

**GUIDELINES**  
**FOR**  
**COMPLETING**  
**THE**  
**MASTER OF LAWS THESIS**  
**(SPRING 2020 UPDATE)**

# **COMPLETING THE MASTER OF LAWS THESIS**

This document is intended to provide to GW Law students guidelines on matters relating to the Master of Laws (LL.M.) thesis. The Law School's Bulletin identifies the thesis requirements for LL.M. candidates. The standards set out in the Bulletin govern to the extent that the matters below are inconsistent with the Bulletin.

## **General Thesis Guidelines**

Full-time LL.M. students (those enrolled in 9 or more credit hours per semester) are expected to complete all degree requirements within one calendar year of matriculation. Part-time LL.M. students (those enrolled in 8 or fewer credit hours per semester) are expected to complete all degree requirements within two calendar years of matriculation. The thesis advisor has the discretion to provide written consent for an extension of the thesis deadlines up to one calendar year.

The thesis must be a substantial scholarly work of a quality and length akin to a law review article. The thesis is to be written under the supervision of thesis advisor who is a full-time member of the Law School faculty or, with the approval of the program director, an adjunct member of the Law School faculty. The thesis advisor assigns the thesis grade and is the final authority regarding thesis deadlines. When a faculty member accepts a student's request to serve as thesis advisor, the two parties should establish and agree, in writing, to a timeline of thesis deadlines based on the student's planned graduation date.<sup>1</sup>

The general expectation is that the completed thesis will be between approximately 15,000 words and 25,000 words in length, including footnotes (approximately 60 to 100 double-spaced pages). However, the thesis advisor, in consultation with the program director, has full discretion to establish a minimum word or page length requirement for the thesis. The student must fulfill any word or page minimum established by the thesis advisor or the thesis will not be accepted for grading. The thesis advisor may impose additional requirements regarding the thesis subject, outline, content, citation style, authoritative support, and general presentation. Furthermore, the thesis advisor must approve the student's research methodology and should receive at least one preliminary draft of the thesis. A thesis advisor may require additional drafts or outlines for review.

## **Thesis Course**

Students writing an LL.M. thesis must enroll in Thesis (LAW 6690 and LAW 6691), a two-semester, four-credit scholarly writing class taught by a member of the Law School's legal writing faculty. The appropriate time to register for the Thesis courses depends on

---

<sup>1</sup> Students should consult the Law School's academic calendar or contact the Records Office for the exact date of graduation. The Records Office can be reached at 202.994.6261 or [rec@law.gwu.edu](mailto:rec@law.gwu.edu). Spring graduation is always in May. Summer graduation is always in August or early September. Fall graduation is typically in January.

whether the student is a full-time student or a part-time student, when the student is admitted, and when the student intends to graduate:

- Full-time LL.M. students admitted in the fall semester should register for Thesis I (LAW 6690) in the fall semester and Thesis II (LAW 6691) in the spring semester of their degree program. However, a student who takes Thesis I in the fall semester and intends to graduate in August may, with the permission of the thesis advisor and notice to the program director, take Thesis II in the summer semester. Alternatively, with the permission of the thesis advisor and notice to the program director, a student planning to graduate in summer may take Thesis I in the spring semester and Thesis II in the summer semester.
- Full-time LL.M. students admitted in the spring semester should register for Thesis I (LAW 6690) in the spring semester and Thesis II (LAW 6691) in either the summer semester or the fall semester of their degree program. With the permission of the thesis advisor and notice to the program director, a student may take Thesis I in the summer semester and Thesis II in the fall semester.
- Part-time LL.M. students are expected to complete at least one fall semester and one spring semester of non-thesis coursework before beginning their theses. After completing these semesters, part-time LL.M. students may register for Thesis I (LAW 6690) and Thesis II (LAW 6691) in any combination of the summer, fall, and spring semesters that remain in their degree program. With the permission of the thesis advisor and notice to the program director, a student may take Thesis I, Thesis II, or both in earlier semesters of their degree program.

Thesis I (LAW 6690), which meets four times during the semester in small group classes, provides structure and guidance in selecting a thesis advisor and topic; researching and forming a thesis statement; organizing and outlining; and initiating the drafting process. Thesis II (LAW 6691) meets four times during the subsequent semester and covers drafting, polishing, and tips for seeking publication. The course also includes workshops during which students engage in peer review. Thesis II is a restricted course, and a student must have identified a thesis advisor and obtain written approval from the thesis advisor before registering for Thesis II in person in the Records Office.<sup>2</sup>

In general, the student is expected to satisfy all requirements established by both the Thesis course professor and by the student's thesis advisor; submission of the material to one does not alone satisfy any requirements for submission of material to the other.

## **Completing Thesis Requirements**

The student bears the responsibility to maintain contact with and provide regular progress updates to the thesis advisor. The student's work in Thesis I and II will show as credits "in progress" until the thesis is accepted and graded by the thesis advisor.

---

<sup>2</sup> The "Request to Register for a Restricted Course" form is available in hard copy in the Records Office and on the Records Office website, <https://www.law.gwu.edu/records>, on each semester's information page.

If the student fails to complete the thesis by the established deadline and while enrolled in Thesis II, the student must secure a written extension from the thesis advisor. With the written approval of the thesis advisor, a student may receive an extension of up to one calendar year to complete the thesis. During this year or portion thereof, the student must maintain continuous enrollment; breaking enrollment during this time will require readmission into the Law School. A student who, due to extraordinary circumstances, requires time beyond a one-year extension to complete the thesis must seek written approval from the thesis advisor and the program director before the one-year extension expires. Thesis advisors may establish supplemental requirements regarding additional time requests.

Once an extension for completion of the thesis has been approved, the student must contact the Records Office to arrange for “continuous enrollment” for the next semester. A student who fails to maintain continuous enrollment will be required to apply for readmission to continue in the degree program. Currently, the charge for continuous enrollment is \$35.00; this fee enables continued use of the Burns Law Library and Westlaw, Lexis, and Bloomberg accounts. Provision of Westlaw, Lexis, and Bloomberg access is handled by the Library's Electronic Services Department, and all requests for passwords or password extensions/reactivations must be sent to [eservices@law.gwu.edu](mailto:eservices@law.gwu.edu) for verification of enrollment status before passwords are extended or reactivated. Emails should state the student's name, whether they are enrolled as a student or as continuous enrollment for thesis completion, the semester(s) of enrollment, and the GWID number. Because continuous enrollment is a semester-by-semester determination, the student must email Electronic Services to request an extension *each* semester.

An application for graduation must be submitted for the semester in which graduation is anticipated by the deadline published by the Records Office. The Records Office will not renew prior applications. LL.M. candidates apply to graduate online by submitting the “LLM and MSL Graduation Application,” which is available on GW Law Forms webpage at <https://www.law.gwu.edu/forms>. Questions regarding graduation should be directed to the Records Office at 202.994.6261 or [rec@law.gwu.edu](mailto:rec@law.gwu.edu).

### **Submitting the Thesis to the Electronic Theses/Dissertations System (ETDS)**

The George Washington University Electronic Thesis/Dissertation initiative is an effort to help LL.M. students create works of scholarship that are interactive, visually appealing, and readily accessible to a large audience of interested readers. All completed theses must be electronically submitted to the ETDS at <https://etdadmin.com/main/home?siteId=55> after the thesis advisor has assigned a grade.

Specific instructions for how to submit the thesis to ETDS are provided in the Thesis II course materials and outlined in the attachments below. The formatting requirements to which the student must carefully adhere for the thesis to be accepted for grading by the thesis advisor and subsequently submitted to ETDS are provided on pages 5 and 6 of this

document. Attachment 1, Attachment 2, and Attachment 3 include formatting guidance and step-by-step instructions for uploading the thesis to ETDS and receiving reimbursement for the ETDS Open Access Publishing fee.

The Portable Document File (PDF) submitted online to ETDS must be final and error free. The ETDS Administrator will not edit the thesis. Students must wait until the thesis advisor has approved the final draft before submitting the PDF file to ETDS. Any suggestions or revisions made by the thesis advisor must be incorporated into the thesis before ETDS submission.

## **Publishing the Thesis in a Law Journal**

As the author of a thesis, the student will own the copyright to the work. By submitting the thesis to ETDS, the student grants a license to The George Washington University. The student may wish to “embargo” the thesis, making the thesis unavailable for viewing on ETDS for up to two years, while the student secures a contract to publish an article or book based on the thesis. For additional information on ETDS and publication of theses, the student should visit <http://library.gwu.edu/etd/publication-issues>.

The Law School must be given credit for material used in the publication of any portion or adaptation of a student’s thesis. This credit typically appears on the Disclaimer or Acknowledgements page (see samples in Attachment 1); for example, “This Article was submitted to partially satisfy the requirements of a Master of Laws degree at The George Washington University Law School.”

Materials on how to evaluate a thesis and seek publication in a law journal are provided in Attachment 4 and Attachment 5.

## **Academic Integrity**

In writing the thesis, all students must act in full accordance with the GW Law School Policy on Academic Integrity. Specific provisions of note include sections 4.1 (the pledge of honesty), 5.2 (academic dishonesty), and 8.2 (sanctions). Students are also expected to be familiar with the Law School’s handbook, *Citing Responsibly: A Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism*. These documents can be found by clicking the “Integrity Code” and “Citing Responsibly” links at <https://www.law.gwu.edu/academic-integrity>. Any plagiarism will result in an automatic failing grade and referral to the Academic Integrity Committee.

**If you have any questions about these “Guidelines for Completing the Master of Laws Thesis,” please contact your thesis advisor or the Thesis course professor.**

## **THESIS SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR LL.M. DEGREE CANDIDATES**

Candidates must follow all formatting requirements outlined below. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in rejection of the thesis by the Electronic Theses/Dissertations System (ETDS) and may delay graduation. Thesis advisors may set additional guidelines to supplement, but not replace, these minimum requirements. Supplemental formatting guidelines can be found on the specific LL.M. program websites.

### **Formatting**

- Preliminary pages must be in the following order (see Attachment 1 for specific layout)
  - Title Page (required)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgements (required)
  - Disclaimer (optional)
  - Abstract (required)
  - Table of Contents (required)
  - List of Figures (required if there are figures)
  - List of Tables (required if there are tables)
- Word-formatted
- Times New Roman (12 pt.)
- Double-spaced text
- 1.5-inch left margins
- 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and right
- Footnotes (no endnotes or inline citations) with proper Bluebook academic citations (as given in the Bluebook's Whitepages)
- No blank pages
- Page numbering:
  - Lower case Roman numerals for preliminary pages [e.g. title page, table of contents (see attachment 1 for sample formatting)]
    - Title page is page i, but is not numbered
    - Page numbers are to be located at the bottom center
  - Arabic numerals beginning with "1" on the first page of text and continue to the end
    - Page numbers are to be located at the bottom center
    - All pages, including appendices or supporting documents, must be numbered
- See Attachment 2 for a guide to adjusting page numbering.

## **Additional Formatting Requirements for Submission to the ETDS**

- The document must be submitted to ETDS as a single PDF file.
- There must be no password protection on the PDF and security settings must allow for printing.
- Fonts must be embedded in the Word document before conversion to PDF.
- The following tools will convert documents to PDF:
  - PDF Conversion Tool in UMI ETD Administrator (RTF and Microsoft Word documents only)
  - Adobe also offers an online service for PDF file creation:  
<https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/acrobat/features.html>
  - For a tutorial and FAQs on creating PDF files for submission to ETD, visit  
<https://support.proquest.com/article/detail?id=kA11W000000PEa5SAG>

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- (1) Sample Formatting of Preliminary Pages
- (2) Page Numbering Guide for MS Word
- (3) Ten Step Process for Uploading the Thesis to ETDS
- (4) Scholarly Writing Rubric
- (5) Scholarly Writing Publication Guide
- (6) Writing Centers Information



## **Attachment 1: Sample Formatting of Preliminary Pages**

{Insert 6 blank single-spaced lines under the top margin }

The Title of the Thesis

By

Brilliant Law Student {full name - no initials }

B.A., June 1985, Impressive University

J.D., May 1990, Impressive Law School

{List bachelor's and all graduate degrees in chronological order  
with dates conferred and names of conferring institutions }

{Insert 2 blank single-spaced lines under the final degree }

A Thesis submitted to

{Insert 2 blank single-spaced lines under the above line }

The Faculty of

The George Washington University Law School

in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree of Master of Laws

May 17, 2020

{or the convocation date on which your degree will be conferred }

{Insert 8 blank single-spaced lines under the date }

Thesis directed by

Your advisor's name {exactly as it appears in the Law School Bulletin }

Professor of Law {or the title exactly as it appears in the Law School Bulletin }

## Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank....

## Disclaimer

Captain \_\_\_\_\_ serves in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps. This paper was submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Laws in Government Procurement Law at The George Washington University Law School. The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense or U.S. Government.

## Abstract

[title of paper:] How the Lead Systems Integrator Experience Should Enhance Efforts to Rebuild the Defense Acquisition Workforce

Over the past nine years....

## Table of Contents

I.	Introduction .....	1
II.	Background.....	4

## Introduction

[text]

## **Attachment 2: Page Numbering Guide for MS Word**



## **Page Numbering Guide for MS Word** (with gratitude to Dan Schwender, LL.M. '11)

1. Create your title page.
2. At the end of your title, go to the “Page Layout” tab, select “Breaks” and choose “Next Page” to create a section break.
3. On the new page, create your table of contents. At the end of your table of contents, go to the “Page Layout” tab, select “Breaks” and choose “Next Page” to create a section break.
4. On the new page, write the text for your article.
5. Now, return to your table of content page. Double click the footer area on your table of content page. It should read “First Page Footer Section 2” and a new “Design” tab should appear at the top of your screen.
6. Choose the “Page Number” section within the “Design” tab and select the appropriate positioning of your numbers (i.e. bottom/center). If you are using Word 2011 and encounter a problem inserting page numbers directly into the footer, close the footer and simply use the insert page number drop down menu.
7. Choose the “Page Number” section again and select “format numbering” and select the appropriate number style (i.e. lower-case roman numerals “i, ii, iii...”).
8. Now return to the first page of your article’s text. Double click the footer area on your first text page. It should read “First Page Footer Section 3” and a new “Design” tab will appear on the top of your screen.
9. Choose the “Page Number” section and select the appropriate positioning of your numbers (i.e. bottom/center).
10. Choose the “Page Number” section again and select “format numbering” and select the appropriate number style (i.e. standard numerals “1, 2, 3...”).
11. Your pages should now be correctly numbered. If you used the Multilevel list (outline formatting) under the “Home” tab “Paragraph” section while writing your paper, then you can right click the table of contents and update it automatically. Otherwise, you will have to create a table of contents manually.

\* See also a written guide on page numbering for Word 2013 (similar principles should apply to later versions of Word) on the Kansas State University ETD site: <http://www.k-state.edu/grad/etdr/word/word13/pagenumbers.html>.

## **Attachment 3: Ten Step Process for Uploading the Thesis to ETDS**

## Ten Step Process for Submitting the Thesis to ETDS

- 1) Start by visiting <https://library.gwu.edu/etd>
  - a. In the left navigation bar on that page, you will find under “Formatting Your Content” a link to the “School of Law” page. These page links to guidelines that include specific requirements for font, margins, and page numbering, as well as a sample of the preliminary pages of the final thesis document.
  - b. In the same left navigation bar, you will find under “Word and LaTeX Resources” a link to “MS Word Help.” On this page, you can sign up for *Microsoft Word Training* if you feel you need a refresher for purposes of formatting your thesis in accordance with the Law School’s guidelines before you upload it onto ETDS.
  - c. Further down this left navigation bar you will find links to information about the ETD Approval Process, *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ) about submitting to ETDS and specific information about *Copyright Issues*.
  - d. You **must** download the “ETD Approval Form,” which can be found on the left-navigation bar by clicking “Forms and Surveys” (<https://library.gwu.edu/etd/forms-surveys>). This form must be signed by your thesis advisor after the thesis has been graded, and then the form must be submitted to Stephanie Allgaier, GW Law’s Director of Graduate Student Services, at [sallgaier@law.gwu.edu](mailto:sallgaier@law.gwu.edu) before final approval can be given to your thesis via ETDS.
  
- 2) The next step is to create an account at <https://www.etdadmin.com/main/home?siteId=55>. Click the “Sign up and get started today!” button to do so. After creating an account, you can come back to the [www.etdadmin.com](http://www.etdadmin.com) site as often as you need to complete the uploading process and make revisions. When asked to identify your institution, click on “The George Washington University.”
  
- 3) The first page will present *Publishing Options* with a set of instructions. You **must** select “Open Access Publishing.” The Law School will reimburse you for the cost of Open Access Publishing.<sup>3</sup> You may decide whether you want an “embargo” on your paper to withhold posting on the internet for up to two years. You may also decide whether you want major search engines like

---

<sup>3</sup> The reimbursement form is available on the GW Law Forms webpage, <https://www.law.gwu.edu/forms>, as a fillable PDF file. To receive reimbursement, submit this form to Finance Associate Max Hernandez, [maxhernandez@law.gwu.edu](mailto:maxhernandez@law.gwu.edu), with a PDF copy of the credit card receipt provided by ETDS.

Google to discover your paper. There is **no** requirement to register for a copyright.

- 4) The next step will prompt you to provide contact information where you can be reached. Please ensure you provide a permanent mailing and email address. Do not provide your GW email if you do not plan to use it anymore.
- 5) Next you will provide details about the title of your thesis, your degree, as well as your thesis advisor (there is no committee review for LL.M. theses). You will be prompted to provide text for a brief abstract, which will appear on the ETDS page as information for researchers in deciding whether to read your full paper. You may choose to simply use the same language from the abstract you provide in the preliminary pages of your thesis.
- 6) Next you will upload the document to ETDS in PDF format. Use the PDF converter function. FAQs about converting to PDF and much more are available at <https://library.gwu.edu/etd/steps> (see step 8).
- 7) Next, you can choose to order bound copies of your thesis at your own expense.
- 8) Finally, you will click on "Submit."
- 9) Once you have uploaded your document, the ETD administrator will receive email notification and will review the document for consistency with the formatting guidelines provided in the Law School's thesis submission guidelines.
- 10) If edits need to be made, the ETD administrator will ask you to make revisions in your original Word doc. After making the corrections to your Word doc, you must convert back to PDF and upload the new document. You will receive email notification when your thesis receives final approval and is uploaded to ETDS.

After completing this process, you can request reimbursement from the Law School for the ETDS Open Access Publishing fee. The reimbursement form is available on the GW Law Forms webpage, <https://www.law.gwu.edu/forms>, as a fillable PDF file. To receive reimbursement, submit this form to Finance Associate Max Hernandez, [maxhernandez@law.gwu.edu](mailto:maxhernandez@law.gwu.edu), along with a PDF copy of the credit card receipt provided by ETDS.

## **Attachment 4: Scholarly Writing Rubric**

**SCHOLARLY WRITING RUBRIC<sup>4</sup>**

	<b>Highly Proficient</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Developing</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	Introduction is effectively crafted to grab reader’s attention by gaining and holding interest. Introduction articulates the paper’s thesis, places the thesis in proper context, and lays out the framework of the paper. Hypothetical or real illustration may be used to give context to reader and develop an interest in the thesis. If a quotation is used to begin the paper, the quotation is closely connected to the topic and thesis, attributed to a credible source, and makes a good “sound bite.” The introduction includes a roadmap of the major subsections of the paper, briefly describing each part of the paper.	Introduction is well-crafted, but does not successfully grab and hold reader’s attention. This may be due to underdeveloped context, missing context, or an otherwise incomplete contextual background for the reader. An example may be used, but fails to fully connect to the thesis. A quotation, if used, appears to have no obvious connection to the topic of the paper, giving the impression that the author felt a need to include a quote, but for no good reason.	There is an introduction attempted, but execution is so poor as to give the reader no real sense of what to expect from the paper. There may be parts missing, such as a comprehensive roadmap. Over-quoting or over-reliance on other authors’ work may dominate the introduction, detracting from the sense that the paper topic and thesis is unique to the author.
<b>Thesis</b>	There is a clearly-stated thesis in the introduction to the paper. The thesis says something, is easily identifiable, and is manageable. The thesis strikes the right balance in scope, neither too simple nor too complex. Any biases or assumptions at play in the thesis are fair and appropriately identified, with recognition of alternatives where possible. Thesis results are positive and supportable; to the extent there are negative or problematic results, those results are addressed and defended in the analysis.	There is a thesis present in the paper, but it is not well-crafted. The reader has to work to find the thesis, and the reader may have to synthesize multiple partial thesis statements to understand the actual thesis in the paper. The thesis may be vague or underdeveloped, possibly resulting from the author’s incomplete grasp of the thesis, from an over-ambitious project (too broad in scope), or other reason suggesting the author has not fully committed to a thesis.	There are loose references to multiple possible theses, but no single sentence states the thesis, and the reader cannot uncover the thesis from reading the multiple loose references. Even with a thesis sentence, the thesis is poorly designed because it fails to fully satisfy the requirements of saying something, being easily identifiable, and manageable, though it may satisfy one or two of these requirements.
<b>Analysis: Support of the Thesis</b>	Based on the analysis, the thesis is valid and supportable. Analysis addresses counterarguments, reflecting critical reflection on the thesis. The paper considers how the thesis would operate in different factual situations to provide further support for the thesis on a broader scale. The analysis presents a solution that can be implemented or addresses why lack of implementation does not detract from the strength of the proposed solution. Effective use of hypotheticals or examples to illustrate analysis help reader grasp complex points. Limitations in scope are appropriately identified and addressed.	The analysis is partially underdeveloped, erroneous, or missing, leaving the reader unable to determine the validity of the thesis. This is more likely due to inadequate research or effort than to actual substantive gaps (there is analysis to support the thesis, but the student has not fully developed it, as compared to there is no analysis to support the thesis). The analysis fails to fully address counterarguments or implementation challenges, leaving unanswered questions for the reader. Scope limitations are acknowledged, but not addressed, or ignored.	There is an attempt at supporting the thesis, but the analysis is too thin to convince the reader of the thesis’s validity. The author’s approach is too cursory, making unsupported assumptions and drawing conclusions without fully engaging in the scholarship and other material to support the thesis.

<sup>4</sup> Excerpted from Jessica Clark and Kristen Murray, Scholarly Writing: Ideas, Examples, and Execution (Teacher’s Manual) (2d ed., Carolina Academic Press).

<b>Organizational Choices</b>	The paper executes the appropriate large-scale organizational approach (possibly as directed by law review or seminar professor), as well as consistently effective small-scale organization. The paper is internally consistent, with similarly structured headings and sub-headings, and properly proportioned sections. The paper is effectively and accurately titled. The paper shows evidence of thoughtful organizational choices that support the analysis.	On the whole, the paper shows signs of thoughtful organizational choices, but those choices are not effectively executed throughout the paper, or are not as well-executed as they could be. Some signs of this are imbalanced sections (e.g., a lengthy background section and a very short solution section), inconsistent headings and sub-headings, and an ordering of arguments that does not support the thesis as well as it could (e.g., starting with counterarguments).	There is no clear organizational approach to the paper, suggesting the author dumped in all information without time to assess its placement. The organization is so poorly executed as to detract from the analysis of the paper because the reader cannot understand how the parts and sub-parts of the paper fit together or how they support the paper's thesis. Lack of organization on the small scale is also present here, including poor paragraphing.
<b>Writing Style and Polish</b>	The writing is clear, concise, rhetorically effective, and meticulously proofread. For this category, technical accuracy is necessary but not sufficient: the writing also must be fluid and sophisticated. When effectively executed, examples of fluid and sophisticated writing include topic sentences, transitions, subject-verb agreement, and simplicity and brevity in sentence structure and word choice.	The writing contains few, if any, errors in style or mechanics; these errors do not detract from the overall substantive strength of the paper. Despite technical accuracy, the writing lacks some fluidity or sophistication (e.g., overuse of the passive voice, mismatching in subject-verb pairs, nominalizations, unnecessary wordiness, etc.).	The writing suffers from clarity or precision issues; substance is sometimes confused or obscured as a result. A more rigorous edit would have eliminated technical errors and mistakes. Use of colloquial or idiomatic speech is excessive. At the low end of this category, the writing shows a distinct lack of care in proofreading and editing. There may be signs of a need to work on the rules of standard written English.
<b>Incorporation of Feedback</b>	The paper accurately and appropriately incorporates feedback, including in response to specific comments from reviewers and applying specific comments on a global scale. Sophisticated interpretation and application of feedback is evident throughout the paper, resulting in a significantly improved draft. The improvements are attributable to the author's interpretation and application of the feedback rather than merely the result of accepting specific suggested changes.	The paper accurately and appropriately incorporates feedback, but does so by merely accepting specific changes or strengthening identified weak areas. The paper does not reflect a global application of feedback, leaving the reader to deal with inconsistencies and confusion—the inconsistencies and confusion stand out because the author demonstrated the ability to avoid these problems in other parts of the paper, but failed to similarly do so in others.	The paper rejects most or all feedback with no legitimate basis (e.g., the student did not communicate disagreement with the reviewer, but instead, just ignored the feedback).
<b>Publishability</b>	The paper contributes to the scholarly discussion in a way that suggests it is publishable with little revision. The paper appears complete and professional, with no obvious indication it is a student paper. The topic and thesis are timely, also suggesting likely publication; sources are appropriately and accurately cited. The style and voice are appropriate for a scholarly publication read by practitioners or scholars. A paper that meets this category is not guaranteed to be published, as all publishing decisions are the sole responsibility of the journal editors.	The paper does not advance the scholarly literature on the topic or does not advance it enough to garner publication. The paper does more than merely restate the literature, but fails to provide something useful to the audience. Despite these shortfalls, the thesis is novel and defensible. And with revision to answer these shortfalls, the paper could be strengthened to become publishable.	The topic is overwritten already and the utility of another article on the topic is likely low. A paper may also fall into this category if it provides too narrow a view, giving rise to many unanswered counterarguments that would make a reader question the placement of the article in a scholarly journal. The paper may also fail in other areas so much so as to prevent publication (e.g., writing style is ineffective and confuses the reader). A paper that falls into this category may still be worthy of academic credit.

## **Checklist for Rubric**

### **Introduction**

#### **The student:**

- identifies the thesis and includes a hook that captures the reader's interest and articulates the scope of the thesis.
- describes the overall argument.
- clarifies fundamental concepts to the extent necessary.
- summarizes the paper's structure in a roadmap.

### **Thesis Statement**

#### **The student's thesis statement is evaluated on the basis of the following elements:**

- **Issue**
  - The student identifies a problem and provides a constructive analysis of it.
  - If the proposal is procedural, the student provides recommended substantive standards.
- **Legal Significance**
  - The student presents a thesis that is novel, not obvious, and useful to the audience.
- **Persuasive Argument**
  - The argument in support of the thesis is clear, logical, and sustained throughout the document.
  - The student makes connections to broader related issues, without tangents or distractions.
- **Balance**
  - The student offers a proposition and gives sufficient weight to opposing views and countervailing considerations, by:
    - taking problems and turning them to the student's advantage.
    - addressing implications such as resources and policy matters.
    - acknowledging tradeoffs as necessary.

### **Background and Analysis: Support of the Thesis**

#### **The student proves the proposition by:**

- analyzing relevant facts, statutes, regulations, case law and policies and using these sources effectively to support arguments and distinguish counterarguments.
- synthesizing case law and issues when appropriate rather than simply presenting a descriptive summary.
- discussing precedent with an emphasis on binding precedent.
- testing the thesis' viability using actual facts to avoid unanticipated results



## **Organizational Choices**

### **The student:**

- structures the sections in a logical order.
- prepares the reader for the in-depth analysis by providing sufficient factual and legal background.
- coherently connects sections and uses transitions to effect good flow throughout.
- provides informative road maps and headers to guide the reader.

### **The student's conclusion:**

- re-states the thesis.
- provides insightful observations and conclusions (for example, by discussing the future implications of the thesis or by providing forward-looking recommendations).
- avoids introducing new, confusing information or propositions.

## **Writing Style & Polish**

### **The student achieves a polished product by employing:**

- correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- appropriate vocabulary and usage.
- clear and concise sentence structure, avoiding the passive voice where it would detract from persuasiveness or clarity.
- a professional tone, avoiding idioms and colloquialisms.
- an artful writing style that makes the paper pleasurable (not cumbersome) to read.

## **Evaluating the Overall Supporting Research**

### **The student:**

- understands how the thesis fits in the context of the existing literature.
- relies, where possible, on primary rather than secondary source authority.
- discusses the hierarchy of law and provides sufficient coverage of various sources.
- discusses relevant sources of law (constitutions, statutes, treaties, regulations, cases, administrative materials, and the like) with an appreciation of their authority relative to one another.
- discusses relevant case law.
- discusses relevant policy-related developments and issues.

## **Compliance with Citation and Academic Integrity**

### **The student:**

- complies with *Citing Responsibly* and cites to all outside sources.
- places citations appropriately in footnotes (not endnotes or inline citations) and formatted correctly per the Bluebook's Whitepages instructions for academic citations.

## **Attachment 5: Scholarly Writing Publication Guide**

## Scholarly Writing Publication Suggestions

The book *Scholarly Writing: Ideas, Examples & Execution* by Jessica Lynn Wherry and Kristen E. Murray is an excellent resource for information about publishing. Here are some highlights from the relevant chapter on publication and some tips gathered from students' and professors' publication experiences:

- I. **Where do you want to submit? Think about your career goals. Who do you want reading your paper?**
  - a. What are your options? Take note of the journals being cited most often in the articles you've been reading as part of your research.
    - i. Traditional law reviews are the most prestigious, but also the least likely to publish work by non-professors
    - ii. Specialty legal journals - these receive fewer submissions because of their more narrow subject matter requirements, so you have a better chance of publication here
    - iii. Practitioner newsletters (e.g. BNA) - these are often willing to publish student submissions
    - iv. Internet-only publications - some journals have "extra" Internet publication platforms, and others are online only. These are traditionally less prestigious, but they are gaining ground as we become more internet-focused as a society. Don't be deterred by an internet-only publication option!
  - b. Develop a list of prospective journals
    - i. The Washington & Lee database (<https://managementtools4.wlu.edu/LawJournals/>), with information for almost 800 journals, can help you search for journals by category and subject matter, provides submission instructions for each journal, and can even help generate a list of email addresses for electronic submission.
    - ii. Check out the journal database at Journal Seek ([www.journalseek.net](http://www.journalseek.net)) and LexisNexis ([www.lexisnexis.com/lawschool/prodev/lawreview](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lawschool/prodev/lawreview))
    - iii. The ABA offers a free search engine that searches the free full text of over 400 online law reviews and law journals, as well as document repositories hosting academic papers and related publications such as Congressional Research Service reports. This site can also help you in generating your list. ([https://www.americanbar.org/groups/departments\\_offices/legal\\_technology\\_resources/resources/free\\_journal\\_search.html](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/departments_offices/legal_technology_resources/resources/free_journal_search.html))
    - iv. Deanna Barmakian at Harvard Law School suggests you consider:

1. Is the journal in Westlaw's Journals and Law Reviews Combined (JLR) database?
  2. Are they in LexisNexis' Law Reviews, Combined (lawrev;allrev)?
  3. Are they indexed by Legal Trac?  
[https://www.cengage.com/search/productOverview.do?N=197+4294904586&Ntk=P\\_EPI&Ntt=126269676852085702017354736251578818018&Ntx=mode%2Bmatchallpartial#title-list](https://www.cengage.com/search/productOverview.do?N=197+4294904586&Ntk=P_EPI&Ntt=126269676852085702017354736251578818018&Ntx=mode%2Bmatchallpartial#title-list)
  4. Are they indexed by Index to Legal Periodicals and Books?  
<https://www.ebscohost.com/title-lists>
  5. Are they included in Tables of Contents Services like Current Index to Legal Periodicals?  
<https://lib.law.washington.edu/cilp/period.html>
- v. If you're interested in shortening your paper into a concise piece that might be suitable for a legal looseleaf and its practitioner audience, check out the LawTRIO database, which can be accessed from here:  
<https://gwlaw.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://www.infosourcespub.com/cdlinks/search.cfm>. You can search by subject and specifically limit your search to newsletters. The coverage is limited to US legal newsletters, but also includes online newsletters.
  - vi. Ulrich's Periodicals Directory is also useful for locating all types of publications, both foreign and domestic. You can find the database here:  
<http://proxygw.wrlc.org/login?url=http://ulrichsweb.serialsolutions.com>. In the advance search, students can limit to serial type, country of publication, and other limiters. This database is not limited to legal resources.
  - vii. Also, ExpressO and Scholastica, which are electronic submission systems (see more below in para. IV.c.), allow you to select which journals you would like to send your paper to. You can search by title, browse by category and Top 100 ranking (based upon [US News & World Report rankings](#) ).
  - viii. Finally, ask your professor for any suggestions as to which journals are likely to be interested in your work.

## II. Tailor your submission

- a. Check the journals' requirements - what do they want to see in a submission?

- b. Review previously published pieces for each journal to which you plan to submit your work. Look for average length, subject matter preferences and stylistic issues.
- c. The format of a piece published by a general-purpose law review (generally longer and more academic in tone) *might* differ somewhat from a piece published by a specialty legal journal (some specialty journals are similar to traditional law reviews, while others are more to-the-point and for use by busy practitioners), and it will definitely differ from a piece published in a BNA newsletter (much more succinct). Alter your piece according to the source to which you're submitting.

### III. Time your submission

- a. Best bets
  - i. February and March (especially mid-February) is the BEST time to submit a piece to a journal - new editorial boards have been selected, and they're looking to fill their upcoming volume.
  - ii. August through September (especially mid-August) is your second-best option; editorial boards are back at school, looking to fill up any empty slots. Sometimes there will be slots that remain unfilled from the spring, and other times a previously selected author might pull an article, causing the journal to scramble for a replacement.
  - iii. Some suggest submitting at the earlier end of each of these windows.
- b. Avoid submitting pieces during times outside these windows, and especially during December, January, June and July. Why? There's no one at school! Editorial boards are either enjoying their winter breaks or enjoying their summer jobs. June and July are a somewhat better bet because some editorial boards will continue to work over the summer, but mid-February and mid-August are still the best choices.
- c. From here? Winter break and summer break are GREAT times to review your options, make a list of publication outlets, and edit your note accordingly. Ideally, you should have someone with a "fresh" pair of eyes take a look at what you have in January or July, and then start sending out submissions!

### IV. Making your submission

- a. Make strategic decisions

- i. Send out a “first wave” of submissions to the journals in which you’d most like to publish. Go as broad as you can—the more journals you submit to, the more likely you are to receive an offer!
- ii. If you don’t get any offers, consider send out a “second wave” to journals in which you’re less interested, or to newsletters and internet outlets, about a week or two later.

b. What to send

- i. Cover letter - They don’t all require one, but you should send one unless the journal specifically asks you not to. Journal editors do read them.
  1. Use Law School letterhead (email the Thesis course professor for permission to obtain it)
  2. Make it interesting! Include a compelling fact or idea from your paper. Emphasize freshness.
  3. But keep it short! Save the details for the abstract and make the themes consistent.
  4. Include word count.
  5. Mention your qualifications and any past articles and where you placed them.
  6. Proofread your cover letter within an inch of its life!
  7. If emailing (more on this below), put the cover letter *in* the body of the email and not as an attachment.
  8. Professor Larry Cunningham offers advice about writing an effective submission cover letter at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180406210416/https://concurringopinions.com/archives/2009/08/sample-law-review-submission-cover-letters.html>. The book “Academic Legal Writing” by Eugene Volokh also has advice on cover-letter writing and offers samples of effective cover letters.
- ii. Abstract - Some journal editors review *only* abstracts, and then they read the full submissions of a few “finalists.” Without an abstract, you’re out of the running!
  1. About 200-250 words summarizing your paper, its implications, and why a journal should be interested in it.
  2. The abstract is very important because if you use ExpressO (see para. IV c) the receiving editors see only your name, school affiliation, title, and abstract.
  3. Frame it for an editorial audience by focusing on the impact and urgency/freshness of your contribution to the current literature.

4. Draw from your intro and conclusion to do this.
  5. Review some samples on SSRN.
  6. Professor Eugene Volokh of UCLA offers some advice about writing an effective abstract at <http://www.volokh.com/2010/02/08/writing-an-abstract-for-a-law-review-article/>
- iii. Resume - Update your resume! Some journals want to see a resume or CV. Tailor it to your audience, and remember this isn't a job search! Emphasize scholarly achievements (awards, etc.) and previous publications over work experience.
- iv. Check your formatting. Some journals have very specific requirements, and others don't. Generally speaking, your work should be:
1. Left-aligned, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font.
  2. Footnoted (not endnotes) that are single-spaced, 10-point Times New Roman font.
  3. Stellar bluebooking = happy editors.
  4. Consider using Prof. Volokh's journal article template to make your work look professional: <http://www2.law.ucla.edu/volokh/writing/article.dot>
- v. You may consider sending a follow up letter to your top choice journals, particularly if you relied on the journal's past articles in your paper or if the school has a program in their curriculum that focuses on your paper topic.
- c. How to send it
- i. Bepress's ExpressO (<https://www.bepress.com/products/expresso/>)
1. Bepress makes a "blast" release of your paper to law reviews of your choice. Your paper can be delivered to your choice of 550+ law school journals, simply by uploading the electronic file to the site. See the ExpressO FAQs at <https://www.bepress.com/products/expresso/authors/faq/>.
  2. **GW Law has an institutional account for current students and recent graduates. This allows you to make submissions to specialty journals without paying the ExpressO submission fee. Contact Scott Pagel, Associate Dean for Information Services and Director**

of the Law Library, to request access. He can be emailed at [spagel@law.gwu.edu](mailto:spagel@law.gwu.edu).

- a. The institutional account allows free submissions only to specialty journals.
  - b. To submit to general-purpose law reviews, you will need to make a separate personal ExpressO account and pay a fee of \$3.10 per submission.
3. This process is less personalized than emailing yourself, but many journals use it as their primary delivery method. You can upload a cover letter, abstract, and resume to accompany your paper when it gets sent. Note: because you are submitting under a student account, even if you submit after graduation, you may be blocked from some journals that don't accept student papers. However, these journals typically *do* accept submissions from LL.M. students; such restrictions are generally intended only for J.D. students, but ExpressO does not distinguish between LL.M. and J.D. students. To get around this, you can usually submit directly to those journals by email.
  4. GW Law's ExpressO Institutional Student Account is setup under the Complete Prepaid Plan, which allows for unlimited submissions, but it is restricted to a single subject area, which means students can only select one subject area per submission. You can, however, combine more than one subject area (e.g., banking AND corporate) for greater specificity. The system will also identify which journals are "full," meaning they are no longer accepting submissions.
  5. You can submit in your paper in "waves" - in other words, you can submit to 15 journals that are "sure things," and then whether you get offers or rejections, you can submit another 10-15 and put in expedite requests. When you submit to ExpressO you can print out a log of when you upload to help you keep track, but the system can automatically seek expedited review if you can an offer and want to see of other journals will match it (more on this in para. V. below).
- ii. Scholastica ([https://scholasticahq.com/law\\_reviews](https://scholasticahq.com/law_reviews)):
    1. In recent years, law journals have become overwhelmed with submissions, likely because ExpressO makes submitting so easy, and relatively inexpensive at \$3.10 per submission (or free for those with an institutional account). To weed out frivolous submissions, some journals have begun accepting via Scholastica, which



charges \$6.50 per submission. There is no free access to an institutional account.

2. From the author's perspective, Scholastica works exactly the same as ExpressO.
3. Some journals that have chosen Scholastica over ExpressO still accept submissions by email as a means of avoiding the \$6.50 charge. Others—especially general-purpose law reviews at higher ranked law schools—accept submissions only through Scholastica.

iii. Email

1. The Washington & Lee website (see para I.b) can e-mail articles for you
2. You can also email by yourself (to journals not on the W&L website)
3. The main drawback of this approach compared to ExpressO or Scholastica is that you'll need to maintain a carefully organized Excel spreadsheet to keep track of offers, rejections, and expedited reviews.

iv. Snail Mail

1. Only if the journal REQUIRES hard copy submission. Many limit submissions to electronic only.
2. Otherwise, you waste postage and kill trees, and run the risk of having your work lost amid the wreckage of a student journal office.

**V. Dealing with offers**

a. When you get an offer:

- i. Request an expiration date and any additional terms. Seeking guidance from a professor might be a good idea at this point to make sure you don't agree to something that's problematic.
- ii. Try to respectfully negotiate with the journal editors a one- to two-week period before the offer expires to allow you to consider it. During this period, consider using the offer to help you negotiate with other journals. It's common practice to use one offer as leverage to obtain additional offers from higher-ranked journals. You can contact other journals still considering your submission to request they "expedite" review of your manuscript so that you receive a decision from them before your original offer expires. Some law reviews will not give an initial response until they learn you are holding another offer.

1. ExpressO and Scholastica allow you to submit “expedite requests” through their systems; otherwise, you can submit expedite requests to journals by email.)
  2. Note it is considered unethical to submit your paper to a journal where you would *never* agree to be published only for the purpose of being able to seek expedited review from more prestigious journals.
- iii. ExpressO and Scholastica create templates so you can update journals of any offers you receive. You might tailor the template to express your gratitude in receiving the offer.
  - iv. Also negotiate with editors to post your paper on the Social Sciences Research Network (SSRN). Editors may want only the abstract visible until the issue goes to press. SSRN will get you attention outside the legal field and may result in offers to speak or present about your topic and thesis.
- b. When you accept an offer, notify other journals to withdraw your submission from consideration.
  - c. If no offers, change the title, do another round of revisions, and prepare for another round of submissions.
    - i. Submit to less prestigious journals
    - ii. Consider scaling back the length and scope of your paper and seek publication of an excerpt in a newsletter or other format
    - iii. Don’t take rejection personally!

**VI. Working with editors:** Once you’ve accepted an offer, you’ll embark on the very exciting publication process as an author working with 3L editors!

- a. Do NOT take edits personally. Allow yourself a day or two to digest suggestions before firing back a response.
- b. You don’t have to accept all changes (it’s your name on the article!) but do consider them and take them seriously.

**VII. The Dark Horse: Writing Competitions!**

- a. There are a surprising number of writing competitions that offer both publication AND cash prizes to the winning authors, in addition to perks like trips to conferences or gala events.
- b. Check requirements: some will accept any submission, some accept only one per school. You may be the default “winner” from your school if no one else wants to enter the competition!

- c. Places to look for competitions:
  - i. ABA section websites
  - ii. Writing Center home page  
(<http://www.law.gwu.edu/Academics/EL/Writing%20Center/Pages/Competitions.aspx>)
  - iii. Journal websites
  - iv. Prof. Kathryn Sampson's blog  
(<http://legalwritingcompetitions.blogspot.com/>)

## **Attachment 6: Writing Centers Information**

## GW LAW WRITING CENTER

For additional feedback throughout the writing process, you can turn to the GW Law Writing Center. The Writing Center offers one-on-one writing conferences, multi-person workshops, videos, tip sheets, and other resources to legal writers of any class year and ability. For more information, please visit [law.gwu.edu/writingcenter](http://law.gwu.edu/writingcenter).

### ONE-ON-ONE WRITING CONFERENCES

The Writing Center is staffed by roughly 45 Writing Fellows—upper-level law students with strong writing and analysis skills. Writing Fellows are trained to work with writers at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming and outlining, to developing the structure of a legal analysis, to publishing a near-finished product. The goal of each writing conference is to help student writers become skilled and critical readers of their own writing.

**Why to Go:** Writing Fellows listen, brainstorm, diagnose, and advise: they do not “fix” your paper! They do not spellcheck, grammar-check, cite-check, or proofread. Instead, they help students develop strategies for recognizing global problems in their thinking, organizing, and writing

**Where to Go:** Writing Center conferences are held in room B410. While walk-in appointments are permitted when available, you are encouraged to schedule a conference in advance so that the Writing Fellow can read your draft and prepare feedback before your session.

**When to Go:** Appointments often fill up quickly, so you should make an appointment as soon as you know you want to visit the Writing Center. You are limited to one *scheduled* conference in any 7-day period, but there is no limit to the number of walk-in appointments you can have. *Please note: there are two “Busy Weeks” each semester leading up to major 1L deadlines when all Writing Center appointments are 30 minutes in length and appointments book up quickly. In the Fall semester, Busy Weeks are in late September and mid-November; in the Spring Semester, Busy Weeks are in early February and late March.*

**How to Prepare:** If you wish for a Writing Fellow to review a draft, you must submit the draft to your Writing Fellow no later than 24 hours before your scheduled conference. You should also include an agenda in which you explain what the Writing Fellow should focus on while reading your draft. However, you may still attend a scheduled or walk-in appointment with a Writing Fellow to have a brainstorming conversation even if you do not submit a draft.

**Interested?** For more information and to schedule a conference, visit [law.gwu.edu/writingcenter](http://law.gwu.edu/writingcenter).

**The GW Law Writing Center is open in Fall and Spring but closed in Summer.**

## GWU WRITING CENTER

If you are seeking guidance on writing mechanics—such as grammar, syntax, and usage—please visit the main **GWU Writing Center** located in Gelman Library. You are encouraged to visit both the law school writing center and the university writing center, as they provide different types of feedback and support. For more information and to schedule a conference with a writing consultant, visit [writingcenter.gwu.edu](http://writingcenter.gwu.edu).

**The GWU Writing Center is open in Fall, Spring, and Summer.**