ST.THOMAS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

To the Curriculum Committee

Senior Writing Requirement Independent Research Proposal

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Anticipated Date of Graduation_____ **Term:** _____

Faculty Sponsor: _____ **Student I.D.#** _____

Applicant proposes the following topic in fulfilling of his or her Senior Writing Requirement:

_____

_____

Applicant must also attach a 1-2 page topic report identifying the subject area of the law which the student intends to research together with a brief bibliography.

The applicant understands that as a requirement for graduation, student must write a significant analytical paper reflecting substantial legal research, original thought, proper writing style, and correct citation form. This requirement may be fulfilled either through a law school seminar or through an independent study with a full-time faculty member. To qualify for the independent study option, the student must submit this form to the Curriculum Committee prior to the semester the student intends to do the independent study. The applicant must obtaining the authorization of the full-time faculty member who has agreed to supervise the research and have him/her sign the form before submitting it for approval. Once the faculty sponsor has signed off on the form the applicant must submit this form, (with the sponsor signature and the accompanying required documentation to the Law School Registrar before 5:00 pm of the deadline date.)

DEADLINES:

For the summer or fall semester, the proposal must be submitted by April 15.

For the spring semester, the proposal must be submitted by November 15.

Late applications will not be considered unless an extension of the due is approved by the Curriculum Committee or the Dean's Office.

To be completed by Supervising Faculty Member

I, the undersigned faculty member, agree to supervise the described Independent Research Project:

Signature (Faculty Sponsor): _____ Date: _____

To be completed by Chair of Curriculum Committee

Inasmuch as the above-mentioned student

_____Has proposed a significant analytical paper reflecting original thought

_____Has included a 1-2 page topic report with a brief bibliography

_____Has identified a full-time faculty sponsor willing to supervise the paper

I hereby certify that the Curriculum Committee has determined that the proposal

_____Satisfies _____Does not satisfy

the requirements of the Independent Research Option.

(Comments – if necessary)

Signature (Chair): _____ Date: _____

Senior Writing Requirement
Independent Research Option

In addition to satisfying the Senior Writing Requirement through a law school seminar, a law student may also satisfy the requirement through a 1credit independent study with a full-time faculty member. In order to satisfy this requirement, a student must submit a proposal to the Curriculum Committee during the semester before the student intends to do the independent study. For the summer and fall semester, the proposal must be submitted no later than **April 15**. For the spring semester, the proposal must be submitted no later than **November 15**. The proposal will be directed to the Curriculum Committee. The proposal must identify the full-time faculty member who has agreed to supervise the student, the semester in which the independent study will take place, the student's date of graduation, and include a 1-2 page topic report identifying the subject area of the law which the student intends to research with a brief bibliography. The proposal should identify an area or aspect of the law that the student is interested in investigating and should narrow the subject area to one of manageable proportions. Some preliminary research will need to be done in finding a subject area. Additional research will be needed to narrow the subject area and develop an original thesis or a novel approach to addressing a pressing societal problem. This should be done in consultation with the faculty member who will be supervising the project. The ideal proposal will include the specific area for focused research as well as the student's tentative "take" on the subject matter. A note or paper done in connection with a law review competition may serve as a starting point and as a basis for a proposal to the curriculum committee, but cannot be used in and of itself to fulfill the Senior Writing Requirement.

Keep in mind in approaching a possible faculty sponsor that they are not required to supervise independent studies. It will involve a substantial time commitment on their part. A student should approach those faculty members with particular expertise in the student's subject area. While different faculty members will have different requirements, the student should expect to meet with his or her faculty sponsor on multiple occasions during the course of the semester. For example, depending on the faculty member, a faculty sponsor may expect the student to submit at different points during the semester a topic report and bibliography, a thesis statement or novel approach to addressing a particular societal problem, an outline, a draft paper and a final paper. For a student's paper to fulfill the Senior Writing Requirement, it must also conform to the Bluebook citation format.

For guidance on the entire research and writing process, including the initial stages of selecting a topic, doing preliminary research, narrowing the topic, and developing a thesis or proposed solution, it is highly recommended that you obtain a copy of ELIZABETH FAJANS AND MARY R. FALK, SCHOLARLY WRITING FOR LAW STUDENTS: SEMINAR PAPER, LAW REVIEW NOTES AND LAW REVIEW COMPETITION PAPERS. The latest 2011 edition can be rented for $16.95 at www.amzn.com/0314207201. Another excellent research aid is EUGENE VOLOKH, ACADEMIC LEGAL WRITING: LAW REVIEW ARTICLES, STUDENT NOTES AND SEMINAR PAPERS (Foundation Press, 5th ed., 2016) which can be purchased through West Group for $53.00 http://store.westacademic.com/s.nl/it.A/id.72767/.f; or on Amazon, in paperback for $53.00 at http://www.amzn.com/1634598881.