

Wayland Mission Statement

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

Contact Information

Course: LGLS 5301 VC01 – Legal Research and Writing

Campus: WBUonline

Term/Session: Fall 1 2026

Instructor: Dr. Brenda Johnson

WBU Email Address: brenda.johnson@wayland.wbu.edu

Office Hours, Building, and Location: Appointments are available via Zoom by request

Class Meeting Time and Location: WBU Online

Course Information

Catalog Description: Teaches students how to find legal authorities relevant to legal problems, how to analyze a legal issue using facts and law, and how to communicate legal analysis logically and concisely. This course consists of research exercises; writing exercises, including letters and legal memoranda; and more complex research and writing assignments.

There is no prerequisite for this course.

Textbook Information

Required Textbook(s) and/or Required Materials:

LGLS 5301 – Legal Research and Writing

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER	ED	YEAR	ISBN#
Legal Research, Analysis, and Writing	Putman/Albright	Cengage	5 th	2024	9780357619445

*The textbook for this course is part of the **Wayland's Automatic eBook** program. You will have access to an eBook and interactive learning material on the first day of class through your Blackboard course site. The cost of this Automatic eBook will be billed directly to your student account when you register for the course. You will be notified via email with access instructions and additional information. If you do not wish to participate in the Automatic eBook program, you will have the first 12 days of class to opt-out of the program (additional details will be outlined in your email instructions). For more information on the Automatic eBook program, visit the Wayland Bookstore [Automatic eBook FAQ](#) page.*

Optional Materials: <<List optional materials recommended to enhance student learning>>

Course Outcome Competencies: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define various legal research terms
- Distinguish between primary and secondary legal authority
- Distinguish between binding and persuasive authority
- Locate and correctly apply primary and secondary legal authority to given facts
- Locate legal authority with electronic research and validate case law
- Research and draft a legal memorandum
- Read a case and identify its component parts

Attendance Requirements

WBUonline

Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses. Online courses are no different in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Student “attendance” in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus. Instructors in online courses are responsible for providing students with clear instructions for how they are required to participate in the course. Additionally, instructors are responsible for incorporating specific instructional activities within their course and will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for documenting student participation. These mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, participating in a weekly discussion board, submitting/completing assignments in Blackboard, or communicating with the instructor. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements. Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 2 or more weeks of an 8-week session, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress for students with excessive non-participation. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given session is considered a “no-show” and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus. Additional attendance and participation policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university’s attendance policy.

University Policies

[Link to Statement on Academic Integrity , and reference one of the following in regard to how generative artificial intelligence \(GAI\) such as ChatGPT may or may not be used in this course:](#)

- a. No use of any generative AI tools permitted.
 - i. Students are required to create and produce all work themselves or with assigned group members. Any work submitted that has used an AI generative tool like Chat GPT will be in immediate violation of the academic integrity policies for the course and WBU.
 - ii. All assignments must be fully created, designed, and prepared by the student(s).
 - iii. Any work that uses generative AI will be treated as plagiarism.

Disability Statement: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Disability Services Coordinator and Academic Coach serves as the coordinator of students with disabilities and must be contacted concerning accommodation requests (office (806) 291-1057. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

Accessibility issues with content in WBUonline courses or in Blackboard should be addressed to the WBU accessibility coordinator, Dr. Rick Hammer, hammerr@wbu.edu or call (806) 292-9150.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

Assignment	Description	Points
Required First Assignment	Introductory assignment required at course start	10
Email Assignment	Assignment involving professional email communication	15
Blackboard Assignment	Orientation or navigation task within Blackboard	15
Attendance/Participation	Based on engagement and participation throughout the course	100
Weekly Discussion Boards	7 total discussion boards, each worth 30 points	210
Weekly Quizzes	6 total quizzes: Weeks 1–5 worth 30 points each (2 chapters), Week 6 worth 45 points (3 chapters)	195
Legal Research & Writing Assignment	Major writing assignment requiring application of legal research skills	200
Final Exam	Comprehensive exam covering; 85 questions, each worth 3 points	255
Total Possible Points		1,000

Required First Assignment: As the name implies, this assignment must be completed first and is located at the very top of the Course Content section in Blackboard. This assignment is used for census purposes, and students who complete the RFA on or before the official university deadline will be counted as attending/participating on the census date of August 17, 2026. *However, in this course, you are expected to complete the RFA no later than Wednesday, August 15, 2026, at 11:59 PM CST in order to stay on pace with Week One assignments and discussion requirements.* Please understand that completion of other course activities (such as discussion boards or weekly assignments) will not substitute for the Required First Assignment. Therefore, even if you complete all other assignments but fail to complete the RFA, you will be administratively dropped from the course per university policy. If you are dropped and wish to remain in the course, please email me immediately. I will be happy to assist you in the re-enrollment process!

Email Assignment:

To encourage prompt and effective communication throughout the semester, students must use their Wayland email address to send an email to the instructor. *To receive full credit, the email must include the following information:*

- 1) Name of the student
- 2) Course Title that the student is enrolled in
- 3) that the email is made for the purpose of fulfilling the email assignment
- 4) a statement that the student has independently reviewed the syllabus
- 5) inform the instructor whether or not they have any questions regarding the syllabus, assignments, or course structure and
- 6) if the student does have questions, list those questions out.

Emails sent from non-WBU addresses *will not be accepted.*

If you have issues accessing your WBU email, please reach out to WBU Online or IT promptly. Access to your WBU email is not only necessary for this assignment but will be vital throughout the semester as I send course updates and announcements via email.

This email assignment is due by 11:59 PM CST on August 12, 2026

Blackboard Assignment: In an effort to ensure that you are capable of submitting documents (and that no issues arise when you are required to submit your final project, you will be required to submit a copy of the syllabus in the designated location in the "Week One Folder". *This assignment is due on or before August 12, 2026 at 11:59 PM CST.*

Attendance/Participation: Attendance in this course will be measured through timely completion of weekly assignments and discussion board posts. Missing a weekly deadline will count as an “absence.” Per the 25% rule, accumulating four (4) absences may result in failure of the course and a final grade of F. *Participation is not just about showing up or submitting something for credit—it is about demonstrating genuine effort, critical thought, and active engagement with the course material.* I am looking for meaningful contributions that reflect your understanding, analysis, and personal insight.

Reading Assignments: Reading Assignments are to be completed on time (i.e., before the corresponding assignments and discussions are due). It will be to your benefit to take notes as you read. Additionally, you should be prepared to participate in online discussions about the assigned reading.

Discussion Boards: There will be discussion board or weekly alternative assignment for each week of class, except for week 8. Each week, a prompt (or the instructions for the weekly alternative assignment) will be posted by Monday at 1:00 p.m. CST. If an alternative assignment is posted, that assignment will be due on that Sunday by 11:59 p.m. CST.

If a discussion board is assigned for the week, you will need to formulate an initial response to that prompt by Thursday @ 11:59 p.m. CST of each week. By Sunday at 11:59 p.m. CST of each week, you will need to have read your classmates initial responses and reply to at least two of your classmates’ initial responses. Of course, you are welcome to respond to more than two of your classmates’ posts, but you will need to clearly indicate which two responses you would like me to grade. Otherwise, I will grade the first two responses.

Note: Posting all your discussion answers on Bb is a major requirement of this course. Accordingly, late posts will receive an automatic deduction. If you consistently turn in late assignments, the deductions will increase. Additionally, please remember that plagiarism will not be tolerated in any way (refer to the Wayland Baptist University Policy on Dishonesty). Additionally, answers that are created or revised using artificial intelligence will not be accepted. You may view your peers work and postings to learn from one another, but you can’t copy their work.

While there is no specific word limit, your initial post should be long enough to adequately address the prompt and all issues that are presented. Your initial post must be insightful, thorough, and show an appreciation and understanding of the issues. Your responses to your classmates’ initial posts should identify portions of the post you agree/disagree with and explain why. Additionally, your responses should supplement, contradict, question, or further discussion on the pertinent subject area. All posts should be substantiated by examples from the textbook and/or appropriate websites. Do not forget to cite your sources! It is also expected that all posts reflect critical thinking and good grammar.

Course Exams and Quizzes: You will have weekly quizzes which will test your knowledge of the assigned readings for the week. Each week as you read the assigned reading material, you are advised to take notes as the quizzes are open book and open note. The quizzes will have time constraints imposed. Therefore, you should ensure you have an adequate understanding of the material prior to beginning the quizzes as you will not have time to “hunt” for answers in the textbook. The final examination is comprehensive. The best way to prepare for the final exam is by reviewing your notes, PowerPoints, and past quizzes.

Final Project: Your final project (a written legal memorandum) *will be due on September 26, 2026 by 11:59 PM CST*. More information about this assignment will be released on the first day of class. Plagiarism and use of artificial intelligence shall result in disciplinary action. Late papers *will not* be accepted. Papers must be submitted in Times New Roman 12- Point Font. No Exceptions!

Note: This assignment is through Safe Assignment, and I will not accept any submissions with a 50% or more Matching Percentage. If your Matching Percentage is 50% or more you will receive an automatic “F” for the assignment. This information will then be reported to Dean Crowe and other appropriate personnel who will handle further sanctions from the University. Furthermore, there will be a significant grade deduction for matching percentages between 21% and 49%. The only allowing matching percentage is 0%-20%.

The University has a standard grade scale:

A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F= below 60, W = Withdrawal, WP = withdrew passing, WF = withdrew failing, I = incomplete. An incomplete may be given within the last two weeks of a long term, within the last week of an 8-week session, or within the last two days of a microterm to a student who is passing, but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work for reasons beyond the student’s control. A grade of “incomplete” is changed if the work required is completed prior to the last day of the next long 16-week term or 8-week session, unless the instructor designates an earlier date for completion. If the work is not completed by the appropriate date, the I is converted to an F.

Student Grade Appeals: Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Vice President of Academic Affairs to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

Tentative Schedule

WEEK ONE: (August 10, 2026 – August 16, 2026)

- **Required First Assignment:** Due Wednesday by 11:59 PM CST
 - **Blackboard Assignment:** Due Wednesday by 11:59 PM CST
 - **Email Assignment:** Due Wednesday by 11:59 PM CST
 - **Assigned Reading:**
 - Chapter 1: *Introduction to Research, Analytical Principles, and the Legal Process*
 - Chapter 2: *Introduction to Legal Research and Analysis*
 - **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial response due by Thursday at 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due by Sunday at 11:59 PM CST
 - **Weekly Quiz:** Due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
-

WEEK TWO: (August 17, 2026 – August 23, 2026)

- **Assigned Reading:**
 - Chapter 3: *Constitutions, Statutes, Administrative Law, and Court Rules – Research and Analysis*
 - Chapter 4: *Case Law – Research and Briefing*
 - **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial response due by Thursday at 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due by Sunday at 11:59 PM CST
 - **Weekly Quiz:** Due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
-

WEEK THREE: (August 24, 2026 – August 30, 2026)

- **Assigned Reading:**
 - Chapter 5: *Secondary Authority and Other Research Sources – Encyclopedias, Treatises, American Law Reports, Digests, Shepard's*
 - Chapter 6: *Secondary Authority – Periodicals, Restatements, Uniform Laws, Dictionaries, Legislative History, and Other Secondary Authorities*
- **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial post due Thursday by 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
- **Weekly Quiz:** Due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST

WEEK FOUR: August 31, 2026 – September 6, 2026)

- **Assigned Reading:**
 - Chapter 7: *Computers and Internet Legal Research*
 - Chapter 8: *Commercial Internet Research*
 - **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial post due Thursday by 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
 - **Weekly Quiz:** Due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
-

WEEK FIVE: (September 7, 2026 – September 13, 2026)

- **Assigned Reading:**
 - Chapter 9: *Legal Analysis – Key Facts*
 - Chapter 10: *Legal Analysis: Issue Identification – Spotting the Issue*
 - **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial response due by Thursday at 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due by Sunday at 11:59 PM CST
 - **Weekly Quiz:** Due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
-

WEEK SIX: (September 14, 2026 – September 20, 2026)

- **Assigned Reading:**
 - Chapter 11: *Legal Analysis: Stating the Issue*
 - Chapter 12: *Case Law Analysis – Is a Case on Point?*
 - Chapter 13: *Counteranalysis*
 - **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial response due by Thursday at 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due by Sunday at 11:59 PM CST
 - **Weekly Quiz:** Due Sunday by 11:59 PM CST
-

WEEK SEVEN: (September 21, 2026 – September 27, 2026)

- **Discussion Board Assignment:**
 - Initial response due by Thursday at 11:59 PM CST
 - Two responsive posts to your classmates due by Sunday at 11:59 PM CST
- **Legal Research & Writing Assignment:** Due Saturday by 11:59 PM CST

WEEK EIGHT: (September 28, 2026 – October 3, 2026)

- **Final Exam:** Due Wednesday, October 1, 2025 by 11:59 PM CST

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

- **Term Begins:** August 10, 2026
- **Census Date:** August 17, 2026
- **Last Day to Drop with a “W”:** September 11, 2026
- **Last Day to Drop with “WP/WF”:** September 25, 2026
- **Last Day of Term:** October 3, 2026
- **Grades Due:** October 6, 2026