

Upper Level Legal Writing Requirement Rules and Standards

Amended April 10, 2007

The purpose of the Upper Level Writing Requirement is to have each student individually complete at least one rigorous extended piece of legal writing (in addition to those in RWA). Research, analytical, organizational, and other writing skills are important components in the preparation of any quality product of legal writing. The Upper Level Writing Requirement requires each student to demonstrate his or her ability to apply each of these skills in producing one substantial, cohesive piece of legal writing prior to graduating from law school.

A. Faculty to Review with Student the Upper Level Writing Requirement Rules and Standards

At the initial one-on-one consultation between the student and the faculty member described in section D(3)(b), below, the faculty member shall review with the student the Upper Level Writing Requirement rules and standards, including any additional standards the faculty member finds appropriate for the paper. Any additional standards required by the faculty member shall also be given to the student in writing and posted in the course registration materials.

B. Requirements for a Paper to Receive Upper Level Writing Credit

Faculty members shall certify that a paper satisfies the Upper Level Writing Requirement only if it meets the following standards, as well as any other standards that the faculty member finds appropriate for the paper:

1. The topic of the paper is appropriate for an extended piece of legal writing which requires application of research, analytical, organizational and other writing skills.
2. Factual, legal and other material in the paper are cited appropriately, according to the Blue Book, ALWD or other recognized legal citation system prescribed by the faculty member.
3. The student uses numbers and types of sources which the faculty member believes are appropriate to the nature and scope of the paper topic.
4. The paper demonstrates legal analytical skill and the application of that skill is appropriate to the nature and scope of the paper topic.
5. The paper is well organized, and demonstrates a grasp of grammar and other writing skills.
6. The paper is at least 20 standard pages in length, unless the faculty member determines that a shorter paper appropriately addresses the topic. A "standard" page will generally have (i) one inch margins, (ii) 12 point, Times New Roman font in the body, (iii) 10 point, Times New Roman font in footnotes, (iv) double-spacing in the body, and (v) single-spacing in the footnotes, or other formatting that the faculty member believes appropriate to the assignment and that is communicated to the student(s) at the beginning of the course.

C. Indicating that a Student has Satisfied the Upper Level Writing Requirement

When a student has written a paper which satisfies the Upper Level Writing Requirement, the supervising faculty member shall complete the Upper Level Writing Requirement Certification and submit it to the Registrar's Office together with the grade report for the course in which the paper is written. The Registrar shall indicate on the Law School Requirement Checklist that a student has fulfilled this requirement only if the faculty member teaching a course which qualifies for Upper Level Writing Requirement credit has included this certification in the grade report. No student will receive the Upper Level Writing Credit simply because the student received a grade of C- or above in a course which qualifies for this credit.

D. Courses, Including the Independent Study Course, in which the Upper Level Writing Requirement may be Met

1. No required course shall be eligible to meet the Upper Level Writing Requirement.
2. The Curriculum Committee shall be responsible for determining whether a course (other than a required course) meets the Upper Level Writing Requirement.
3. The Curriculum Committee shall apply the following standards in determining whether a course, including the Independent Study course, meets the Upper Level Writing Requirement.
 - a. The Upper Level Writing Requirement is satisfied by the completion of a paper, brief, casenote, or other piece of legal writing that meets the requirements for the writing requirement in section B above.
 - b. There must be meaningful one-on-one consultation between the student and the faculty member.
 - c. It is recommended (but not required) that the faculty member require that the student submit an outline of the writing project prior to commencing the first draft, which the faculty member should discuss with the student.
 - d. The student should be required to conduct at least one rewrite of the paper after critique by the faculty member.
 - e. The Upper Level Writing Requirement may be satisfied by successfully completing, in accordance with these guidelines: (i) a casenote of the UALR Law Review; (ii) a brief for the course of Advanced Appellate Advocacy; (iii) Independent Study; (iv) a paper for any class that has been approved by the Curriculum Committee as satisfying these standards; or (v) any other legal writing project undertaken in accordance with these standards in a course that does not otherwise meet the standards for satisfying the Upper Level Writing Requirement, so long as the supervising faculty member certifies that the paper meets the requirements of section B above.

- f. Any faculty member wishing to designate his or her class as one satisfying the Upper Level Writing Requirement must first obtain authorization from the Curriculum Committee. Authorization shall be given only if the Curriculum Committee determines that the writing requirements of the class meet the standards set out in section B above.

Upper Level Writing Requirement Certification

Semester: _____

Course Name: _____

Name of Faculty Member: _____

Student's Name: _____

I am taking this course to meet the Upper Level Writing Requirement.

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

This student's paper DID DID NOT

meet the standard for Upper Level Writing Requirement Credit.

Signature of Faculty Member: _____ Date: _____