



PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Advocacy Institute Is Pleased to Present

Comprehensive Legal Writing

**January 22, 2025
9:30 a.m.* – 3:45 p.m.**

**Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex
Advocacy Institute Conference Center
Fourth Floor, West Wing
25 Market Street, Trenton, New Jersey**

***Registration starts at 9:00 a.m.**

Program Summary

This program will help participants improve their legal writing through a series of lectures on different aspects of the writing process. Students will learn how to create a framework before they begin drafting, apply a compelling theme to their written work, incorporate structure and context into an initial draft, construct a persuasive and compelling story, create strong paragraphs and develop a personal editing process applicable to all writing projects. Students will also meet individually with a faculty member for a personalized writing feedback session.

Eligibility

Attendance at this program is limited to individuals registered by their division or office leadership.

Faculty

Jennifer Downing-Mathis is the First Assistant Prosecutor in the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office. Prior to that, she was most recently the Deputy First Assistant Prosecutor and the Chief Assistant Prosecutor of the Special Victims Unit. She has served as the Chief of the Megan's Law Unit and held the titles of Senior Assistant Prosecutor and Supervising Senior Assistant Prosecutor. In the course of her career, FAP Downing-Mathis has worked in the Megan's Law, Juvenile, Domestic Violence, Grand Jury, Trial Section, Child Abuse and Sexual Assault (now Special Victims), Forfeiture, Bias Crimes and Human Trafficking Units within the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office. She is a certified legal instructor with the NJ Police Training Commission, teaches recruits at the Mercer County Police Academy and conducts annual training for officers and detectives throughout Mercer County. FAP Downing-Mathis began her legal career as a law clerk for the Honorable Paulette Sapp-Peterson, (now retired, on recall). She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, *cum laude* from Rider University and a Juris Doctor from Widener University School of Law in Wilmington, Delaware

Sam Garland is a Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Bureau of the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office. He is Chief of the Civil Litigation Unit, which represents the State, state agencies, and state employees in civil actions pending in state and federal trial and appellate courts and before administrative boards. SAAG Garland held clerkships with the United States District Court for the District of New Hampshire and the New Hampshire Superior Court. He holds a B.A. in English from the College of the Holy Cross and a J.D. from Wake Forest University School of Law.

Rick Linsk is an Assistant Attorney General in the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, Charities Division, where he helps enforce compliance with Minnesota law by nonprofit organizations, soliciting charities, and charitable trusts. He previously practiced civil litigation for a law firm in the Twin Cities, primarily focusing on consumer class actions, healthcare law, disability-benefits law, and employment law. Before his legal career, he worked for roughly 30 years as an investigative and enterprise journalist for news organizations based in Minnesota, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. AAG Linsk served as a judicial law clerk for three justices of the Minnesota Supreme Court. He holds a B.A. in Journalism from Temple University and a J.D., *cum laude*, from the Mitchell Hamline School of Law, where he was an editor of the law review.

Lauren J. Rainey is the Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the Anne Burnett Marion School of Medicine at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas. She previously served in the Department of Law and Public Safety's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, where she conducted training and assisted with implementing strategic diversity and inclusion initiatives throughout the Department. Ms. Rainey also served in the Division of Criminal Justice's Prosecutors Supervision & Training Bureau, where she lead specialized training and CLEAR initiatives and conducted community outreach on behalf of DCJ and the Office of the Attorney General. Prior to joining DCJ, Ms. Rainey was an Assistant District Attorney in the Family Violence & Sexual Assault Unit of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. Ms. Rainey earned a Bachelor's of Arts degree with dual majors in English and Women's and Gender Studies from The College of New Jersey, a Master's Degree in Social and Community Services from Capella University, and a Juris Doctor from Rutgers School of Law-Camden.

Anthony A. Picione Prior to his retirement in October 2024, Mr. Picione was an Assistant Attorney General with the New Jersey Attorney General's Office, concluding his career as the Acting Warren County Prosecutor. As the Acting Warren County Prosecutor, Mr. Picione supervised and oversaw all functions and staff of one of New Jersey's twenty-one county prosecutors' offices. Previously, Mr. Picione was Deputy Director of the Office of Public Integrity and Accountability and Counsel to the Executive Director at OPIA after its formation in 2018. Prior to that, Mr. Picione was the Deputy Chief and then the Chief of the Division of Criminal Justice's Corruption and Government Fraud Bureau for over a decade. Before becoming the Acting Warren County Prosecutor, Mr. Picione's practice concentrated on white collar crime, particularly offenses involving public officials and public funds. During his career, Mr. Picione has prosecuted numerous high profile cases involving public corruption and the theft of public funds. Mr. Picione is an instructor for the New Jersey Attorney General's Advocacy Institute, the National Association of Attorneys General and the New Jersey Police Training Commission, as well as an Adjunct Professor of Trial Advocacy for Rutgers Law School. Mr. Picione received his J.D., *cum laude* from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and his B.A., *magna cum laude* from Drew University.

Ari Telisman is the Director of Legal Skills Training for the National Association of Attorneys General. He oversees training programs and resources for the attorney general community on topics including trial advocacy, legal writing, motion practice and depositions. Before joining NAAG, Mr. Telisman served as senior litigation counsel for the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, as an assistant attorney general in Illinois, and as a prosecutor in Indiana and Florida. He has tried nearly 100 cases involving a wide variety of crimes, as well as many civil trials. Mr. Telisman serves as an instructor for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. He is also an adjunct professor who has taught courses on trial advocacy and legal ethics at Loyola University Chicago School of Law and Chicago-Kent College of Law. Mr. Telisman received his B.S. from Carnegie Mellon University and his J.D. from the Florida State University College of Law.

AAG Margaret A. Cotoia is the Director of the New Jersey Attorney General's Advocacy Institute, which provides continuing legal education programs for deputy attorneys general and assistant county prosecutors. She maintains overall responsibility for AGAI programs, including faculty recruitment, curriculum development and litigation skills training. Prior to joining the Advocacy Institute, AAG Cotoia was the first statutory Ethics Training Officer for the New Jersey State Ethics Commission. She designed, conducted and administered ethics training programs for State executive branch entities, provided ethics advice and counsel to State employees and officials and trained and supported a statewide network of ethics liaison officers. Before working for the SEC, AAG Cotoia was a mediator and hearing examiner at the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission. She holds a Bachelor's of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. and a Juris Doctor from the Penn State University Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where she was an editor of the law review.

CLE Credit

NJ CLE Credit: This program has been approved by the Board on Continuing Legal Education of the Supreme Court of New Jersey for 3.6 hours of total CLE credit. Of these, 0.0 qualify as hours of credit for ethics/professionalism.

PA CLE Credit: 3.0 substantive credits (\$4.50 mandatory registration fee required).

AGENDA

9:00 am – 9:30 am	Participant Registration
9:30 am – 10:00 am	Training Overview
10:00 am – 10:10 am	Break
10:10 am – 10:40 am	Session 1 Presentation: Preparing to Draft: Building Framework You will learn techniques for organizing legal analysis, research, and planning materials in the preparatory stages of the writing process. Writing Feedback Sessions: Some participants will meet individually with faculty for feedback on their written work.
10:40 am – 10:55 am	Break
10:55 am – 11:25 am	Session 2 Presentation: Preparing to Draft: Creating Theme in Persuasive Writing You will learn the role of theme in persuasive writing, how to create one, and how to develop it over the entire document. Writing Feedback Sessions: Some participants will meet individually with faculty for feedback on their written work.

11:25 am – 11:40 am	Break
11:40 am – 12:10 pm	<p>Session 3</p> <p>Presentation: Drafting: Carrying Framework and Context into Your Initial Draft</p> <p>You will learn how to provide context, structure, and framework in a document, specifically focusing on how to craft introductions, umbrellas and roadmaps, and headings.</p> <p>Writing Feedback Sessions:</p> <p>Some participants will meet individually with faculty for feedback on their written work.</p>
12:10 pm - 12:25 pm	Break
12:25 pm – 12:55 pm	<p>Session 4</p> <p>Presentation: Drafting: Storytelling in Persuasive Writing</p> <p>You will learn the role of the facts in a persuasive document and identify ways to present the facts to support the goal of the document.</p> <p>Writing Feedback Sessions:</p> <p>Some participants will meet individually with faculty for feedback on their written work.</p>
12:55 pm – 1:55 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:55 pm – 2:25 pm	<p>Session 5</p> <p>Presentation: Drafting: Effective Paragraph and Sentence Structure in Persuasive Writing</p> <p>You will learn how to craft well-constructed paragraphs with clear, readable sentences.</p> <p>Writing Feedback Sessions:</p> <p>Some participants will meet individually with faculty for feedback on their written work.</p>

2:25 pm – 2:40 pm	Break
2:40 pm – 3:10 pm	<p>Session 6</p> <p>Presentation: Editing: Creating an Editing Process</p> <p>You will learn concrete steps to become better at editing your own draft to create a strong, logical, and well-structured final product.</p> <p>Writing Feedback Sessions:</p> <p>Some participants will meet individually with faculty for feedback on their written work.</p>
3:10 pm – 3:20 pm	Break (complete survey)
3:20 pm – 3:45 pm	Debrief Discussion and Closing Remarks



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