

To: Incoming UB Law Students in Section B2  
From: Prof. Kate Rowan  
Date: August 2019  
Re: Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research Class

Welcome to UB Law! I am looking forward to meeting you at our first Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research (“LAWR”) class on Monday, August 19. Before our first class, please do the following:

1. Purchase the three required books for the course:
  - Christine Coughlin et al., *A Lawyer Writes* (3d ed. 2018)
  - Richard Wydick, *Plain English for Lawyers* (6th ed. 2019)
  - *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (20th ed. 2015)

These books are available at the North Campus Bookstore or from Amazon or other retailers. Please ensure that you have purchased the correct editions. There are also copies on reserve at our law library for you to review. As you decide whether to buy or rent these books, please note that all three will be useful to you throughout your legal career, and that we will be using *Plain English for Lawyers* and *The Bluebook* during the bridge/spring semesters as well.

2. Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 in our primary textbook, *A Lawyer Writes*, and the three short articles that have been posted along with this letter: “Putting Law School Into Practice,” “Talking to Students About the Differences Between Undergraduate Writing and Legal Writing,” and “Ten Tips for Transitioning to Legal Writing.” Also, I’ve posted a number of articles in the Law School Tips and Legal Writing Tips folders under Course Documents on UB Learns/Blackboard, our course website; I suggest that you take a look at these materials before school begins or early in the semester. I will continue to add resources to our UB Learns site throughout the semester.
3. Review the syllabus, which I will post on UB Learns under Course Information shortly before the start of class. I will distribute paper copies of the syllabus in class on August 19 and we will discuss the course then.

4. Enroll in Mastering the Bluebook Interactive Exercises (“MBIE”) and Core Grammar for Lawyers (“CGL”). We will be using both of these online programs throughout the semester to teach and practice citation and grammar. Please follow these instructions to enroll in both programs. Make sure to use the discount code (you will receive a bundle discount for using both programs) and enter the class code so that I can track your progress throughout the semester. I will provide more information about how we will use both programs in the syllabus and in class.
  - a. *Mastering the Bluebook Interactive Exercises*
    - i. Go to <https://masteringthebluebook.com/getmbie> in your browser.
    - ii. Complete the form, selecting “NY” for your state and “University at Buffalo School of Law” for your school.
    - iii. On the payment page, enter “BUFF2019” in the Access Code field. Your discounted price will appear immediately.
    - iv. Enter your credit card information, verify the purchase, and continue on to create your MBIE account.
    - v. When creating your account, include our class code: 319-162-4581.
  - b. *Core Grammar for Lawyers*
    - i. Go to <https://coregrammar.com/getcgl> in your browser.
    - ii. Complete the form, selecting “NY” for your state and “University at Buffalo School of Law” for your school.
    - iii. On the payment page, enter “BUFF2019” in the Access Code field. Your discounted price will appear immediately.
    - iv. Enter your credit card information, verify the purchase, and continue on to create your CGL account.
    - v. When creating your account, include our class code: 319-610-8473.
5. Take the Core Grammar for Lawyers Pre-Test.
  - a. Once you’ve enrolled in Core Grammar for Lawyers, log into your account and click on your Bookshelf. At the top you will see the Pre-Test. You must complete the Pre-Test by Sunday, August 25. You should allot approximately an hour to take the test, though of course this may vary.
  - b. Completing the Pre-Test is a required component of your course grade, but the test itself is not individually graded. Rather, it is designed to evaluate your grammar skills at the outset of the semester and to focus your attention on the areas you most need to improve. As you’ll see in the syllabus, you will be required to complete the CGL lessons throughout the semester and conclude by taking the Post-Test (which will be graded). You may test out of

certain lessons depending on your performance on the Pre-Test. Please note that some questions on the Pre-Test are specific to legal citation methods that you may not yet be familiar with; not to worry, we will spend class time learning these concepts. In short, please just try your best on the Pre-Test.

6. Finally, please prepare your first writing assignment—an introductory essay—and email it to me ([katrinro@buffalo.edu](mailto:katrinro@buffalo.edu)) before class on August 19. This is an informal, one-to-two page double-spaced essay in which I'd like you to tell me a little bit about yourself. Please include the following information, in any order or format that you wish:

- Name (including any preferred nickname)
- Hometown
- Undergraduate/other educational information (including institution and degree)
- Why you chose to go to law school and become a lawyer, and why you chose UB specifically
- Possible career goals
- Your view of your strengths and weaknesses as a writer
- What you hope to learn in this course
- Anything else you think I should know at the outset of the semester

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me at [katrinro@buffalo.edu](mailto:katrinro@buffalo.edu). I'm looking forward to meeting you on August 19.