

2026 CASE NOTE INSTRUCTIONS

Dear Class of 2028,

The pages that follow explain the rules of the write-on competition. **Most importantly, your competition paper is due no later than 11:59 P.M. CDT on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.** You will submit the paper electronically by uploading it to the Write-On Competition webpage.

Late papers WILL NOT be accepted. Only one submission per case note and Bluebook exam is allowed.

You will write a case note on the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision *Case v. Montana*. A case note is an article in which the author sets forth the context, key facts, and holding of a case and evaluates its meaning, significance, justification, and potential impact on the law. Examples of case notes from previous years are available on the website for your review. The sample case notes are provided as guidance only. You may organize your paper differently. Also, do not assume that the citations in the sample case notes are correct.

Although there is no "correct" form for organizing and writing a case note, such works usually contain three basic elements: facts, law, and analysis/conclusion(s). You should incorporate these elements into whatever organizational scheme you find most effective. The following discussion of each element should give you an understanding of what to discuss in a case note:

FACTS: The facts, procedural history, and holding of the case should be discussed concisely. You should convey "what happened" in relatively few words.

LAW: You should describe thoroughly the present state of the law on the issue(s) in question. You must include adequate authority for every proposition through heavy footnoting. Well-accepted rules of law need be given only summary treatment. That is, you need not give a detailed restatement of well-established law (e.g., the necessity of consideration to create an enforceable contract). You should take into account the direction in which the law is moving and whether the subject case is consistent with or departs from pre-existing law. An exhaustive and detailed discussion of the law is absolutely necessary.

ANALYSIS/CONCLUSION: Here, you should analyze the principles and concepts at issue. You should offer your critique of the relevant law and the logic of the case, and you should address the practical impact of the case. Because these are your own ideas, fewer footnotes will be required. You will be judged on your ability to demonstrate an understanding of the problem presented, and to offer either (1) rebuttal and criticism or (2) agreement and further support of the Court's decision.

You should also explain how the case affects the law in that particular area. This conclusion is vital, and you should not wait until the last page of your note to develop it. You should have a tentative conclusion in mind throughout your research and writing process. You are neither required nor expected to use and cite all the sources provided on the write-on website.

Please do not wait until the last minute to begin writing. The best case notes are those that are written carefully and that have been through several review/revision cycles. A developed ability to communicate ideas concisely and edit scrupulously is a quality highly valued by all academic journals.

In sum, write the best case note you can. You will be able to use it as a writing sample for jobs or clerkships in the future.

Thank you in advance for your effort. We look forward to reading your submission. Best of luck!

[See Rules and Requirements on the Following Page]

CASE NOTE RULES & REQUIREMENTS

You must submit your paper electronically by **11:59 P.M. CDT on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.** You may submit earlier if you wish. There is a link entitled “Submit Your Paper” on the website. Click on that link, enter your anonymous number, choose the appropriate word processing document type, and click “Send File.” Late papers will not be accepted regardless of the reason. You may submit your case note and Bluebook exam only one time.

Even if you qualify to grade on to a journal, you still need to submit a case note and Bluebook exam to that journal to communicate your interest. Every journal is requiring all interested potential members to participate in the write-on competition.

Formatting

1. Do not put your name anywhere in the case note. Put your anonymous number as a header at the top right of every page. Save your document as anonymous#.casenote (i.e., 123.casenote.doc). Your anonymous number will be the same as it was for the Spring semester.
2. Each page should be numbered, with the page number centered in a footer at the bottom.
3. There is a 2,500 word limit (including both above the line text and footnotes) for the case note. The suggested length is 8–10 pages, but you may exceed that limit as long as you remain within the word limitation.
4. Case notes must be typed and double-spaced. All margins must be 1 inch. However, you should single-space where required by *The Bluebook*.
5. Footnotes should be single-spaced within a footnote and double-spaced between footnotes.
6. You must use 12-point Times New Roman font for the text. You must use 10-point Times New Roman font for the footnotes.
7. *The Bluebook*, **22nd Edition** is the final authority for all citation forms. Follow the typeface conventions for law reviews, not for briefs or legal memoranda.

Honor Code

1. After the last sentence in your paper, type the word “PLEDGE” in all caps to indicate your adherence to the Honor Code. “PLEDGE” will not be counted in the word count.
2. All work must be done individually. You may not discuss the assignment with or seek assistance from anyone else. This includes students who are not participating in the competition. Discussing the competition with anyone, participating in the competition or otherwise, constitutes an Honor Code violation and will result in disqualification from the competition.
3. Sources: You may refer to and cite only the sources available on the website and those listed below. You are not permitted to use Westlaw, Lexis, or any other legal research platform to complete the case note or the Bluebook exam, even if you are looking up cases already posted as PDFs on the write-on website. Citing or using other sources not permitted in these instructions is considered an Honor Code violation. Also, remember

that use of material from a source without attribution is plagiarism and an Honor Code violation.

Acceptable general sources:

- (a) *The Bluebook*;
 - (b) *The Texas Law Review Manual on Style*;
 - (c) *Black's Law Dictionary*;
 - (d) Books on academic legal writing, such as *Academic Legal Writing* by Eugene Volokh (permitted but by no means necessary);
 - (e) Any standard dictionary or thesaurus;
 - (f) Standard reference works on grammar and style;
 - (g) Computerized grammar and spell-checking, but NOT a citation-checking program.
4. The use of generative AI platforms, including but not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, or Harvey, is prohibited. Use of such platforms constitutes a violation of the Honor Code and will result in disqualification from the competition.

Other Considerations

1. Do not attempt to communicate directly with any member of any journal about the write-on competition. If you have a question related to the competition, you should submit it anonymously through the question form on the website. *Alabama Law Review* Executive Editor Destiny Duke and *Alabama Law Review* Executive Editor Yanni Mazza will post the answered question on the website as soon as possible after submission. No substantive questions will be answered. Destiny and Yanni reserves the right not to answer questions for which appropriate answers cannot be provided.
2. You are responsible for all information posted on the website. Even if you personally have no questions, you should consult the site frequently. If for some reason the question and answer page is not functioning properly, email your question to *Alabama Law Review* Executive Editor Joe Zenick at joe.zenick@law.ua.edu. He will remove your name and any other identifying marks from the email before forwarding the question to Destiny. Destiny will then post an answer to the question on the website, or alternatively, email a response to every participant. **In order to preserve confidentiality, Joe will not be involved in grading any of the case notes or Bluebook exams.**
3. If you have concerns about whether your case note or Bluebook exam has been properly submitted, you may ONLY contact Joe, who will tell you whether your materials have arrived.
4. Every write-on participant has been assigned the same case on which to write a note.
5. Limit your note to information relevant to the law of the case. The graders have been instructed to grade objectively without regard to personal ideology.
6. Membership offers will be made no earlier than June 22, 2026.
7. Case notes not in compliance with the above requirements will be penalized and may be disqualified.