

Chapter 127. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Career Development and Career and Technical Education

Subchapter N. Law and Public Service

§127.773. Legal Research and Writing (One Credit), Adopted 2025.

- (a) Implementation.
 - (1) The provisions of this section shall be implemented by school districts beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.
 - (2) School districts shall implement the employability skills student expectations listed in §127.15(d)(2) of this chapter (relating to Career and Technical Education Employability Skills, Adopted 2025) as an integral part of this course.
- (b) General requirements. This course is recommended for students in Grades 10-12. Prerequisite: at least one credit in a course from the Law and Public Service Career Cluster. Recommended prerequisite: Court Systems and Practices. Students shall be awarded one credit for successful completion of this course.
- (c) Introduction.
 - (1) Career and technical education instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.
 - (2) The Law and Public Service Career Cluster focuses on planning, managing, and providing legal services, public safety, protective services, and homeland security, including professional and technical support services.
 - (3) Legal Research and Writing provides an introduction to the study and practice of legal writing and research. This course is designed to introduce students to the methods and tools used to conduct legal research, develop and frame legal arguments, produce legal writings such as briefs, memorandums, and other legal documents, study U.S. Constitutional law, and prepare for appellate argument(s).
 - (4) Students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences such as career and technical student organizations and other organizations that foster leadership and career development in the profession such as student chapters of related professional associations.
 - (5) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (d) Knowledge and skills.
 - (1) The student conducts legal research. The student is expected to:
 - (A) plan a legal research strategy;
 - (B) access print and online research materials to find and analyze case law;
 - (C) describe the difference between mandatory and persuasive authority;
 - (D) research mandatory and persuasive case history using online databases such as Lexis-Nexis;
 - (E) explain how to shepardize case law;
 - (F) critique other's legal writing(s) to determine whether cited case law and other legal sources were correctly referenced and relied upon for precedential holdings;
 - (G) evaluate and apply concepts found in Bluebook citation rules to one's writing.

- (2) The student prepares, drafts, and defends legal arguments. The student is expected to:
 - (A) read and analyze case law;
 - (B) read and analyze case procedural history;
 - (C) apply legal precedent to current legal issues; and
 - (D) develop arguments based on research, relevant case law, statutes, and public policy.
- (3) The student understands, prepares, and drafts legal documents. The student is expected to:
 - (A) use and interpret legal reference documents such as the Bluebook to follow and apply requirements for legal writing and citations;
 - (B) prepare and draft legal briefs that include standard elements, including an introduction, table of authorities, brief answer, introduction, argument, counter-argument, and conclusion;
 - (C) prepare and draft memoranda that follow a standard legal format; and
 - (D) prepare and draft other legal documents such as demand letters and pleadings.
- (4) The student studies and analyzes U.S. Constitutional law. The student is expected to:
 - (A) analyze the relationship between the U.S. Constitution, Common Law, state law(s), and local law(s);
 - (B) analyze the legal, social, and historical implications of court decisions affecting the interpretation of the U.S. Constitution;
 - (C) predict possible outcomes of future cases and frame arguments in ways that are likely to garner the support of the judiciary;
 - (D) critique cases related to U.S. Constitutional law and other current legal issues such as free exercise clause, establishment clause, due process, and equal protection; and
 - (E) critique cases related to current legal issues.
- (5) The student participates in a class moot court simulation. The student is expected to:
 - (A) research and evaluate case law on a current legal issue;
 - (B) read and evaluate appellant, respondent, and amici briefs associated with the chosen case;
 - (C) write an appellate brief; and
 - (D) prepare an oral argument and respond to questions during the presentation of the argument.