

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

CO-301(L): WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINE OF LAW

Semester and Year

(This syllabus and course were designed from the advanced-level core upper-division writing requirement at a public university in the State of Colorado).

INSTRUCTOR:

EMAIL:

OFFICE HOURS & OFFICE LOCATION:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

CO301(L): Writing in the Discipline of Law expands your writing, analyzing and composing skills in specific academic, professional, public, and personal contexts specifically as it relates to legal reading and writing. We will use contemporary rhetorical theory to develop a more sophisticated understanding of effective communication as we read, write, discuss and compose various legal texts. As we proceed, we will explore multiple genres (types) of legal writing to evaluate the consequences of that language on the world around us.

We will examine and articulate the power of legal language: both to free and to confine depending on its use; we will aim to increase our ability to do the former and fight the latter throughout the semester. Writing is a powerful tool, never more so than when it is used to craft the rules by which we all must live.

We will explore nuances of various rhetorical situations and create legal texts and communications dedicated to various legal and lay audiences. We will review, analyze, and produce various legal texts and attempt to understand the appropriate implications of each audience we attempt to serve through our writing. This is a class dedicated to learning and producing language to advance social and legal change however you choose to do so going forward and the power of rhetoric and writing to strengthen your efforts.

If law school is in your future, this class will offer a preview of the type of material you are likely to encounter in: Constitutional and Criminal Law, Evidence, Trial Practice, Legal Ethics and Legal Writing. Civil procedure and civil litigation (outside of foundational Constitutional case law) will not be covered in depth.

EXPECTATIONS:

As a CO301(L) student you will write to annotate, reflect, inquire, respond, inform, and persuade. You will read, write, and advocate as citizens, scholars, and aspiring legal professionals. This material covered in class will sometimes cover controversial material, as these subjects tend to make the most impact on the legal world, and the world as a whole. We will cover case law and situations involving race/discrimination, immigration,

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

free speech and access to education, among others. If these topics, or the required class work and discussion, will make you uncomfortable to a level that you cannot participate meaningfully, another upper-division writing class would likely be a better fit.

You will be expected to participate in regular discussions on heated topics, to read, research, and writing on various issues. As a three-credit writing-and reading-intensive upper-division course, you can expect several hours per week of work (including class time). Texts, particular case law, rules of evidence and statutes (the laws themselves) are notoriously hard/time-consuming to read. Give yourself plenty of time to take notes/prepare before each class.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND TRANSFERRABLE CREDIT POLICY

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has approved CO301(L) for inclusion in the Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways program in the [GT-CO3] category. For transferring students, successful completion with a minimum C– grade guarantees transfer and application of credit in this GT Pathways category. For more information on the GT Pathways program, go to <http://highered.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/gtpathways/curriculum.html>.

CO301(L) ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING COMPETENCY AND CONTENT CRITERIA, as approved by the State of Colorado.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY—CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Competency in written communication is a student’s ability to write and express ideas across a variety of genres and styles. Written communication abilities develop over time through layered, interactive, and continual processes and experiences across the curriculum.

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs):

Students should be able to:

CO3 CONTENT CRITERIA:

1. EXTEND RHETORICAL KNOWLEDGE

- a. Use texts from rhetoric, discourse studies, communication, or related disciplines to extend understanding of rhetorical concepts to the discipline that is the focus of the course.
- b. Develop sophisticated strategies for critical analysis of disciplinary or specialized discourse.
- c. Learn more sophisticated ways to communicate knowledge to appropriate audiences.
- d. Apply reflective strategies to the synthesis, communication, and creation of knowledge.

2. EXTEND EXPERIENCE IN WRITING

- a. Hone recursive strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
- b. Critique one's own and other's work, including the work of professional writers and/or scholars.

3. EXTEND CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

- a. Reflect on the implications and consequences of context.
- b. Incorporate alternate, divergent or contradictory perspectives or ideas within one's own position.
- c. Extend and complicate the consequences of the stated conclusion.

4. USE SOURCES AND EVIDENCE

- a. Select, evaluate, and synthesize appropriate sources and evidence.
- b. Use discipline-appropriate criteria to evaluate sources and evidence.

5. EXTEND APPLICATION OF COMPOSING CONVENTIONS

- a. Select and adapt genre conventions including structure, paragraphing, tone, mechanics, syntax, and style for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
- b. Use specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation appropriately in more extensive or in-depth writing objects.

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

MATERIALS:

- Online Access: You must be able to download and edit documents on your computer and/or print documents regularly. You must actively read for this class – skimming/not taking notes is not an option. You are free to use whatever note-taking strategy you prefer but it must be consistent, reliable, and prepare you well.
- You should have access to a printer for readings and peer review materials.
- Highlighters in 5 colors: pink, orange, yellow, green and blue.
- Computer/Tablet with internet access and access to our class page. Please make sure your laptop is charged prior to class.
- A notebook for in-class work, homework, and handouts (please have the same spiral notebook/journal with you every day in class).
- A physical or digital copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.
- *There is no textbook assigned for this class, but you will have to print cases and have a place to organize and keep them.*
- *Readings and case law will be linked in the schedule/calendar or available on Canvas. Be sure to follow the prompts for notetaking instructions on each reading.*

Course Assignments/Breakdown of Grade	Percentage
Unit 1: Rhetorical Analysis of Legal Text	20%
Unit 2: Writing for an Academic Audience: Case Brief and Academic Article Abstract	20%
Unit 3: Legal Writing for a Lay Audience (Opinion Editorial)	20%
Final Extended Reflection and Mission Statement	20%
Process Work (class work/participation, homework, journals, discussions, peer review, conferences & attendance)	20%

Grades will be assigned at the end of the semester, according to the following grading scale: 97-100 = A+; 93-96 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 70-76 = C; 60-69 = D; 0-59 = F (There are no C-, D+, or D- in final grades).

You will need a D to pass the course, unless your major requires a higher grade. Check with your advisor, so you know what your major requires. Incompletes will not be given.

ABSENCES POLICY

Missing more than two weeks of our course will make successful completion difficult. Students who miss more than three weeks of class are encouraged to take this course during an alternate semester. If you have concerns about your ability to regularly attend class due to mental or physical well-being, please contact (insert University's Mental/Physical Health Resources/Accommodation Contact Here).

I value your contributions to our class and look forward to our time together. You will not receive credit for in-class activities if you miss class. No late work will be accepted if your absence is unexcused. If it is excused, please let me know so we can plan.

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

Missing more than two weeks of class will result in a 5% deduction from your process work grade per missed class. If you are late do not come to class and take one of your allowed absences. You must be on time to this course. It is distracting and disrespectful to class to arrive late consistently and will not be permitted.

COMING TO CLASS PREPARED (FACE-TO-FACE): This class will thrive on interaction between students; for you to thrive in this learning environment, you will need to participate to the fullest—regardless of the activity. We are in this learning together, and your presence matters. Being prepared not only positively affects the classroom community, but it allows you to encourage, support, and learn from each other. *Being prepared means that you have completed the assigned reading for the day, you bring materials required and you're ready to talk.* If you are not prepared to work, you cannot participate to the fullest, learn to the fullest, or contribute to the fullest. This is an in-person, face-to-face, class. Classes are not recorded for asynchronous engagement.

CANVAS AND CLASS COMMUNICATION

You will find our course materials on Canvas. This includes the syllabus, calendar, assignment prompts, campus resources, and additional readings. I recommend that you check Canvas every day to ensure you are prepared for class. All assignments, including homework, will be submitted and graded electronically through Canvas.

I will be using campus email to communicate with you throughout the semester, so be sure to check your CSU email frequently. I will answer brief, clarifying questions via email with 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends (although likely sooner). Questions that require discussion or a lengthy response should be asked in class or during office hours. Please allow 24 hours for an email response. Your email should include a specific subject line, an opening salutation (“Dear Ms. Smith”), context for your email, a closing with your name (“Thank You, James”), and practice using standard English conventions, as email correspondence is a rhetorical situation.

EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR PROCESS WORK

A key part of this class is writing to develop your ideas and then share them with others. To this end you will be expected to participate in a daily journal entry for class. It is essential that you bring the same notebook every day and that you thoughtfully complete your journal at the start of class. This key writing inside of class will prepare you for class discussion and let you think more about the work you have done outside of class.

WRITING RESOURCE: THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center is a resource that you can use at any time during your studies. When you visit the Writing Center—in person or virtually—you will work with peer consultants whose goal is to help you grow as a writer. Peer consultants can work with you at all stages of your writing process. Visit [the Writing Center](#) website to learn more and to schedule a consultation.

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

(Enter University specific guidelines here – Colorado State University’s are included here as an example)

The CSU Principles of Community are **inclusion, integrity, respect, service, and social justice**; these principles undergird the University’s mission, and I believe they should guide the interactions of all students, faculty, and staff—inside and outside the classroom. To that end, please:

- **Be inclusive** by welcoming all your peers of all identities, talents, and abilities as members of the CSU community.
- **Have integrity** by being accountable for your actions and acting ethically and honestly.
- **Be respectful** of all members of the CSU community by contributing to an environment where freedom of expression, critical discourse, and the advancement of knowledge are valued.
- **Engage in service** by giving your time, talents, and resources to promote one another’s well-being.
- **Support social justice** by treating others with fairness and equity and challenging prejudice.

To meet CSU’s Principles of Community, we must avoid shutting other people down, harassing language or body language, bullying or mobbing, or making disparaging remarks toward another’s culture, ethnic group, race, age, disability, gender identity, religion, and/or sexual orientation. We discuss and engage with difficult material in this class. I am confident you will all behave respectfully.

This is a class based on conversation and active engagement, if you are uncomfortable with those expectations, please find a better fit in another course. It should never be your intention to offend someone, and you should think before you speak but you are free to challenge ideas. With those things in mind, I highly encourage you to speak your mind in a respectful way. Do not be afraid to disagree with me or each other.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

We take academic integrity seriously. Academic integrity means that no one will use another’s work as their own, including some else’s ideas, someone else’s words, or someone else’s graphics. The course will adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. **The Student Code of Conduct defines plagiarism this way:**

“Plagiarism includes the copying of language, structure, images, ideas, or thoughts of another, and representing them as one’s own without proper acknowledgement; the failure to cite sources properly; sources must always be appropriately referenced, whether the source is printed, electronic, or spoken.”

***Highlighted Material** is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

If you plagiarize in your work, you could lose credit for the plagiarized work, fail the assignment, or fail the course. Plagiarism could result in expulsion from the university. Each instance of plagiarism, classroom cheating, and other types of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the principles in the **CSU General Catalog page explaining Students' Responsibilities**.

In cases of suspected academic dishonesty, **all instructors at CSU** are required to forward documentary evidence to the Director of Composition and the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services. The Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services will ensure due process and advise instructors regarding appropriate disposition of the case. If at any point you're uncertain whether or not you're incorporating the ideas and language of others correctly, ask me.

Honor Code Statement

Academic integrity means more than just avoiding plagiarism. It also involves doing your own reading and studying. It includes regular class attendance, careful consideration of all class materials, and engagement with the class and your fellow students.

Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Because academic integrity is so central to our mission as students, teachers, scholars, and citizens, we will ask you to write or type the CSU Honor Pledge ("I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance.") at the top of each major writing assignment.

Insert A.I. policy here: ****Use of AI, any chat service, or any other program used to create text/written work is a violation of the Honor Code, an act of Academic Dishonesty, and constitutes plagiarism for purposes of this course. Your words and ideas must be your own from start to finish and any outside ideas must be properly cited. ****

CSU'S STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, STALKING, AND RETALIATION POLICY

CSU's Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as "Responsible Employees." This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As "Responsible Employees," faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety. Any student who may be the

*Highlighted Material is intended as a tool for a potential instructor to see where they will most likely want to insert their own information.

victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:

- Emergency Response 911
- Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment (970) 491-1350
- Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency) (970) 491-6425

For counseling support and assistance, please see the [CSU Health Network](#) (970-491-7121), which includes a variety of counseling, medical, and support services. The [Sexual Assault Victim Assistance \(SAVA\) Team](#) (970-472-4200) is a 24-hour confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement and that can be of great help to students who have experienced sexual assault.

LEARNING SUPPORT AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with learning challenges who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the [Student Disability Center](#) (970-491-6385) as soon as possible to ensure accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Cell phones and headphones (of any kind), absent an emergency or accommodation, are not permitted to be turned on or used in class. If an extenuating circumstance exists, please tell me if you are expecting a call or text before class – then leave the room to take your call/send your text should it occur. Professionally, it is important you know how to silence your devices. Please communicate like the future respectful professionals you are. Laptops/tablets should not be used when we are not using them together for class.

Free Printing on Campus (List resources here)

CLOSING OBLIGATION: Your decision to remain in this course constitutes your agreement to abide by the policies and procedures listed in this syllabus. Please contact me in writing within our first week of class if you have any questions or concerns.