

CECELIA C. SMITH

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EDUCATION

DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Juris Doctor, 1987. Dean's Advisory Council, 1985-1987. Hardt Cup Moot Court Competitions, 1985-1986.

SOPHIE NEWCOMB COLLEGE OF TULANE UNIVERSITY, Bachelor of Arts in English, *magna cum laude* and Departmental Honors, 1984. Phi Beta Kappa. Honor's Program. Junior Year Abroad Honors Program at the University of Sussex. George Meyer Merit Scholarship. Senior Honors Thesis. Mortar Board. Phi Eta Sigma and Alpha Lambda Delta honor societies. Omicron Delta Kappa.

EXPERIENCE

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

2021-present

Writing Specialist, Writing Professor

Courses: Advanced Legal Writing. Spring 2026, 2025, 2024, 2022; Fall 2022
Legal Writing and Analysis. Fall 2025, 2024; Summer 2023

Writing Specialist responsibilities include:

- Created and continue to develop the Florida State University College of Law Writing Center.
- Work individually with students on writing assignments, including legal memoranda, briefs, writing samples, academic papers, cover letters, and other written work.
- Present workshops on topics in legal writing.
- Guest lecture in classes to teach students topics in legal writing.
- Write and post to the Writing Center web page student guides on grammar and style.

Bar and Academic Support responsibilities include:

- Work with the Bar Success Team to promote student success on bar examinations.
- Track student progress and correspond with students to develop individual study strategies.
- Present supplemental workshops.

SELECTED WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Top Techniques in Clear and Effective Legal Writing. First-year students learned techniques in grammar and style to develop clear, effective legal writing. Students learned to break apart long sentences, eliminate intrusive phrases, and avoid passive voice. Students practiced streamlining sentences with parallel construction. (Fall 2024, 2023, 2021)

Persuasion by Top Advocates. First-year students explored persuasive writing techniques used by top advocates in briefs and motions. Students learned how to develop a theory of the case, tell a story, and use persuasive language, including zingers and a confident tone. (Spring 2026, 2025, 2024)

Division of Administrative Hearings Lunch and Learn Workshop. This workshop explored topics in clear and effective writing for administrative law judges. Over sixty DOAH and NAALJ judges attended via Zoom and in person. Attendees received CLE credit. (August 2025)

Clear and Effective Writing: Avoid Nominalizations and Other Abstractions. This workshop explored how abstractions, including nominalizations, passive voice, and legalese, make legal writing hard to understand. We learned to avoid nominalizations by replacing static nouns with active verbs, and we eliminated truncated passives by saying who did what. We also reviewed how to use familiar, concrete words rather than legalese. (Fall 2025)

Creative Writing vs. Legal Writing: A Discussion with FSU Law Student and Author David Glasser. In this workshop, FSU law student David Glasser and I discussed David's legal thriller, *The Death of Justice*. We explored the similarities and differences between creative writing and legal writing. Students learned how creative writing can complement legal writing. We analyzed techniques for storytelling in the fact section, and we learned to develop a theory of the case as we would develop a character in a creatively written story. Finally, we discussed how legal writing, like creative writing, can leave a lasting impression on the reader. (Fall 2025)

Grammar and Style Triage. This workshop addressed the most common grammar and style problems of the semester based on my polling of Legal Writing and Research professors and students. We addressed dangling modifiers, mismatched pronouns, and nonparallel structure. We worked to improve grammar and style in the final draft of the first-year legal memorandum. (Fall 2025)

Upper-Level Writing Requirement Workshop. Students learned techniques for researching and writing academic papers, including how to write thesis statements and outline papers. (Fall and Spring, 2026, 2025, 2023)

Uniform Bar Examination Workshop. UBE examinees learned formats and outlines for Multistate Examination Essays and Multistate Performance Test answers. (Spring 2025)

Dangerous Curves Ahead: Pitfalls, Benefits, and Ethics of Generative AI in Legal Writing. Students explored how generative AI is affecting legal writing in law school and in the practice of law. We reviewed ABA Ethics Opinion 512, which provides guidance on key areas, including competence, confidentiality, and client communication. (Fall 2024)

Multistate Performance Test Bar Workshop. UBE examinees learned the Multistate Performance Test format. Students practiced writing an MPT outline using multilayer schematics. (Summer 2024)

How to Write a Federal Constitutional Law Bar Essay. Students practiced writing an effective essay for the Florida Bar Exam. We reviewed targeted topics in federal constitutional law and outlined an answer to a Florida Bar essay question. (Spring 2024, Summer 2023, 2022)

Practice Writing a Bar Exam Essay with the Multistate Performance Test (Academic Support Students). Students practiced writing a bar exam essay using an MPT. Students learned the MPT format and practiced writing an outline and an answer with multilayer schematics. (Spring 2024)

Balance and Symmetry: Guidelines for Clear and Effective Writing. Students learned parallel construction to harmonize language with thoughts. Students practiced symmetry with correlative conjunctions. Students learned to eliminate dangling modifiers and dangling pronouns. We practiced using similes and metaphors to create balance and interest. (Fall 2023)

Liven Up the Language: Language and Sentence Structure. Students explored the use of colorful words, confident tone, and figures of speech. We also analyzed the benefits of using pithy sentences as well as balanced, longer sentences. Students reviewed how to revise sentence fragments and run-on sentences. (Spring 2023)

Tell a Story. Students focused on storytelling techniques, learning how to tell a story in the fact section of a brief. Students learned to let choice details speak for themselves. Students practiced eliminating adjectives and adverbs and learned to "show, not tell." (Spring 2023)

Writing for Wellness. Students explored how journaling helps them achieve goals, boost memory, enhance critical thinking, and heighten academic performance. Students examined different types of journals, including gratitude journals and stream-of-consciousness journals. Students discussed how journaling improves mental health and strengthens communication skills. (Fall 2022, 2021)

Clear and Effective Writing Parts I and II. Students learned to break apart long sentences and avoid passive voice. We also analyzed parallel and positive structure in sentences and paragraphs. Students learned to avoid ambiguity, choose words with care, and use an appropriate style. (Fall 2022)

Winning Techniques: Theme and Story. Students learned to develop a theme that runs through the brief or motion. Students practiced telling a story in a statement of facts. (Spring 2022)

Winning Techniques: Language and Sentence Structure. Students surveyed techniques used by top advocates to learn how to use colorful words, confident tone, and figures of speech. Students analyzed the benefits of using pithy sentences as well as balanced, longer sentences. (Spring 2022)

Pleadings and Motion Practice. Students learned helpful writing tips for pleadings and motions. Students examined the purpose and common faults of the complaint, answer, motion to dismiss, and motion for summary judgment. (Fall 2021)

Writing for Your Employer. Students explored how to "start strong" at their law firm or agency. Students learned to write professional legal correspondence, including emails and client letters. Students also practiced writing an e-memo. (Fall 2021)

TALLAHASSEE STATE COLLEGE

2012-2021

Adjunct Professor, Foundations of the United States Constitution

Responsibilities included presenting course proposals to the Academic Planning Committee and updating the Exemption Examination for Foundations of the United States Constitution.

JUDKINS, SIMPSON, & HIGH

1993-1994

Associate. Family Law, Criminal Law, and Appellate Law.

Responsibilities included preparation of pleadings, discovery, motions, appellate briefs, and legal memoranda.

HOPPING GREEN & SAMS

1987-1993

Associate; Law Clerk. Administrative, Criminal, and Civil Litigation, Environmental and Land Use Law, and Appellate Law.

Responsibilities included preparation of complaints, answers, administrative petitions, discovery, motions for summary final order, motions *in limine*, motions for attorney’s fees, appellate briefs, contracts, legal memoranda, and summaries of legislation; arguing motions; taking depositions; preparation of witnesses for hearing; preparation of trial notebooks and exhibits for hearing; drafting opinion letters relating to Development of Regional Impact status for various properties; preparation of scholarly articles for *The Florida Bar Journal*; pro bono representation of criminal defendant in federal court.

HOLLAND & KNIGHT

Tampa, 1987, and Summer 1986; Tallahassee, Summer 1985

Associate; Summer Associate.

Responsibilities included research and preparation of legal memoranda, discovery, pleadings, motions, and appellate briefs.

SOPHIE NEWCOMB COLLEGE OF TULANE UNIVERSITY

Summer 1984

Instructor, English as a Second Language.

Responsibilities included tutoring ESL students and managing student labs.

MICHAEL P. ALLEN, SECOND CIRCUIT PUBLIC DEFENDER

Summers 1982, 1983

Summer Intern.

Responsibilities included interviewing clients, research, and clerical work.

SCHOLARSHIP

“Use Parallel Structure,” FSU College of Law Writing Center student guide (Fall 2024)

“Break Apart Long Sentences,” FSU College of Law Writing Center student guide (Fall, 2023)

“Prefer Active Voice,” FSU College of Law Writing Center student guide (Fall, 2023)

“Getting Started,” FSU College of Law Writing Center student guide (Fall, 2023)

“Judicial Review of Zoning Regulations,” *Florida Environmental and Land Use Law*, co-authored with Elizabeth Bowman, published by the Florida Bar, 1993.

“Judicial Review of Administrative Decisions,” *All You Ever Wanted to Know About Florida Administrative Law*, published by the Florida Bar, 1990.

SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- Brief Judge, FSU Moot Court Team Competition 2026, 2025.
- Panel Judge, FSU Legal Writing and Research Oral Arguments, 2012-2015, 2021-2024.
- Summer Undergraduate Program, 2025: interviewer.
- Summer Undergraduate Program, 2024: interviewer, oral argument panel judge.
- Summer Undergraduate Program, 2023: interviewer, oral argument panel judge, class facilitator.
- Junior League of Tallahassee, 1990-present.
- St. John's Episcopal Church, member, 1975-present.
- Leon High School Foundation Board member, 2014-2017.
- The Florida Bar member (currently inactive status), 1988-present.