Writers’ Guidelines

Syllabus is the e-newsletter of the American Bar Association’s Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar and is published quarterly in September, December, March, and June. It is a free benefit of membership in the Section and is sent electronically to 13,000 law school faculty, judges, bar examiners, and others interested in legal education.

Syllabus presents an editorial mix of news briefs and opinion pieces about issues and trends that affect legal education and law school accreditation as well as Section events and activities. Content is provided by staff and volunteer authors. Submitted articles are typically 1,000 to 2,000 words apiece. We do not accept previously published articles.

If you have an idea for a Syllabus article, please send a query letter to the Syllabus editor at leap-syllabus@americanbar.org. The query letter should include a detailed description of the proposed topic, its relevance to Syllabus readers, the author’s credentials for writing on the topic, and a list of previously published articles. If accepted, the completed article will be due 6 weeks prior to publication:

August 1 for the September issue
November 1 for the December issue
February 1 for the March issue
May 1 for the June issue.

Queries and accepted articles should be sent as a MS Word attachment.

Queries and submitted articles are reviewed by the Section’s Publications Committee who make decisions on publication and make any editorial suggestions for those pieces accepted for publication. Accepted articles are then copyedited for style and grammar and returned to the author for review of the edits and suggestions and for the resolution of queries. One week is generally allowed for the author’s review. The Committee’s peer reviewer and the Syllabus editor work closely with the author to finalize the article.

Keep in mind that Syllabus is not an academic journal. Writing should be lively, crisp and clear. Avoid jargon and arcane language. Do not use footnotes; directly credit sources within the body of the article by quoting or paraphrasing them. All submitted articles are expected to be proofread by the authors for factual errors. Authors bear full responsibility for accuracy of information and quotations.

Syllabus follows The Chicago Manual of Style and Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary for matters of style and usage. The publication also follows a style sheet specific to the editorial requirements of the ABA and the Section.

Authors of accepted articles will be required to sign a standard publication agreement granting copyright to the American Bar Association.