

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Law
with effect from Semester A 2024/25**

Note:

This course is for Chinese judge students of the JSD programme.

Part I Course Overview

Course Title:	Legal Writing and Skills I
Course Code:	LW8713D
Course Duration:	One semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	D8
Medium of Instruction:	Chinese (Putonghua) supplemented by English
Medium of Assessment:	Chinese
Prerequisites: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Precursors: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Equivalent Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Exclusive Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

The objective of the course on Legal Writing and Skills to teach students those essential skills in academic legal writing, in particular, how to identify a topic worthy of legal research, the skills in both descriptive and analytical writing, skills in formulating a reasoned argument.

This course will be a hands-on course in which students are expected to actively participate in the course by rewriting their proposal and come up at the end of this course with a written chapter one of their respective theses.

In 8-9 lectures, the instructors will teach some basic skills which are essential for dissertation writing. Sample journal articles and past JSD dissertations will be analysed to illustrate how those skills can be and have been applied. Students will be assigned to do intensive reading of books and articles relevant to their theses thereafter. In the remaining 4-5 lectures, students will be asked to present their writings, which will be used as examples to discuss how those writings can be further improved and what additional research work needs to be undertaken in order to come up with improvements.

Through such continuous practice over one semester, students are expected to master the necessary academic writing skills.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

No.	CILOs	Weighting	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Demonstrate an understanding of various writing skills.		✓		
2.	Understand the differences of different writing skills, the purposes of different writing skills and their application in different writings.		✓	✓	
3.	Develop the ability to know what skills are needed for which kind of writing in their own thesis writing process.			✓	✓
4.	Develop the skills to apply different kinds of writing skills in writing their theses.			✓	✓
		100%			

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

Course teaching methods:

Lectures will be given to enable students to understand various writing skills.

Reading as well as actual practice in revising their research proposal and chapter one of their theses will be hands-on practice the students are expected to do frequently and intensively through the semester.

Presentation as well as meaningful participation through critically commenting on their peers' research proposal and writing will constitute the third method of teaching.

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week
		1	2	3	4			
Lecture and In-class Discussions	Lectures and in-class discussion and analysis will introduce various writing skills and their relevance as well as importance to thesis writing.	✓	✓					
Presentation and Participation in Discussions	- Each student will be given several opportunities to present his/her revised thesis proposal as well as the first chapter of his/her thesis, especially on research topic, literature review, and how to structure the thesis. - Students are required to actively participate during in-class discussions on the presentation of his/her classmates.		✓	✓	✓			
Readings	- Students are required to meet their supervisors frequently during the semester to select reading materials for their theses. - Students are expected to read around 10 journal articles relevant to his/her thesis topic.		✓	✓	✓			

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

This course will be assessed by attendance and participation on a pass or fail basis.

NOTE: To pass this course, students must pass both components of this course.

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4				
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
1. Proposal Presentation and Discussion	✓	✓	✓	✓			40%	The use of Generative AI tools is not allowed.
2. Submission of a Revised Proposal	✓	✓	✓				60%	The use of Generative AI tools is not allowed.
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. A research proposal of 6,000 words	Ability to explain and present in detail a chosen topic	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Marginal levels
2. Class presentation	Ability to explain and present in detail a chosen topic	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Marginal levels

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. A research proposal of 6,000 words	Ability to explain and present in detail a chosen topic	High	Significant	Moderate	Marginal levels
2. Class presentation	Ability to explain and present in detail a chosen topic	High	Significant	Moderate	Marginal levels

Part III Other Information

1. Keyword Syllabus

Discussion of descriptive and analytical writing skills
Discussion of skills in formulating a reasoned argument
Hands-on practice of those skills

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

To be assigned in class and by supervisors.

2.2 Additional Readings

To be assigned by supervisors.

2.3 Access to Library Resources

Students will have the opportunity to attend a tour of the library during the first few weeks of the course. Students should take full opportunity to take a library tour. The law librarian will instruct students on how to access other libraries and facilities within and outside Hong Kong.

The Law Library has an excellent collection of legal materials in print copy and electronic format. Some important databases include:

- BLIS (Bilingual Laws Information System) which contains the statutory Laws of Hong Kong and selected constitutional documents.
- Lexis/Nexis
- Westlaw
- Law Library Electronic Databases that include Index to Legal Periodicals and Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals, Latest Judgement Alert, Hong Kong Premium Service, Hansard U.K

CD-ROM's include British Hansard, LEXIS/NEXIS, the Laws & Regulations of China, and the European Union Laws Library. There are also databases in Chinese as well as print format copies of Chinese law.