1. **What is the Law School’s R&W requirement?**

Each student must have a rigorous writing experience evidencing legal analysis resulting in a paper of professional quality. All students must identify the method by which they propose to satisfy their R&W requirement no later than the beginning of their 5th semester (or equivalent penultimate semester) of law school. Moreover, all students planning to complete their R&W requirement through an independent study or in conjunction with a course or seminar must obtain a designated faculty supervisor no later than the start of the semester before their final semester. Students identify the method by which they propose to satisfy the R&W requirement by submitting a completed R&W Record’s Office Form (gold form) to Tina Melville in the administrative suite. Please pick up the gold form in the Records Office for this purpose. It provides the various options available to fulfill the requirements and asks for dates when aspects of the paper must be completed. The form must be completed and filed as soon as possible after the professor agrees to oversee the R&W project.

2. **How do I enroll?**

That depends on how you wish to fulfill the requirement. There are three basic ways to fulfill an R&W requirement: in connection with a seminar or elective course (#3), through participation on a law journal (#4) or a competition team (#5); or by writing an independent study paper under faculty supervision through enrollment in Legal Research (Law 8746)(#6-8)

3. **Can I write a paper in connection with any seminar or elective course to fulfill the requirement?**

Yes, if the professor in the course agrees. Professors have different approaches to the use of a seminar paper as fulfilling the R&W so you need to speak with your professor.

- Some professors will permit you to use your paper for the course to also fulfill the R&W without any additional credit hour enrollment or different requirements for the paper than are required for the course generally since the course requires a paper that meets the requirement.
- Some professors will permit you to use your paper for the course to fulfill the R&W only if it is more substantial in size or scope and quality than the paper required for the course. The professor will require the student to enroll in additional credit,
either in the course (for example 3 credits rather than 2 credits) or in Law 8746 Legal Research (2 hrs) and will supervise the writing of the paper.

- Sometimes you may have a topic that you find interesting in a course that does not require a paper. You can request the professor or another professor to supervise an R&W on that topic through independent study (see #6-8)

4. **I’m going to be on the staff of one of our law journals. Can I fulfill the R&W that way?**

Yes. Your Law Review Comment, Urban Lawyer Annotation or Matrimonial Law Journal Project can be used to satisfy the R&W requirement, provided a faculty member supervises the writing and certifies to the Records Office that the work meets the R&W requirement. Although a student may receive additional academic credit for satisfying the R&W requirement with Urban Lawyer written work (in addition to any staff/editor hours received), neither a Law Review Note or Comment nor a Matrimonial Law Journal Project may be so used to obtain additional academic credit hours. Students desiring to obtain two R&W credit hours for faculty supervised and certified Urban Lawyer written work should enroll in Law 8746 Legal Research (see #7 below).

5. **How about a competition team for which I am doing substantial research and writing?**

You may also satisfy your R&W through the writing you complete as a member of a competition team if your supervising professor agrees. For example, if you complete Appellate Advocacy III satisfactorily and rewrite the brief so that it is of professional quality; or write an Appellate Advocacy IV brief of professional quality, you may earn your R&W certification; however, you will not receive additional credit hours for doing so. The Appellate Advocacy professor must certify to the Records Office that the student has fulfilled the R&W requirement in this manner.

A brief used in other competitions, including the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition, the Giles Sutherland Rich Moot Court Competition, the Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, or the Adoption Law Moot Court Competition may be used to satisfy the criteria if a faculty member certifies to the Records Office that the student has fulfilled the requirement in this manner. Students desiring to obtain two R&W credit hours for writing such a brief should enroll in Law 8746 Legal Research (2 hrs.).

6. **How do I go about fulfilling the R&W through Legal Research (Law8746)?**
This is essentially an independent study format for fulfilling your R&W. You can approach this independent study in one of two ways:

- Pick a professor with whom you work well (see #6 for more on this) and ask the professor to supervise you in an R&W, helping you to choose a topic that the professor would feel comfortable supervising—normally that would be a topic that the professor teaches or writes in, but see #7; or

- Pick a topic and approach the professor who you think, based upon courses the professor teaches or writes in, would be most interested and able to supervise you in the development of that topic. See #7.

7. What kinds of topics can I use for an R&W? Do topics have to relate to something I have studied in a particular class? What if I want to research a topic in Admiralty Law, or Space Law, or Gaming Law, but we don’t offer that course? If there is a course on a subject that I am interested in writing about but I can’t take the course, can I still write in that subject?

You need not choose a topic based on course offerings. If you have a particular interest in a topic, simply ask if there is a member of the faculty with the interest and background to be able to supervise that topic. Most faculty are happy to work with a student who is enthusiastic for a topic, no matter how unique the subject matter. Faculty may or may not be willing to supervise you in writing on a topic for which there is a current course offering.

8. Who can supervise an R&W?

While adjunct professors may supervise an R&W paper, they may not do so alone. A regular faculty member must also be willing to co-supervise and to oversee the proper performance and completion of the paper, and to certify that the paper fulfills the requirement. The name of the co-supervising faculty member must be provided to the Records Office at the time of registration. No other individuals (e.g., supervising attorneys in internships, employers, etc.) can supervise an R&W.

9. Can I use a paper that I wrote for work (or a competition, or an undergraduate course?)

It is impermissible and considered an Honor Code violation to use the same paper for academic credit in more than one course, seminar, or after using it to fulfill a journal requirement without disclosure and permission to do so. Normally faculty
members will give you permission only if the paper is lengthened and/or substantially changed. Accordingly, the R&W Record’s Office form requires that you either sign the following statement or, disclose that you have used or plan to use the paper or portion of the paper in another context, providing the course, seminar or journal to which it was or will be submitted:

"I understand that, unless disclosed, no portion of this paper may be used to fulfill academic requirements in any other context. I also understand that my failure to disclose that any portion of this paper has or will be used to fulfill academic requirements in another contest violates the School of Law Honor Code."

10. What if I don't have a topic? How do I find one?

See Professor Paul Callister’s webpage on this topic here: http://libguides.library.umkc.edu/lrw and watch his video presentation here: https://mediasite.law.umkc.edu/Mediasite/Play/2a536e67d3dd45daa4e73bf961bc0dec1d for more guidance.

11. How do I enroll for R&W? How many credits? Graded or ungraded?

Decide whether you need to enroll for credit hours to fulfill your R & W Requirement (see # 2-5). If so, then:

- Register in Law 8746 (R&W Requirement) for 2 credit hours;
- Provide the reference number of the faculty member supervising the research on the course request sheet. The Law 8746 reference numbers for the faculty are listed on the web;

This Legal Research credit is ungraded.

12. Can I do my R&W in any semester, including the summer?

Yes, you can enroll in any semester after your first year. All students must identify the method by which they propose to satisfy their R&W requirement before the start of their last semester of law school. Moreover, all students planning to complete their R&W requirement through an independent study or in conjunction with a course or seminar must obtain a designated faculty supervisor no later than the start of the semester before their final semester. Students identify the method by which they propose to satisfy the R&W requirement by submitting a completed R&W Record's Office Form (gold form) to Tina Melville in the administrative suite.
Please pick up the gold form in the Records Office for this purpose. It provides the various options available to fulfill the requirements and asks for dates when aspects of the paper must be completed. The form must be completed and filed as soon as possible after the professor agrees to oversee the R&W project.

13. Must R&Ws be completed in one semester? What if I want to start on the paper during the summer and finish it in the fall?

Deadlines for R&Ws are negotiated between faculty and student. If a student does not complete the R&W by the end of the semester in which he or she has enrolled for the credit, an incomplete grade will be entered. Students must complete R&Ws well before graduation dates. Don’t believe rumors that students have been able to delay their R&Ws until after graduation and have still been able to take the bar. Requirements of the bar change and, even if you are permitted additional time after graduation to complete the R&W, doing so significantly increases the risks that you will be unsuccessful in passing the bar.

14. How long do R&Ws have to be? Do they have to use Blue Book citation form?

- **Analysis:** Does the piece reflect an informed understanding of the doctrines and theories used? Has the author critically appraised the case(s), doctrines, statutes or ideas developed? Does the piece include a thorough presentation of the relevant available resources? Does the piece show creativity and original work? Is the analysis thorough, well written and organized?

- **Authority:** Are the assertions supported? Is the support more than a single source? Does the authority come from a variety of sources? Is interdisciplinary support offered when appropriate? Does the student over-rely on a single source?

- **Format:** The research and writing requirement is intended to focus on legal analysis. That analysis can come in a variety of forms from an interoffice memorandum, an advocacy brief, or a scholarly article. While that analysis underlies legal drafting, drafting legal documents would not meet the criteria. A piece satisfying the research and writing requirement should be approximately thirty (30) pages, evidencing sufficient use of authority and encompassing multiple drafts.

15. I’ve heard that it’s easy to be charged with plagiarism in writing an R&W. How do I avoid that?
Read the law school's plagiarism policy (at http://law.umkc.edu/pdfs/plagiarism-policy-and-guidelines.pdf) and ask your supervising faculty member if you have any doubts.

16. I’ve finished my R&W. How do I get my credit?

- Get an R&W certification form from Tina Melville and fill it out.
- Ask your supervising professor to sign the form and submit it to the Records Office.
- The Law School will also need an electronic copy of the paper/brief, so be sure you provide a clean final copy to umkclawrw@umkc.edu, as well as to the professor. The Records Office will retain the signed approval forms and the R&W papers/briefs for a limited period.