

LAW B597A – WJELP Journal Seminar

SYLLABUS

Wednesdays, 5:30-6:20 [Three nights in the autumn quarter only; **STARTS OCT 7**]

WINTER: NO CLASSES; WRITING AND INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS ONLY

Professor: Todd A. Wildermuth

Office Hours: by appointment

Textbook:

No textbook is required for this class. All necessary materials will be available on Canvas. I cautiously recommend Eugene Volokh's book *Academic Legal Writing: Law Review Articles, Student Notes, Seminar Papers, and Getting on Law Review*, in either its 4th (2010) or 5th (2016) edition. We will discuss this book and you are welcome to decide at that point if you would like to supplement the course materials with Volokh's printed advice.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

This seminar is designed to support second-year law students who are writing articles for WJELP. This is a graded course with multiple assignments.

Writing an article for the journal gives students an opportunity to think critically about the current laws, ponder future developments, and consider the implications for the practice of law. **Writing at this level is inherently challenging and, for many, an entirely new experience.** In the process, though, students improve their writing, legal analysis, and understanding of the law and its application. The seminar focuses on topic selection, research, and drafting.

Specific learning outcomes for this course are:

- Awareness of – and dexterity in searching – high-quality, accurate, and balanced sources of legal information regarding current developments in federal and state environmental law;
- Ability to discern advocacy-oriented environmental information from descriptive environmental information, and the dexterity to make fair use of all materials in analytical legal writing through proper qualification and contextualizing;
- Capacity to identify a novel and relevant legal issue in environmental law, through formal pre-emption checks as well as a broad consideration of the needs of the legal community and the audiences that might be informed by it;
- Formulation of a concise argument containing both descriptive and prescriptive claims;
- Ability to support all claims with ample evidence, considering logical counterarguments, alternative viewpoints, and adequate treatment of previously published work;
- Improved ability to critically evaluate prior drafts of one's own writing, to constructively comment on the writing of peers, and to effectively manage external comments on a piece of writing; and,
- Develop a complete first draft of a law-review note or comment conforming with professional standards for clarity, substantive content, and format.

Course Structure and Grading:

The seminar will include lecture and discussion, incremental writing targets, and frequent individual conferences to help students develop their articles. Students will be evaluated on the basis of the assignments listed below. All written assignments must be turned in via Canvas by the appropriate date and time. Assignments will be evaluated on timely submission, completeness, and a good faith effort to make progress. Successful students will turn in assignments on time, demonstrate vigorous intellectual engagement, and actively participate in class sessions.

There is no One Right Way to complete each step of this course, but I have provided a guideline so you know about what each step should look like. The "Model Answer Materials" are available as a folder in the "Files" section of this Canvas website. Each progressive step in this class has an associated sample in that model answer folder. You should try to work each step to the quality in that example as best you are able.

Seminar grading is not subject to the mandatory curve. A single, shared grade for both quarters will be recorded after Winter Quarter.

- Class Participation (Autumn) -- 5 points
- Whirlybird and Abstract (Autumn) -- 5 points
- Annotated Outline (Autumn) -- 5 points
- Complete Intro and Advanced Outline (Autumn) -- 5 points
- Partial Draft 2 (Winter) -- 5 points
- Partial Draft 3 (Winter) -- 5 points
- Peer Feedback Memo (Winter) -- 10 points
- Complete First Draft (Winter) -- 10 points
- **TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS -- 50 points**

Disability-Related Needs:

I want everyone to succeed in this course and appreciate diverse learning styles. Please do not hesitate to schedule an appointment with me if, on any basis, you would like to discuss ways I could help improve your learning in this course.

If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 011 Mary Gates Hall or 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions.

Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

UW Religious Accommodation Policy:

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy \(https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form \(https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/).

Law School Attendance Policy:

I will take attendance for the three class sessions. Under changes to ABA Accreditation Standard 304, adopted in August 2004, a law school shall require regular and punctual class attendance.

At any time after the fifth week of a course (halfway through a summer session course), a student who has been determined by the instructor to have attended fewer than 80 percent of the class sessions in any course will be required to drop the course from his or her registration upon the instructor's so indicating to the Academic Services Office.

An instructor may also impose stricter attendance standards or other sanctions for nonattendance, including lowering of a grade, provided that students are informed at the start of the course of the instructor's attendance rules and possible sanctions.

Course Evaluation:

As this is a continuing course over two quarters, course evaluations are open online during the last week of classes in the Winter quarter.

Course Schedule:

Class Meeting	Topic	Read for This Class
Wednesday, 7 Oct	<i>Beginning to Get Ready to Get Started to Do Something</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read an environmental law law review article of your choice. • Be prepared to summarize it for the class. • Be prepared to present a tentative topic for your own paper.
Wednesday, 14 Oct	<i>Making a Claim: Description, Prescription, and Their Magical Combination</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read Eugene Volokh, "The initial step." (Links to an external site.) pp. 9-12 • Identify the major claims of each type in three examples:

Class Meeting Topic

Read for This Class

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o o Goodbye Family Farms... (Links to an external site.) o o The Gap-Filling Role... o o The Marcellus Shale...
<p>Wednesday, 21 Oct</p>	<p><i>Linear Thinking and its Alternatives: Developing a Structure and Writing an Abstract</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRING TO CLASS your one-sentence thesis and be prepared to discuss its descriptive and prescriptive elements. • Bryan Garner on the whirlybird, available on Canvas • Strunk and White on a “suitable design,” (Links to an external site.) rule #12 • UNC Writing Center on abstracts (Links to an external site.)

WHIRLYBIRD AND ABSTRACT DUE

<p>Wednesday, 28 Oct</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT DUE IN LIEU OF CLASS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract-writing exercise available on Canvas
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<p>Sunday, 8 Nov [originally: Wednesday, 4 Nov; changed on 2 Nov]</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT DUE IN LIEU OF CLASS</p>
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ANNOTATED OUTLINE DUE

<p>Wednesday, 11 Nov THROUGH Wednesday, 2 Dec</p>	<p>CONFERENCES IN LIEU OF CLASSES</p>	<p>[Individual conferences]</p>
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<p>Sunday, Jan 3, 2021 [Originally: Wednesday, 9 Dec (the last day of autumn classes;</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT DUE IN LIEU OF CLASS</p>
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COMPLETED INTRODUCTION AND PARTIAL FIRST DRAFT DUE

Class Meeting Topic

changed on 15 Nov]

Read for This Class

Sunday, Jan. 31

PARTIAL DRAFT #2 DUE

Sunday, Feb. 14

PEER FEEDBACK MEMO DUE

Sunday, Feb. 28

PARTIAL DRAFT #3 DUE

Friday, Mar. 19

COMPLETE FIRST DRAFT DUE