

Legal Research and Writing
Summer 2023
Professor Greg Johnson

Readings and Activities for the First Week (and beyond)

Dear students,

Welcome to Vermont Law and Graduate School! We will have a busy first week in Legal Research and Writing. We have our regularly scheduled classes on Monday and Wednesday, plus a make-up class on Friday morning (to make up for Memorial Day). As a heads-up, in the second week of class we will have research training sessions for Westlaw (Monday, June 5, from 9:00-10:00 am) and Lexis (Wednesday, June 7, from 9:00-10:00 am). These sessions are in addition to our regularly scheduled classes on those days. The sessions occur in the same room as our class (Oakes 210).

Here is the schedule for the first week:

Wednesday, May 31 (10:30-11:45 a.m.)

An introduction to American legal systems

A Lawyer Writes, 15-22 (Sources of Law) (through “Weave a Tapestry”)

Legal Research, An Introduction

Constitution of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (on Canvas)

The Bluebook, review ix-xvi (Table of Contents), read 1-4 (Introduction and Rule B1.1) and Rules B11 and 11

Assignments:

1. Install (free to you) Microsoft Office 365 from VLS’s IT website if you do not already have it.
2. In a paragraph of 100-150 words, compare/contrast the Preambles of the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Due on Sunday, June 4, by 11:59 pm (upload to Canvas)

Friday, June 2 (make-up class at 9:00-10:15 a.m.)

Hierarchies of authority; an introduction to *stare decisis*; legal research process

A Lawyer Writes, 22-31 (Systems of law)

Legal Research Process Chart (on Canvas)

United States v. Cooley, ___ U.S. ___, 141 S.Ct. 1638 (2020). (on Canvas).

June Med. Servs. v. Russo, ___ U.S. ___, 140 S.Ct. 2103 (2020). (on Canvas).

The Bluebook, Rules B2, B10.1.1, 10.2, and Table 6 (Case names in citations)

Friday, June 2 (regular class at 10:30-11:45 a.m.)

Reading and researching statutes

A Lawyer Writes, 33-43 (Reading statutes)

Researching Statutes

United States Constitution, Art. VI, cl. 2 (Supremacy Clause)

McGirt v. Oklahoma, ___ U.S. ___, 140 S.Ct. 2452 (2020). (on Canvas).

The Bluebook, Rules B.12.1.1, 12.1-12.3.2 (Citing statutes)