggest that you look at these materials before school begins or early in the semester. I will continue to add resources to our UB Brightspace site throughout the semester.

#### **6. Prepare your first writing assignment.**

Finally, please write an informal introductory essay and email it to me ([pjnewell@buffalo.edu](mailto:pjnewell@buffalo.edu)) in the text of the email, rather than as an attachment, by Monday, August 21. Please include the following information, in any order that you wish:

- Name (including preferred first name, if different from UB enrollment name, and pronouns, if you’d like)
- Hometown
- Undergraduate/other educational information (including institution and degree/major)
- Why you chose to go to law school and become a lawyer, and why you chose UB specifically
- Possible career goals
- Your view of your strengths and weaknesses as a writer
- What you hope to learn in this course
- Anything else you think I should know at the outset of the semester

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me at [pjnewell@buffalo.edu](mailto:pjnewell@buffalo.edu). I’m looking forward to meeting you on August 22!