UMKC School of Law Fall Semester 2010

COURSE NAME: Advanced Legal Research & Writing: Scholarly Writing

COURSE NUMBER: Law 707E

PROFESSOR: Professors Hall, MacLachlan and Weddle,

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES:

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: Introduction to Law and Lawyering Processes


METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:

The course is graded on a credit/no credit basis based on the student’s preparation of a working draft of their scholarly writing as well as attendance and participation in the course. Students not currently participating in an R & W, law review comment, or written independent study should see the instructor prior to enrolling. Faculty supervising the R & W or independent study are responsible for reviewing and certifying the R & W and grading the independent study.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

Preparation of students for scholarly writing including independent study, law review, and seminar paper writing. Focus will be on topic identification and refinement; developing a thesis; research strategies including reiterative and mediated searching, systemic evaluation of resources, problem typing and solving, and resources for specific topics in the law; proper attribution and use of authority; developing a working draft; and creating a balanced, thorough, and carefully reasoned and supported analysis.
COURSE CONTENT:

1) The Nature of Legal Scholarship and Ways of Knowing
   a) Defining legal scholarship
   b) Identifying concerns about the task of writing a scholarly piece
   c) The writing process and scholarly writing
   d) The nature of research for legal scholarship
   e) Intro to TWEN and Research Resources
2) Choosing and Developing a Thesis
   a) Exploring possibilities
   b) Testing preliminary theses
   c) Effective methods for ongoing reflection, inquiry, and thesis refinement
3) Achieving the Characteristics of a Workable Thesis
4) Avoiding the Pitfalls of a Potentially Problematic Thesis
5) Refining Your Understanding and Your Thesis
   a) Achieving information literacy
   b) Expanding and refining your research strategy
   c) Recognizing and addressing problems in the thesis
6) Moving from Exploration of the Thesis to Writing Drafts of the Article
   a) The recursive process
   b) Prewriting techniques
   c) Ongoing research
   d) Organizing the draft
   e) Writing the Draft
   f) Revising and Refining the Article
7) Marketing the Article Beyond the Law School

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:

This course is not focused on writing briefs, contracts or even memorandum. Rather the course recognizes that the practice of law is an intellectual undertaking with a variety of scholarly activities, both professional and academic, contributing to well being of the profession. Students will refine skills and understand the commitment necessary to scholarly writing.