



Yong Pung How
School of
Law

Year 2023/24 Term 2

**LAW4063 ADVANCED LEGAL WRITING: STUDENT PUBLISHING INITIATIVE
(0.5CU, SMU-X)**

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A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This SMU-X course will give SMU law students opportunities to work one-on-one with graduate mentors to produce high-quality case commentaries or shorter-form legal articles, with an aspirational goal of publication. As well as enhancing their legal knowledge, students will hone their writing and editing skills, and learn to communicate their analysis in a manner which is helpful to both lawyers and non-lawyers. This will also help students develop their body of work as they move from school into practice.

Students can choose their topics from a curated list of topics, or propose their own ideas (ideally involving issues of practical significance, analysis of which would be helpful to practitioners and/or the general public).

Students will work closely together with their graduate mentor on their commentaries or articles, crafting their work and receiving feedback and comments on a pre-agreed schedule. Students can also build up their networking skills through these mentorships.

At the end of the course, students will have produced one case commentary or article of around 5,000 words. The students can submit their papers to SMU Lexicon or other forums.

B. PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)
LAW106 Legal Research & Writing I and II.

C. RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS
As recommended by the course coordinator and mentors.

D. ASSESSMENT METHOD

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Article (90%) 	Skeletal – 10% First draft (after feedback) – 35% Second draft (after feedback) – 35% Final version – 10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class participation (10%) 	Attending all sessions; being adequately prepared for each session; appropriately incorporating mentor comments in the drafts/submitted version.

There will be no final examination.

Assessment Criteria. Guidelines will be provided for each of the graded components mentioned above. Attendance at all sessions is *mandatory*. Students are to contact the coordinator and mentor if they are unable to attend a session. *Unexcused absences will result in a lowering of the class participation component of the final grade and/or the final grade itself.*

It is also expected that students will conduct themselves **professionally**, both in and out of class. This includes behaving in a mature, courteous manner towards classmates, the course coordinator and the mentors, as well as complying with instructions and course policies, as would be expected in a work environment. *Failure to do so will also result in a lowering of the class participation component of the final grade.*

Academic Integrity. All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

As a reminder on how to avoid plagiarism, students are encouraged to refer to this Library guide at: <https://library.smu.edu.sg/elearn>. When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://oasis.smu.edu.sg/Pages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

E. COURSE METHODS

This course will resemble an apprenticeship in legal writing. The student will work closely with the course coordinator and mentors to produce an article of strong quality.

The mentor will monitor the students' work closely at every stage, including: approving the paper topic, reviewing and commenting on the interim drafts, and reviewing and commenting on the final product. The mentor will also help the student to improve in his/her analysis and attain a better understanding of the subject, as well as in the student's writing and editing. The course coordinator will oversee the relationship, as well as assess the quality of the final article (together with the mentor).

F. CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: The syllabus/schedule is meant only as a guide and is subject to amendment.

Week	Topic
1	<p><u>In-class session with course coordinator and mentors</u></p> <p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to start writing ▪ Principles of good legal writing ▪ Editing – best practices <p>Meeting with mentor and course coordinator (agree on topic)</p>
2	Students to work on skeletal

3	Submission of <i>skeletal</i> to alumni mentor Meeting with mentor to review skeletal
4-6	Students to work on 1st draft.
7	Students to submit <i>1st draft</i> to mentor
8-9	Meeting with mentor to review 1st draft
10-11	Students to work on 2nd draft Students to attend workshop on finer points of writing.
12	Students to submit <i>2nd draft</i> to mentor
13-14	Meeting with mentor & course coordinator for final comments. Students to submit <i>final version</i> to mentor & course coordinator.

G. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Please note that all course materials (including any slides) are meant for personal use only, namely, for the purposes of teaching, studying and research. You are strictly not permitted to make copies of or print additional copies or distribute such copies of the course materials or any parts thereof, for commercial gain or exchange.

For the full copyright notice, please visit: <https://smu.sg/Copyright-notice> or OASIS -> CAMPUS LIFE & EXCHANGE -> CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE -> UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE

H. DROPPING A COURSE

Students are reminded to follow the dates and procedures of add/drop modules found in <https://oasis.smu.edu.sg/Pages/RO/All-About-BOSS.aspx#parentHorizontalTab5>. UG and JD students need to drop the electives via BOSS unless otherwise instructed by the School for specific electives (e.g. Moots).

Students who fail to follow the correct procedures and stipulated timelines for dropping their modules will obtain a “W” or “F” grades as indicated on OASIS.

Do note that a “W” and ‘F’ grade is reflected permanently on a student’s transcript.

I. ACCESSIBILITY

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's disability services team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: DSS@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

J. DIGITAL READINESS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (DRTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.