

# HOW TO EARN YOUR WRITING UNITS

In addition to the 84 academic credits required for the Juris Doctor degree, each student must earn 4 upper class writing units. Of the four, two units must be earned in courses (including seminars, externships, and clinic) or through independent research where there is direct and on-going faculty supervision. Journal papers which are read by faculty as part of the journal's policy, and briefs read by faculty for various moot court programs, will not qualify as faculty supervised writing under the rule. Another way to express this limitation is that no more than two of the four upper class writing units required for graduation may be earned in student-run, co-curricular programs such as Moot Court and the four journals.

As you study the registration materials and choose your electives, here are some clues on how to find writing unit opportunities:

Courses listed as "(WCFS)" courses are those in which students will be given an opportunity to earn faculty-supervised writing units (and, in some cases, such as in seminars, to earn academic credits at the same time) by completion of one or more writing projects.

Students looking to work on independent research projects may approach faculty members, who all have a three course (full-time) teaching load based on traditional courses, seminars, and clinic. As a result, they are not responsible for supervising independent research projects. Students are advised that topics for independent research are negotiated with faculty members and that faculty members' expertise in subject areas will, at least in part, determine the topic selected.

The full text of the rules which govern writing unit requirements and opportunities are included in the Student Handbook. Questions may be directed to Carin Crain, Associate Dean of Student Affairs or to Deb Paul, Registrar.

**(For students who started law study at Iowa  
May 2007 or later**