Like prior editions, the seventh edition of *Legal Writing* adopts a process-based approach, not a document-based approach. Learning to write using a document-based approach is like learning to cook by reading a description of the finished dish: how it looks, how it tastes, how it smells. The description of the finished dish is important because the cook needs to understand her goal. But the description of the dish doesn't tell her what she needs to do to get there.

Learning to write using a process-based approach is like learning to cook that same dish by reading the recipe. The recipe takes the cook through the stages of preparation (“chop the carrots into quarter-inch slices; sauté the onions in one tablespoon of olive oil”). In those early stages, the elements of the dish don’t look, taste, or smell the way they will when the cooking process is completed (“cook over low heat, stirring constantly until thickened; then pour into the chicken stock mixture and simmer for one hour”). But those intermediate stages are critical to achieving the end result.

Like a recipe, this book consciously tracks the stages in the writing process. Concepts are introduced at the points where they become relevant to a writer’s process of creating and communicating content. In this new edition, the rule structure is still the starting point. Earlier expansions in the treatment of analogical reasoning and narrative are maintained, but the material is significantly streamlined to meet the needs of modern students. A streamlined approach also preserves the primary pedagogical role of the professor and the student’s actual writing assignment. After all, a student can’t learn too much by reading about how to write. The real action happens in the writing itself. This book aims to convey the crucial information without adding unnecessary distraction or reading time.

Other changes improve the book’s substance. As adult learners, law students need to understand why they are being asked to learn in certain ways. Chapter 1, then, begins with a section on adult learning, the writing process, incremental learning, and “flipped” classrooms. Some content has been combined with other sections, making room for a new Chapter 4 on working with statutes. These days, most legal questions begin with statutes, so this new chapter gives statutes a more prominent place. The citation chapter has been updated as well. Chapter 16’s treatment of letter writing has been streamlined to better match the needs of a first-year course.
The section on brief writing has been restructured and supplemented to provide more guidance in fewer pages. Chapter 18 uses the rule to help students identify issues, begin to organize a draft, and sketch out working headings. Chapter 19 teaches the skill of reworking a rule statement into a more favorable expression—not just accepting the most obvious rule statement from the authorities. Chapter 20 covers the first steps in writing the working draft, and Chapter 21 helps the student refine arguments, especially with the Question Presented and the standard of review. Chapters 22 (facts statements) and 23 (remaining components) complete the initial writing process. Revision and oral argument are covered in Chapters 24 and 25.

**Appendices:** The sample documents are designed, of course, for critique, not for mimicry. The samples in this edition are:

- *Appendix A:* An office memo applying a three-element conjunctive rule and using rule-based reasoning, analogies, policy, and factual inferences.
- *Appendix B:* An office memo applying a rule with factors and making significant use of factual analogies.
- *Appendix C:* Sample letters.
- *Appendix D:* A trial-level brief applying a procedural rule (setting aside a default judgment) that incorporates the substantive rule. A subpart of the analysis uses a set of factors.
- *Appendix E:* An appellate brief addressing a pure question of law setting out two alternative arguments.
- *Appendix F:* An appellate brief making extensive use of statutory construction tools, including the definition of terms used in the rule and arguments based on applicable policy rationales.

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