Course Outline

**Course:** Legal Document Production  
**Prefix No.:** AOT 213  
**Effective Date:** August 2014  
**Next Review Date:** August 2015

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**Prerequisites:** AOT 110 and AOT 267 with a “C” or better.

**Description:** This course introduces legal terminology and covers the production of documents found in the legal office environment. Emphasis is on productivity and excellence in legal document production.

**Purpose of Course:** The student will get training in keyboarding legal correspondence and legal documents in a wide variety of areas, including litigation, general business, real estate, criminal defense, estate planning, and dissolution of marriage actions.

**Textbook(s) or Alternative:** Legal Office Projects, 2nd Ed., by Diane M. Gilmore, PLS. Published by Thomson/South-Western Publishing, 2007.

**Materials (specifying those to be purchased by student):** Textbook USB 2.0 Flash Drive 128MB for saving assignments/files

**Collateral Reading:** None

**Class Management Activities (Attendance, tardies, testing, etc.):**

**Academic Honesty:** During a test, as well as on any written assignment, paper, or project, anyone caught exchanging information or copying someone else’s work will be given a grade of "0" on that work and will face further disciplinary action. Please refer to the “Student Code Book” on "Academic Dishonesty".

**Absences:**

Students are expected to be in class on time and ready to start working. Students are to remain working until the end of the class period. No student is to leave class early without the permission of the instructor.

Day students will be required to meet class for one hour and fifteen minutes two days each week for fifteen weeks. Students will be allowed to miss a maximum of six class meetings during the semester. Night students will be required to meet class for two hours and forty-five minutes one night a week for fifteen weeks. Students will be allowed to miss a maximum of three class meetings during the semester. Once a student goes over the allowed absences, he/she will be dropped from class rolls for excessive absences with the grade of “F”.

There are no excused absences except those verified by other instructors for field trips or school-related activities. A student with a doctor’s excuse will be able to make up missed work, but the
absence is still counted toward the maximum number of absences allowed.

Tardies:
A student is tardy if he/she arrives for class after the instructor has checked the class roll. Three tardies will count as one absence for day students. Time missed for night students will be accumulated until an even hour has been missed. Students should strive to get to class on time each day.

Classroom Etiquette:
An integral part of an education is developing a sense of integrity and responsibility not only toward ourselves but also toward others. In the classroom, as on the job or in your home, exhibiting appropriate behavior reflects on your maturity. Arriving late to class, being unprepared, inappropriate talking while class is in session, etc., negatively reflect on you and your fellow students. Please be considerate.

Student ID:
It is mandatory that every student wear his or her student ID at all times. The instructor will dismiss students without ID from class. The student may get his/her ID and return to class before the midpoint of the class. If the student cannot get his/her ID and return to class by the midpoint, the instructor will record the absence.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT:
Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Dean of Student Services to discuss needs or concerns as they pursue an academic program and participate in campus life. The Dean of Student Services will provide guidance regarding official documentation of disabilities and/or accommodation of needs. (See College Catalog)

RESOURCES (A-V, persons, tools/equipment):
Law Dictionary for Non-lawyers
NALA Manual for Paralegals and Legal Assistants
Secretarial Reference Manuals

All of the above items must stay in the lab at all times.

COURSE TOPICAL OUTLINE: (List topics and sub-topics of course) and Calendar or approximate length of time devoted to topic.

WEEK 1
Outline and Handouts
Project 1 – General Office Procedures
   Task 1-1: Research Internet and prepare memo to attorney
   Task 1-2: Prepare travel requests
Legal Focus: Conflict of Interest
   Task 1-3: Prepare check request and seminar letter
   Task 1-4: Create table of breakfast meeting responses
   Task 1-5: Research Internet and prepare memo to attorney
   Task 1-6: Prepare seminar expense reports
   Task 1-7: Prepare conflict of interest policy, memo and form
WEEK 1 (continued)
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 2
Project 2 - Legal Office Accounting
  Task 2-1: Calculate and prepare invoice
  Task 2-2: Prepare letter to client
  Task 2-3: Prepare settlement statement
  Task 2-4: Prepare memo to attorney
  Task 2-5: Prepare Petty Cash Transaction Record
Legal Focus: Legal Office Accounting
  Task 2-6: Calculate and request petty cash reimbursement
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 3
Project 3 - Legal Document Preparation
  Task 3-1: Prepare a Non-Compete Agreement
  Task 3-2: Edit and finalize an affidavit
  Task 3-3: Prepare Power of Attorney
  Task 3-4: Prepare letter to client
  Task 3-5: Prepare an online client information form
Internet Activity
Legal Focus: Law Firm Web Sites
Critical Thinking Activity
Timed Writing

WEEK 4
Project 4 - Opening File Procedures
  Task 4-1: Prepare New File Information Sheet
  Task 4-2: Prepare conflict of interest paperwork
  Task 4-3: Prepare Agreement for Representation
  Task 4-4: Prepare medical authorization
  Task 4-5: Prepare Letter to Client
  Task 4-6: Prepare adverse party letter
  Task 4-7: Prepare police department letter
  Task 4-8: Prepare check request
Legal Focus: Patient Confidentiality and HIPAA
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 5
Project 5 - Estate Planning
  Task 5-1: Prepare Last Wills and Testaments
  Task 5-2: Prepare Living Wills
  Task 5-3: Prepare Financial Durable Power of Attorney
  Task 5-4: Prepare Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care
  Task 5-5: Prepare billing invoice
  Task 5-6: Prepare letter to clients
Legal Focus: End-of-Life Issues
Internet Activity
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 6
Project 6 - Preparation of Complaint and Summons
  Task 6-1: Prepare Complaint
  Task 6-2: Prepare Summons
Legal Focus: The Ethics of E-mail
WEEK 6 (continued)
Task 6-3: Prepare check requests
Task 6-4: Edit expert witness engagement letter
Task 6-5: Prepare memo to attorney
Critical Thinking Activity
Timed Writing

WEEK 7
Project 7 - Preparation of Real Estate Documents
Task 7-1: Prepare client engagement letter
Task 7-2: Prepare Quiet Title Complaint
Task 7-3: Prepare Warranty Deed
Task 7-4: Prepare Bill of Sale
Task 7-5: Prepare No-Lien Affidavit
Task 7-6: Prepare pre-closing checklist
Legal Focus: Protecting a Title
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 8
Project 8 - Preparation of Discovery Documents
Task 8-1: Prepare Interrogatories
Task 8-2: Prepare Request for Admissions
Task 8-3: Prepare Notice of Taking Deposition
Task 8-4: Prepare Subpoena for Deposition Duces Tecum
Task 8-5: Prepare check request
Task 8-6: Prepare letter to plaintiff’s physician
Legal Focus: Automated Docketing Systems
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 9
Project 9 - Preparation of Criminal Defense Documents
Task 9-1: Prepare New Client Information Sheet
Task 9-2: Prepare conflict of interest paperwork
Task 9-3: Prepare Notice of Appearance
Task 9-4: Prepare Written Plea of Not Guilty
Legal Focus: Victim Compensation
Task 9-5: Prepare Demand for Discovery
Task 9-6: Prepare Motion to Suppress
Task 9-7: Prepare Client Criminal
Critical Thinking Activity
Timed Writing

WEEK 10
Project 10 - Preparation of Trial Documents
Task 10-1: Prepare Joint Pretrial Stipulation
Task 10-2: Prepare Pretrial Exhibit List
Task 10-3: Prepare Jury Instructions
Task 10-4: Prepare Verdict Form
Task 10-5: Prepare trial subpoenas
Legal Focus: Legal Office Assistant’s role in pretrial preparation
Task 10-6: Prepares merge letter to witnesses
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 11
Project 11 - Preparation of Corporate Documents
Task 11-1: Prepare Articles of Incorporation
WEEK 11 (continued)
Task 11-2: Prepare letter to secretary of state
Legal Focus: Piercing the Corporate Veil
Task 11-3: Prepare organizational meeting minutes
Task 11-4: Prepare corporation bylaws
Task 11-5: Prepare stock certificates
Task 11-6: Prepare billing invoices
Task 11-7: Prepare letter to client
Internet Activity
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 12
Project 12 - Appellate Procedures
Task 12-1: Prepare Notice of Appeal
Task 12-2: Prepare Designation to Reporter and Reporter’s Acknowledgement
Task 12-3: Prepare Directions to Clerk
Task 12-4: Create appellate brief
Task 12-5: Prepare table of contents
Task 12-6: Prepare table of authorities
Internet Activity
Legal Focus: Avoiding Appellate Pitfalls
Critical Thinking Activity
Timed Writing

WEEK 13
Case Study I - Commencement of the Action
Task CS-1: Prepare letter to client
Task CS-2: Prepare Petition for Dissolution of Marriage
Task CS-3: Prepare UCCJEA Affidavit
Task CS-4: Prepare Summons
Task CS-5: Prepare check requests
Legal Focus: The UCCJEA
Task CS-6: Prepare interim billing statement
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 14
Case Study II - Discovery Procedures
Task CS-7: Prepare Interrogatories
Task CS-8: Prepare Request for Production
Task CS-9: Prepare Motion to Terminate Temporary Custody Agreement
Legal Focus: Discovery in a Divorce Proceeding
Task CS-10: Prepare Notice of Hearing
Task CS-11: Prepare interim billing statement
Critical Thinking Activity

WEEK 15
Case Study III - Other Divorce Issues
Task CS-12: Prepare Motion to Appoint Guardian Ad Litem
Task CS-13: Prepare Notice of Hearing
Task CS-14: Prepare Order Appointing Guardian Ad Litem
Task CS-15: Prepare Petitioner’s Financial Affidavit
Task CS-16: Compose letter to client
Task CS-17: Prepare Notice of Filing Financial Affidavit
Legal Focus: Mediation
WEEK 15 (continued)
Critical Thinking Activity

Case Study IV - Concluding Documents
  Task CS-18: Prepare Notice of Final Hearing
  Task CS-19: Prepare Marital Settlement Agreement
Legal Focus: Post-Judgment Issues
  Task CS-20: Prepare Quit Claim Deed
  Task CS-21: Prepare Final Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage
  Task CS-22: Prepare letter to client
  Task CS-23: Prepare final billing statement

Critical Thinking Activity
Timed Writing

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:
1. Create and be familiar with legal document formats.
2. Spell legal terms; explain their usage and vocabulary.
3. Keyboard general legal correspondence and legal documents used in a wide variety of areas, including litigation, general business, real estate, criminal defense, estate planning, and dissolution of marriage actions using word processing software on a microcomputer.
4. Demonstrate the ability to supply the appropriate terms required for the particular legal document.
5. Demonstrate the ability to supply the proper punctuation required in legal documents.
6. Effectively use the dictionary and reference books to assist in producing mailable documents.
7. Use critical thinking skills.
8. Do research on the Internet to find information pertaining to certain legal matters.

Mailable Documents: Students should strive to produce mailable documents.
  • Have no spelling errors
  • Have no punctuation errors
  • Have no grammatical errors
  • Contain accurate and complete information
  • Follow the originator’s directions
  • Have no incorrect word usage
  • Have no typographical errors
  • Have no word division errors
  • Are correctly formatted and include all essential parts of the document (Example: date, inside address, enclosure notations, reference initials, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS TO COMPLETE OUTCOMES: Students will read all the welcome information and Job Description at the beginning of the textbook before starting to work on the projects. Students should read the information at the beginning of each project and/or case study before starting to key or transcribe any documents. Students
should read and follow all the instructions in each project and/or case study. Students will be required to do Internet research as required in each project/case study and critical thinking exercises. Internet and critical thinking activities will be averaged with the Project grades. Project documents will count as 40% of the final grade for the semester. Case study documents will count as 30% of the final grade for the semester.

Students will be required to do practice timed writings throughout the semester. Students will be required to turn in five 5-minute timed writings with no more than 5-errors for grading by the end of the semester. Students will be required to do a timed writing for grading every three weeks of the semester. These five timed writings will count as 30% of the final grade for the semester.

Students need to key at least 60 words per minute on five 5-minute timed writings with no more than 5 errors. Instructor will provide the students with the timed writings to work on. You have to have five different timed writings to get credit for them. Students will do a timed writing every three weeks during Fall and Spring semesters, and every two weeks during Summer semester.

The following scale will determine timed writing grades:

- 72 wpm or higher = 100
- 68 wpm - 71 wpm = 90
- 64 wpm - 67 wpm = 80
- 60 wpm - 63 wpm = 70
- 55 wpm - 59 wpm = 60

Grading for project documents and case study documents will be two points deducted for all errors.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:** Students will be allowed to do assignments at home or at one of the NETC community campus sites. All assignments must be completed using Microsoft Word 2010 software. **All assignments must be turned in no later than the due date. No assignment will be accepted after the due date.**

**EVALUATIVE METHODS TO APPRAISE OUTCOMES:**

Final grade for the semester will be figured as follows:
- Project Documents 50%
- Case Study Documents 30%
- Timed Writings 20%

Students should make an extra effort to plan, proofread, and correct copy before submitting it to the instructor. Once you check it, check it one more time.

**GRADING SCALE:**

- 93 - 100 = A
- 85 - 92 = B
- 77 - 84 = C
- 70 - 76 = D
- Below 70 = F