Upper-level Writing Requirement

As you plan your academic program, please be aware that the upper-level writing requirement (Academic Rule XII in the Announcements) requires all students to complete two substantive writing projects in order to graduate. Courses which satisfy an upper-level writing requirement are normally marked as such both within the course schedule document (as a footnote) and the Course Descriptions area. The Course Schedule and Registration websites also include an upper-level writing “mini” schedule, to help you identify writing courses for the semester. Please be aware that if a course is marked as an “Exam or Paper option”, then the option is with the faculty member to choose whether students may complete a project to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement. If you are unsure, please speak with the course professor before assuming you will be able to complete a requirement satisfying writing project.

Effective beginning with the Fall 2015 semester, the writing requirement must be met by completing a “practice-oriented” legal writing course listed in section A and then a second “academic/scholarly” legal writing course in one of the categories listed in section B or any two “practice-oriented” legal writing courses from the types listed in section A.

Section A
The practice-oriented legal writing requirement can be met by successfully completing one of the following courses with a grade of B- or above:

1. Appellate Advocacy
2. Legal Drafting (any variety)
3. A course that will meet the requirements for an Applied Portfolio
4. VIS International Arbitration Moot Court Competition

Section B
The academic/scholarly writing requirement can be met by successfully completing one of the following courses with a grade of B- or above:

1. Law Journal Writing
2. Directed Research (DR): Any student enrolled in DR must attend a seminar in Academic Legal Writing# that covers topics related to the writing process. Writing requirement credit will not be posted for the DR unless the registrar receives verification that the student satisfactorily attended the Academic Writing seminar. The faculty member supervising the DR will be required to certify that each of the requirements of the Academic Rules has been met for each student using the DR to satisfy the writing requirement.
3. A Qualifying Course Paper (QP). Any student enrolled in a QP course must attend a seminar in Academic Legal Writing* that covers topics related to the writing process. While credit for the course will be awarded when the faculty member submits the grade, the QP course will not count toward satisfaction of the writing requirement unless the registrar receives verification that the student satisfactorily attended the Academic Writing seminar. The faculty member supervising the QP will be required to certify that each of the requirements of the Academic Rules has been met for each student using the QP to satisfy the writing requirement.

4. Advanced Legal Research and Writing.

* The Seminar in Academic Legal Writing will be a non-credit, three-hour seminar offered one time at the beginning of each semester.

**Professional Skills Requirement**

The American Bar Association requires all students to take at least one professional skills course prior to graduation. Professional skills courses in our curriculum include: Alternative Dispute Resolution Techniques; Mediation Advocacy; Mediation and Arbitration Skills; Interviewing, Counseling and Negotiating Skills; Legal Drafting; Appellate Advocacy; Trial Advocacy; Trial Practice; Trial Skills; Advanced Trial Practice; CCLS Clinics; Immigration Litigation Clinic; Innocence Project Clinic and Clemency Project; Criminal Defense Clinic; Criminal Prosecution Clinic; and Vis International Arbitration Moot Court. In addition, any course meeting the Transition-to-Practice requirement (clinic or capstone course) will also meet the Professional Skills requirement. However, for a capstone or clinic course of fewer than 6 credits, a student may choose to forgo the use of the course towards the Professional Skills requirement if he or she prefers to double-count the course towards the Transition-to-Practice and upper-level writing requirements. For example, if a student completes a portfolio within a 3 credit capstone course, he or she can use this course to meet the Transition-to-Practice and Professional Skills requirements or the Transition-to-Practice and the practice-oriented writing requirement.

**Please Note:** Students must fulfill the writing requirement and professional skills requirement through enrollment in separate courses. In other words, students may not use the same course to satisfy both of these requirements (“double-counting”). The only exception to this is completion of a clinic worth 6 credits or more. In this case, the student can complete both the Professional Skills requirement and the practice-oriented writing requirement through this one clinic (the Transition-to-Practice requirement is also fulfilled). The student must complete a writing portfolio to satisfy the practice-oriented writing requirement within a clinic.