

**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
2016 UNIFIED WRITING COMPETITION**

These are the official rules of the 2016 Unified Writing Competition and the only rules upon which you should rely. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE RULES WILL RESULT IN YOUR DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE UNIFIED WRITING COMPETITION.

ELIGIBILITY

All students are eligible to participate in the Unified Writing Competition (UWC). Participants may submit to all journals. 1L day, 1L evening, and 2L evening students will receive priority over 2L day and 3L evening students in journal selection. The *Fordham Law Review* and *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, however, only consider 1L day and 1L evening students for membership. The accompanying handout discusses the eligibility requirements of each journal.

DATES

The UWC will commence at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 22, 2016, and conclude at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 26, 2016. The official competition clock will be based on Fordham's computer network, which follows the international atomic clock.

LOCATION

The UWC will be conducted online using Fordham University's Lawnet platform. Competitors may participate from any physical location. **It is the responsibility of competitors to ensure that they have reliable access to the internet and scanning capabilities.** The competition may be found at:

<http://go.lawnet.fordham.edu>

OFFERS

Fordham's journals will begin to make offers to students no later than Sunday, June 26, 2016. Please be advised that offers are given on a **rolling basis**, and will continue throughout the week. Once a competitor selects a journal, he or she should immediately accept the offer and notify other journals of the decision. All offers will be concluded by Friday, July 1, 2016, giving competitors ample time before the OCI bid deadline on Wednesday, July 6, 2016 to update their OCI materials.

CONFLICTS

Students with compelling conflicts—including, but not limited to, full-time employment—may request to participate in an alternate competition. **This alternate competition will take place between 8:00 a.m. on Friday, May 27, 2016 and 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 31, 2016.** Please note that this is Memorial Day weekend.

To participate in the alternate competition, you must submit the following information in an email to FordhamLRevENE@fordham.edu, with the subject line “Alternate 2016 UWC Request,” by **5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 29, 2016**: (1) your full name; (2) your telephone number; (3) a detailed explanation of your conflict; and (4) thorough documentation of your conflict (e.g., a scanned copy of your brother’s wedding invitation AND a scanned copy of your travel itinerary or a letter from your employer verifying your work hours). Competitors will be notified of their approval for the alternate competition on a rolling basis.

HONOR CODE

Any violation of the Honor Code will result in disqualification from the Writing Competition and referral to the Dean for disciplinary action.

The UWC is conducted pursuant to Fordham’s Code of Academic Responsibility (or “Honor Code”), which prohibits, among other things, obtaining unauthorized assistance and using unauthorized sources in the course of completing an assignment. **COMPLIANCE WITH THE HONOR CODE IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.** Specifically, but not exhaustively:

YOU MAY NOT COLLABORATE OR DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF THE COMPETITION WITH ANYONE. “Anyone” means ANYONE, including, but not limited to, classmates, family members, friends, co-workers, and outside lawyers regardless of their relationship to the writing competition or Fordham Law School. This rule extends from the beginning of the competition until all journal offers have been made.

You may not receive assistance of any kind from anyone—including editing assistance—while working on your competition submission.

You may not conduct outside research of any kind, including research on the internet.

You may not look at or attempt to look at any journal publication or student Note after the competition has begun. We suggest that you do this before the competition.

You may not look at or attempt to acquire UWC submissions from previous years at any time before or during the competition.

You may not attempt to access UWC competition materials on Lawnet outside of the dates and times of the competition in which you are approved to participate, unless such access has been specifically authorized by the UWC Administrator. ANY attempt to tamper with, disable, or defeat the permissions and protections of Lawnet is a violation of the Honor Code.

You may not share your Lawnet login credentials with anyone. This includes sending your competition ID to the UWC Administrator in any correspondence, with the exception of your submission to UWC@fordham.edu (discussed below). You may not allow anyone to use Lawnet with your login credentials.

Take all measures to ensure that your integrity and academic honesty cannot be questioned.

COMPETITION EXERCISES

To complete the UWC, all students must complete two mandatory exercises: (1) a Bluebook exercise; and (2) a written analysis of a legal problem in the form of a student Note. These mandatory exercises are discussed in greater detail below.

In addition to the mandatory exercises, students may choose to complete journal-specific optional exercises. The *Law Review* accepts an optional 500-word Personal Statement. All other journals, except the *Urban Law Journal*, will review an optional Statement of Interest. These exercises are discussed in greater detail on the accompanying handout labeled “Journal Descriptions” and on each journal’s website.

PROCEDURE

Identification

1Ls in both the Day and Evening Divisions will be automatically registered to participate in the UWC. 2L Day and Evening Divisions students, 3L Evening Division students, and LLMs must contact the UWC Administrator at FordhamLRevENE@fordham.edu to register for the UWC.

Competitors will receive their competition number in an email to their **Fordham email address** once they are registered to participate in the UWC. This number will serve as your identity in the UWC. If you do not receive this email by Friday, May 13th, 2016 please contact the UWC Administrator at FordhamLRevENE@fordham.edu.

You will use your Fordham AccessIT ID to access the competition materials on Lawnet.

You must place your competition number on the **top right corner of each page of your submission** (not only on your Note, but also on your Bluebook exercise and any additional submission materials). **DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, place your name, email address, Fordham ID number, or any other identifying information anywhere on your submission. If you do, your submission will not be considered.**

The UWC is conducted **STRICTLY** anonymously. The only places where you should provide any identifying information are: (1) the mandatory “Competitor Information” form on Lawnet; and (2) the body of your mandatory email submission to UWC@fordham.edu (discussed below).

Prior to submitting your competition materials, you must input your “Competitor Information” in Part A of the “Competition Form.” To reach the “Competition Form,” you must first follow the “Unified Writing Competition” link under “My Workspaces” on Lawnet. Then, you can click the “Go to the Competition Form” button on the UWC home page. In Part A of the “Competition Form,” provide your year in school, mailing address, and phone number. Note that on this form your “year in school” is the year and division that you are about to finish, not enter (most competitors, therefore, will be 1L Day and 1L Evening students). Also, you should submit the phone number by which you may be reached in mid to late June, accounting for any travel plans.

Access

Competition materials will be made accessible to UWC competitors at 7:00 p.m. on May 22, 2016. All competition materials will be available on Lawnet and may be viewed, downloaded, or printed for the duration of the competition. The ability to submit or modify submissions will be disabled at 7:00 p.m. on May 26, 2016. Competition materials will be made unavailable to competitors at that time.

To access the Bluebook and student Note exercises, follow the “Unified Writing Competition” link under “My Workspaces” on Lawnet. On the UWC home page, click the “View Competition Exercises” button. There, you will be presented with a list that will contain the Bluebook exercise and Note sources. You may download or print these materials.

Competition materials will be made accessible to those competitors who have successfully petitioned for participation in the alternate competition at 8:00 a.m. on May 27, 2016. All competition materials will be available to those competitors on Lawnet and may be viewed, downloaded, or printed for the duration of the alternate competition. The ability to submit or modify submissions will be disabled at 8:00 a.m. on May 31, 2016. Competition materials will be made unavailable to alternate competition competitors at that time.

Exceptional Circumstances

Any corrections, additions, or modifications to UWC rules or materials will be communicated to competitors via the “Announcements” area on the UWC home page. Competitors will also receive an email notification of new “Announcements.”

Extensions will NOT be granted for students who fall ill during the competition. However, students with compelling circumstances—such as hospitalization—may be considered for short extensions. The UWC Administrator should be notified **immediately** of any such occurrence, and the student seeking an extension because of serious illness must provide documentation of hospitalization.

In the unlikely event that Lawnet should fail during the competition, please inform the UWC Administrator immediately. Alternative submission procedures may be considered.

COMPETITION MATERIALS

Approved Materials

You may use the following materials when completing the UWC exercises:

- 1) The materials provided in the “Competition Exercises” library on Lawnet
- 2) These rules
- 3) The documents provided in the “Tips and Tricks” library on Lawnet
- 4) The 20th edition of the Bluebook
- 5) A non-legal dictionary
- 6) Black’s Law Dictionary
- 7) A thesaurus

USE OF ANY OTHER MATERIALS IS PROHIBITED. Your Note must be based **ONLY** on the materials provided in the “Competition Exercises” library on Lawnet.

You **MAY NOT** access **ANY** material on Westlaw, Lexis, Bloomberg, or any other internet resource.

ANY PARTICIPANT WHO USES ANY OUTSIDE SOURCE WHATSOEVER WILL BE DISQUALIFIED AND REFERRED TO THE DEAN FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

The Bluebook

Your Note and Bluebook exercise must conform to the 20th edition of the Bluebook. Please make sure that you have the 20th edition, as it differs significantly from the 19th. Do not use the AWLD book.

SUBMISSION

Your completed submission will be comprised of your Note, your Bluebook exercise, and your Statement of Interest or Personal Statement, should you choose to write one. You are required to submit your completed submission in **TWO** separate ways: (1) upload your submission to Lawnet; and (2) email your submission to **UWC@fordham.edu**. **BOTH** submissions **MUST** be received by 7:00 p.m. on May 26, 2016 (or 8:00 a.m. on May 31, 2016 for students participating in the alternate competition). In addition, you must complete the Honor Statement and the “Competitor Information” forms on Lawnet. **If you fail to submit ALL the required materials by EITHER method before the deadline, your submission will not be considered.**

LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

(1) Submit on Lawnet

When you have completed your Bluebook exercise, Note, and Personal Statement or Statement of Interest, navigate to the “Competition Form” on Lawnet. There, you will be presented with the submission form, which is subdivided into four parts.

As discussed above, competitors must input their “Competitor Information” in Part A of the “Competition Form.”

In Part B of the “Competition Form,” you **MUST** select **ALL** the journals for which you intend to be considered. Please note that your submission will **ONLY** be received by the journals that you select. Additionally, in Part B you must upload your journal-specific Personal Statement or Statement of Interest, should you choose to write one. To attach a Personal Statement or Statement of Interest for a selected journal, click “Choose File.” Browse for the file that you wish to submit and then click “Open.” Repeat this process to attach as many files as your submission requires. **ATTACHED FILES MUST BE IN PDF FORMAT.**

In Part C of the “Competition Form” you must upload your Bluebook exercise and Note. To upload your exercises, click “Choose File.” Browse for the file that you wish to submit and then click “Open.” **ATTACHED FILES MUST BE IN PDF FORMAT.**

Before submitting your materials, you must agree to the **honor statement** incorporated into Part D of the “Competition Form.” Because the competition requires anonymity, you will **sign this statement by indicating that you “Agree.”** The electronic medium does not diminish the gravity of this affirmation. Your agreement to the honor statement certifies that you abided by the Honor Code throughout the competition and that you participated in compliance with the competition’s no-aid and closed-universe requirements.

Once you have completed each part of the “Competition Form,” click “Save” at the bottom of the page to submit your materials. You will receive a confirmation email at your Fordham email address after you have submitted.

The files that you attach to your Lawnet submission must be named by the following conventions:

Competitor_[competition number]_Bluebook_Exercise
Competitor_[competition number]_Note

Any additional submission materials, such as a journal-specific Personal Statement of Statement of Interest, must be named by the following convention:

Competitor_[competition number]_[abbreviated journal name]_[type of additional material]

The following list gives the abbreviated journal names that should be used:

Fordham Law Review: FLR
Fordham Urban Law Journal: ULJ
Fordham International Law Journal: ILJ
Fordham Journal of Corporate & Financial Law: JCFL
Fordham Environmental Law Review: ELR
Fordham Intellectual Property, Media & Entertainment Law Journal: IPLJ

For example, if your competition number is “UWC000” and you wish to submit a Personal Statement to the *Fordham Law Review*, you must name that document “Competitor_
UWC000_FLR_Personal_Statement.”

(A) Editing Lawnet Submissions

You may edit your Lawnet submission at any time during the competition. To do so, navigate to the “Competition Form” on Lawnet. Next to the item that you would like to update or edit, click “Replace.” Then click “Choose File.” Browse for the file that you wish to upload and then click “Open.” Be sure to “save” any changes made and confirm that your submission appears on the “Competition Form.” You will receive a new confirmation email whenever you successfully edit your submission.

(B) Journal-Specific Lawnet Submissions

You are encouraged to submit to all journals. If you wish to submit to all journals, a single, complete submission with all journals marked in Part B will be sufficient. You may wish, however, to submit to

only some journals and not others. To do this, select those journals in Part B to which you wish to submit and do not mark the other journals.

(2) Submit by Email

Completed submissions **MUST** also be emailed to: **UWC@fordham.edu**

NO emails aside from FINAL submissions may be sent to this address. Unlike the Lawnet submission, the email submission may **NOT** be updated. The body of the email message must contain your full name, but otherwise remain blank. The subject line must read:

Unified Writing Competition Competitor [competition number]

Each email submission must have at least two attachments: (1) your Note; and (2) your Bluebook exercise. **ATTACHMENTS MUST BE IN PDF FORMAT.** Your email submission attachments must be named by the following conventions:

Competitor_[competition number]_Bluebook_Exercise
Competitor_[competition number]_Note

Any additional submission materials **must also be attached to your email submission**, including journal-specific Personal Statements and Statements of Interest intended for **ANY JOURNAL**. Any such additional submission material **must** be in PDF format and named by the following convention:

Competitor_[competition number]_[abbreviated journal name]_[type of additional material]

The following abbreviated journal names should be used:

Fordham Law Review: FLR
Fordham Urban Law Journal: ULJ
Fordham International Law Journal: ILJ
Fordham Journal of Corporate & Financial Law: JCFL
Fordham Environmental Law Review: ELR
Fordham Intellectual Property, Media & Entertainment Law Journal: IPLJ

For example, if your competition number is “UWC000” and you wish to submit a Personal Statement to the *Fordham Law Review*, you should name that document “Competitor_UWC000_FLR_Personal_Statement.” Be sure to include your competition number on the top right corner of any additional submission materials.

Avoid Excessively Large Attachments

Try to ensure that your email attachments are not excessively large. Attachments larger than approximately 5 MB are excessively large. While you will not be penalized for submitting excessively large attachments, they will take longer to upload and may cause your submission email to be rejected.

To attain a smaller file size, trying reducing the resolution of your scanned images (but make sure that they remain legible). To reduce the size of a PDF file in Acrobat, choose “Optimize Scanned PDF,” “Recognize Text Using OCR,” or “Reduce File Size” (maintaining compatibility with Acrobat 9.0).

Timely Submissions

You should endeavor to submit your exercises as soon as you can. Be aware that other competitors will be downloading and uploading material during the competition as well. **It is the responsibility of competitors to avoid slowdown due to the volume of activity.** Do not wait until the hour before the deadline to submit, when peak volume should be expected. You must avoid missing the upload deadline because of computer difficulties. **EXTENSIONS WILL NOT BE GRANTED.**

QUESTIONS

All inquiries regarding the UWC should be directed to Tim Deal, the Executive Notes Editor of the *Fordham Law Review* and UWC Administrator, at FordhamLRevENE@fordham.edu. This is the **ONLY** email address you should use for questions. As noted above, do **NOT** send inquiries to UWC@fordham.edu.

Please note that during the UWC, you are **not** guaranteed an answer to an email inquiry, especially if it concerns an instruction covered in these rules. In addition, do not stop working while waiting for an email answer during the UWC, especially during business hours.

EXERCISE 1: BLUEBOOKING

In accordance with the policy of the vast majority of courts and law school journals throughout the country, the journals at Fordham Law School follow the citation rules of the Bluebook, 20th edition. One of the primary responsibilities of any journal staff member is Bluebook proofreading and editing. The Bluebook exercise is designed to test a competitor’s ability to use the Bluebook to edit a Note, Comment, or Article.

The exercise will be comprised of an unedited portion of a scholarly work. There will be errors throughout the piece. These errors will include both Bluebook and spelling mistakes. Do not correct grammatical errors or make grammatical/stylistic suggestions. You are advised to **read both the main text and the citations very carefully.** You are required to correct the errors in the piece in accordance with the 20th edition of the Bluebook.

It is the responsibility of competitors to familiarize themselves with the 20th edition of the Bluebook before the UWC begins. **DO NOT** use the blue pages in the front of the Bluebook—those are for practitioners.

To find the Bluebook exercise, click the “View Competition Exercises” button on the UWC home page. Select the document labeled “2016 UWC Bluebook Exercise.”

To complete your Bluebook exercise, you must print the exercise, make your edits by hand, and scan the completed exercise back into a computer before submitting it. **It is the responsibility of competitors to ensure that they have reliable printing and scanning capabilities.**

All edits must be on the document itself, and MUST BE LEGIBLE AND INTELLIGIBLE. For the sake of clarity, it is recommended that you keep track of your edits in a separate document and make your final edits only when you are finished with the exercise.

Be sure to write your competition number CLEARLY on the top right corner of EVERY page of the Bluebook exercise.

The citation exercise is designed to be completed in approximately TEN to TWELVE hours. It is strongly recommended that you spend around ten to twelve hours on this exercise, including double-checking. This will allow for ample time to thoroughly complete this exercise and work on the Note exercise. Competitors are not to consult any materials other than those approved by these rules.

EXERCISE 2: WRITING A NOTE

A Note is a formalized scholarly analysis of a disputed legal issue. Once on a journal, you will have the opportunity to write a Note, which may be published. This exercise is designed to test your ability to analyze source material and identify an issue, formulate arguments, express your arguments in written form, and support your statements and arguments with sources.

Your legal analysis, writing ability, and the quality of your citations will be assessed.

It is the responsibility of competitors to become familiar with the form, style, and structure of a student Note **before** the competition begins. Once the competition commences, however, use of these materials constitutes outside research and is **absolutely prohibited** under the Honor Code.

Your Note should follow the same format as the Notes in journals, and citations should conform to the 20th edition of the Bluebook. Please note, however, that your submission must have **ENDNOTES**, rather than footnotes.

Note Materials

You will be provided with approximately twelve to eighteen sources of a variety of types, such as cases, statutes, law review articles, etc. You will not be provided with a problem, question, or statement of the issue. Based solely and entirely upon the materials provided to you, you must discern the issue and write a Note.

You should explain the issue and take a position advocating a particular solution to the presented problem. Support this position only with the Note materials that you are provided. Use the materials supplied as underlying support for your argument; do not simply describe what is contained in the materials.

To find the Note materials, click the “View Competition Exercises” button on the UWC home page. There, you will find all of the source materials that you may use to write your Note. Select any document to view, download, or print it.

Conventions

Your submission must be typewritten using **Courier New-12 pt. font**. The length limitation is **ten double-spaced pages (with 1" margins), not including the endnotes**. Please note that the default margins for Microsoft Word are 1.25" on the left and right, so be sure to adjust the settings accordingly. You must leave your **margins unjustified** (i.e. align text left). There is no page limit for the endnotes. Endnotes must also be double-spaced and presented in Courier New-12 pt. font.

If you feel that there is a discrepancy between the way something is cited in a journal and in the Bluebook, follow the Bluebook form. With reference to typeface conventions in the text and the endnotes of your Note, you should **never** use *italics*. Wherever the Bluebook directs you to use *italics*, you should underline. Thus, if the Bluebook calls for *Ex parte* McCardle, you should write Ex Parte McCardle. You should also **never** use SMALL AND LARGE CAPS. You should instead maintain Courier New-12 pt. font. Thus, if the Bluebook calls for FORDHAM L. REV., you should write Fordham L. Rev.

Your Note is limited to **a maximum of ten pages (excluding endnotes)**. There is no word limit, but your submission must not exceed the page limit and must use the proper font, spacing, and margin conventions. You must include two spaces after every period. Mark the page number on the bottom center of each page. Be sure to include your competition number on the top right corner of each page of your Note.

Submissions that do not comply with these rules will not be considered.

Endnotes

Instead of citing sources in the text, you must put all citation information into endnotes. **Do not use footnotes**. You should expect to have an endnote for nearly every sentence of your Note. Anything that you write that is not of your own pure invention **MUST** be cited to its source or it constitutes plagiarism.

Your endnotes should follow the **same format conventions as your text** (Courier New-12 pt., double-spaced, 1" margins, unjustified margins). Number your endnotes using **Arabic numbers** (1, 2, 3, 4 . . .) NOT Roman or other numerals.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Please review the following before contacting the UWC Administrator with questions. Please be advised that the UWC Administrator may not respond to questions during the competition.

Q: May I use Adobe or another editing tool to make my Bluebook exercise corrections?

A: No. All edits must be made by hand.

Q: Is there standardized shorthand that ought to be used to complete the Bluebook exercise?

A: No. As long as your edits are legible and intelligible, no specific shorthand is necessary.

Q: May I use a hard-volume dictionary while completing my Bluebook exercise?

A: Yes.

Q: May I use electronic dictionaries (www.dictionary.com, an iPhone app, etc.)?

A: No. These are considered outside sources and are not allowed.

Q: Must I include an abstract with my Note?

A: No. Doing so would count against your ten-page limit.

Q: Must I include a table of contents with my Note?

A: No. Doing so would count against your ten-page limit.

Q: Do I need to rank the journals in order of preference?

A: No. Competitors do not need to bid by preference.

Q: May I submit any of my competition materials as Word documents?

A: No. The UWC submission form will **only** accept documents in PDF format.

Q: May I see competition materials from past UWCs?

A: No.