Upper Level Writing Requirement

All students are required to fulfill the Upper Level Writing Requirement (ULWR). Academic Rule I. F. states:

I. Graduation Requirements

F. Upper-Level Writing Requirement:

1. Students must complete at least one major writing project, substantial research paper, or equivalent number of smaller writing projects with frequent feedback from a faculty member. This might include seminars, independent studies, or other work, so long as it involves substantial original analysis and research, multiple drafts, and is certified by the faculty member as meeting this requirement. The supervising instructor must certify to the Law School Registrar that a project sufficiently meets the Upper Level Writing Requirement by the first business day in October for students graduating in the fall and the first business day in February for the students graduating in the spring. Independent study courses may fulfill the writing requirement; students may receive from 1 to 3 units of credit as agreed to in advance by the instructor.

Ways to Complete the Requirement
There are many ways to complete the requirement. The list below offers some suggestions on fulfilling the ULWR, but the Rule is flexible and allows faculty and students to work out the parameters of the project.

- **Take a class that is designated as meeting the ULWR.** Every student in the class will write a paper (or series of papers) that may fulfill the requirement. The instructor must still certify that the paper is of sufficient quality to meet the requirement. For example, a student’s paper may be sufficient to pass the course, but it may not meet the instructor’s standard to fulfill the ULWR. To find courses that fulfill the ULWR, click on the ULWR box in the on-line Course Catalogue to filter for classes with this designation.

- **Take a class that may fulfill the ULWR if the student completes additional work described in the course catalogue.** For example, the student may have to write a longer paper or submit more papers than others in the class. These courses are not usually included in the on-line filter that screens for courses that meet the ULWR.

- **Take a class that requires a paper, but which is not designated as fulfilling the ULWR.** A class may require a paper by the end of the semester, but the professor does not read or
comment on early drafts. The paper does not, therefore, qualify as fulfilling the ULWR. The student may speak to the instructor before the class begins or at the beginning of the semester, seeking permission to use the paper to fulfill the ULWR. The student will turn the paper in for a grade at the end of the semester the same as all other students in the class. After the grade is posted, the student will re-write the paper based on the instructor’s comments.
  
  o The instructor has the option to grant an additional unit of credit for the re-write through an Independent Study course.
  
  o If the student substantially lengthens the original paper the instructor may give up to three units of credit through an Independent Study course.

• Take a clinic that is not designated as fulfilling the ULWR. The student must speak to the instructor before the class begins or at the beginning of the semester to arrange to write a paper for the clinic that fulfills the ULWR. Be aware that not every clinic has a project available every semester that will fulfill the requirement.

• Take an Independent Study class. Students can earn 1-3 units of credit for a paper on a topic chosen by the student. The student must find a faculty member willing to supervise the paper and fill out and turn in the Independent Study form.

• Re-write your Moot Court brief. After the Moot Court competition is over, a student can ask a faculty member to read and comment on the portion of the brief that the student wrote. The student will then re-write the paper based on the comments. The instructor has the option to grant an additional unit of credit for the re-write through an Independent Study course.

• Write a brief or research memorandum on a pro bono case. The ULWR can be fulfilled by working on a pro bono project for no academic credit. A faculty member must read and comment on the brief or research memorandum, which the student must re-write. The student must take care that client confidentiality is not breached.

• Write a paper for no academic or pro bono credit. A student does not have to receive academic or pro bono credit to fulfill the ULWR. The student does need a faculty advisor to read and comment on the paper, and to certify that the paper has fulfilled the ULWR.

Timing
Most students begin their paper in the 2L spring semester or, at the latest, the 3L fall semester. The requirement can also be completed in fall of the 2L year. Students are strongly discouraged
from beginning their paper in spring of 3L year; these students run the risk of not completing the paper in time to fulfill the graduation requirement.

The deadline for spring graduates to fulfill the requirement is the first business day in February. For fall graduates, the deadline to fulfill the requirement is the first business day in October.

**Incompletes**
If the student’s paper is not finished by the end of the semester, the student must seek the instructor’s permission to extend the deadline and receive an Incomplete. Both the instructor and the student must fill out an Incomplete Agreement Form, which sets a new deadline to finish the paper.

The last possible deadline to turn the paper in and graduate on time is noon on the second Friday after the last day of final examinations in a student’s final semester; the instructor may set an earlier deadline. A student who fails to meet the deadline will not graduate on time and will not be certified to take the next available bar exam. See Academic Rules I.F.2 and V.B.1.

**I. Graduation Requirements**

**F. Upper-Level Writing Requirement:**

2. If a student has an Incomplete in a course that fulfills the upper-level writing requirement the student must satisfactorily complete the course work within the time limits stated in V.B. below. Students who fail to meet the deadline will receive no credit for the course and the Incomplete will be transformed to the letter grade of “F” and will be so recorded on the student transcript.

**V. INCOMPLETE COURSES**

Assignments in a semester-long course must be turned in by the close of business on the final day of instruction for that semester. Faculty may set an earlier or later deadline for assignments applicable to all members of the class; notice to students of the earlier or later deadline must be in writing.

**B. Deadlines for Completing Incomplete Work:**

Incompletes must be completed no later than the following deadlines (instructors may set earlier deadlines):
1. Courses that fulfill the Upper Level Writing Requirement, including Independent Study/Directed Research that fulfill the Requirement:
   a. Noon on the second Friday after the last day of final examinations in the semester in which the student graduates.

Sign-Off from the Instructor
Regardless of whether students fulfill the ULWR through a class, Independent Study, or on their own for no credit, they MUST turn in the Upper Level Writing Requirement Sign-Off form. It is the student’s responsibility to get the form signed; faculty do not automatically fill it out even if a class is designated as satisfying the requirement.

Students cannot graduate without an Upper Level Writing Requirement form on file with the Law School Registrar.