

# THE STUDY OF LAW IN A NUTSHELL AND WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE CLASSROOM

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At this stage of your academic careers, many of you are very used to the typical classroom setting. After all, you obviously haven't enjoyed the requisite level of academic success that got you into law school without knowing something about how to succeed in academia. Undoubtedly, many of you would like to parlay this success into success at law school. However, it is important to note that law school classes are conducted in a manner peculiar to the study of law in the hopes of allowing you to build the skills that are necessary in order to succeed both inside and outside of the legal profession. The purpose of this note is to discuss some of the notable differences that one experiences inside a law classroom and to give an introduction of how classes are typically conducted. It is important to note that each law professor chooses to teach his / her course their own way and that different professors have different approaches to the material. Thus while not all professors teach alike, it is still possible to briefly generalize over some of the common elements that different pedagogies may share.

Throughout your law school career, you will be exposed to various theories about the law and its role in society. This is particularly the case at Windsor Law where students are encouraged to go beyond traditional sources of law and examine it from a number of different theoretical positions and examine law as an instrument of social policy. These are important courses that will allow you to appreciate the impact that law has on the society in which you live and will strengthen your understanding the role law plays in our daily lives. You will also discuss the manner in which cases are structured and developed from a legal research and writing perspective. At this early juncture, we will be discussing these matters from a rudimentary perspective in so far as they pertain to what may be termed "black letter" or a strictly well established case law perspective.

## ***How does the Law work and where does it come from?***

One way to think of how the law works is that the state has certain rules that it creates through the operation of its statutes and that we have received as a matter of established legal principles and customs that have evolved over time. Coupled with this are international treaties and obligations that the state has entered into on behalf of its citizens

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that may also guide their conduct or obliges the state to maintain certain legal standards. While the state produces rules that are meant to apply to society at large, there exists the task of applying these rules to individuals as the need arises. Against this backdrop is the need to ensure that government powers are executed in a humane manner in keeping with a country's values and traditions as espoused in its supreme legal instrument (its constitution). Thus, while legislative bodies supply the broad macro level rules that govern our daily lives, it is up to the courts to apply it on a micro level.

Canada is a country that has two distinct legal traditions – one civil found in the Province of Quebec and one common law that is found in the other provinces. On the common law side, the role of courts in this country is quite expansive (and this is increasingly becoming the case on the civil side as well). Generally, courts in Canada perform a gap filling function – that is to say, they develop rules and interpretations in those areas where parliament has chosen to stay silent. This also includes interpreting the wishes of the legislature as espoused in the legislation that it passes. In this way, rules develop to suit particular situations where more detail is required than that which is supplied by an Act of the legislature. Courts tend to take the view that if the democratically elected legislators disagree with a court, they are free to pass laws that override the pronouncements made by courts (so long as they do so in a manner that does not offend the constitution). As such, courts then are important sources of law and this then constitutes one of the major focuses of law school courses, that is to say to study not only the rules that come from the legislative branch of government but also their judicial interpretation as derived from the judiciary.

Typically when a judge is presented with a case, he / she seeks to justify their final decision based on rulings that they make. They do this by presenting reasons where they set out the logical thought process that they employed in reaching their decision. These reasons are then presented in what are called “law reports,” that is, compilations of judicial reasons that are assembled by printing services for lawyers to read and study.

Why do we care about the decisions reached in a particular case? We care because of the principle of *stare decisis et non quieta movere* which is latin for “stand by decisions and do not disturb the undisturbed.” That is to say, courts are bound (but not necessarily obliged) to follow previous judicial precedents and decide like cases the same. Of course, this doesn't mean that subsequent or higher courts may not wish to modify or provide new reasons later on (more on this in a minute). Since judicial precedents play such an important role of our understanding of the law, lawyers are quite keen to master cases and argue them. Since cases are vital to the practice of law, law professors have tended since the late nineteenth century to have students study the law in law school the same way that they will study them in practice – through reading actual cases and analyzing judicial opinions in addition to studying academic commentaries on the cases.

Learning to read a case is not an easy skill. It takes a considerable amount of time to master that goes well beyond law school to get right. However, the law school setting is an

ideal place to learn case reading and interpretation. Since judges all write according to their personal writing styles, there is a considerable amount of variation in the manner in which cases are presented. Despite this variation, there are some common elements that all cases contain.

First, judicial decisions usually begin with a discussion of the relevant facts that have led the judge to their decision. It is important to note that when a judge is reciting the facts of a particular case, these are facts that they have accepted after evidence has been adduced to prove their authenticity. In other words, this is the state of affairs that the judge has determined have been proven in court (typically at the trial level [the first level of court]).

Second, the court will set out the legal issues that are the focus of the trial. Here the court will consider what is the crux of the case and what particular legal issue remains in question to be resolved with the outcome of the case. It is not uncommon for a case to resolve multiple and at times separate unrelated issues in a particular case. This is particularly true of cases that appear in higher levels of court (the Court of Appeal and subsequently the Supreme Court). Think of these as issues that need to be decided before disposing of the case.

Third, the court will typically move on to discuss some of the existing legal precedents that would normally apply to the case. Sometimes the precedents apply to a very similar state of facts as in the case under discussion, other times the facts may not fit as nicely and the court will be forced to improvise and refine concepts to fit the facts. It is here that the court will consider how best to resolve the outstanding factual situation that is the focus of the case. As such, the court will talk about the pre-existing case law, some of the principles and factors that other courts have taken into account. Other times when there are no pre-existing cases to draw upon, the court will take it upon itself to elaborate on the pre-existing legislation or caselaw that governs a particular legal issue and flesh out some rules / criteria that might be helpful in interpreting the case. It is these principles / criterion that lawyers tend to focus on as they provide the standard or test upon which subsequent cases will be decided. This then is what students and professors refer to as “the law” in this area.

Fourth, the court will then proceed to apply its interpretation of the law to the facts of the case. That is to say, it will analyze the facts it accepted in the first part of the decision and see how the issue is to be resolved with respect to the legal reasoning that has been developed throughout the case. The court will then conclude with its disposition of the issue – what remedy or sanction will be applied if any.

### ***In the Classroom***

Having discussed how the law has been developed in the case law, we can now turn our attention to the manner in which cases are to be used in the classroom. First and foremost, one needs to realize that law is such a vast topic, that it is nearly impossible to learn about every particular legal issue that pertains to any given legal subject in the short span of

three years let alone four months in a semester for each upper year course. Mastery of a legal subject can take a lifetime. The purpose of a law class and indeed a legal education generally is not to teach you everything there is to know about “the law” generally speaking, rather each course is intended to provide you with the foundational cases and concepts that outline the basics of a particular area. It is these foundations that you will turn to from time to time throughout the course of your career to help you learn the law in the area that you are researching. It is these foundations that are meant to guide you in the future to finding the answer to the particular problem that you seek to resolve. In other words, rather than teach you “the law,” these courses are intended to provide you with the skills you will need to *learn the law throughout the course of your career*. This way, you can adapt to the ever changing nature of the law which evolves from time to time to reflect changes in social attitudes, needs and values (this is one of the reasons that unlike mathematics, there is no “right” answer in law that holds true all of the time). In other words, “the law” is not something static but rather is ever changing and anyone that seeks to interact with it must engage in constant learning and re-learning in order to cope with this dynamic. This is true because in many instances, courts will be asked to rule on fact scenarios and contexts in which there is no previous case. On other occasions, higher levels of court may wish to revisit areas of the case law and modify the jurisprudence to correct what they perceive to be deficiencies in the law. As such then, the law is a flexible, and ever changing dynamic. The same way that a doctor must remain current with respect to medical advances, a lawyer must also revisit and re-educate themselves to take new developments and concepts into account when constructing their own legal arguments. In fact, in Ontario as of 2010 mandatory continuing professional development (CPD) is now mandatory for all members of the practicing bar.

Most law courses revolve around seminal cases that define a particular area. Your professor will present you with these cases and then focus their analysis around them. In particular, they will present you with questions or ideas that are designed to get you to think about what the court is attempting to convey in its reasoning. Your professor will challenge you to look at cases from different perspectives and see what ways in which you can argue with the principles that courts have laid down. They will do this since it is essential for you to master skills that will allow you to make arguments surrounding a case from different perspectives based on which side you will be representing. In some instances, a professor will employ what is known as the Socratic method. That is to say, they will ask pointed and critical questions that are designed to illicit a response that shows you are able to actively engage with the reasoning employed by courts.

As a student, you should avail yourself of every opportunity to participate in class discussions. While some of you may be rather hesitant or shy to express an opinion, you must realize that in any field that requires argumentation, you must be able to express yourself and your opinions. It is crucial to make an effort to overcome your inhibitions as you embark on a career where your ability to convince people through your use of words is essential. Remember, it is better to work out the “bugs” in your arguments here in the classroom rather than in front of a Judge or a client. The classroom should be seen as a

forum for discussion and not one of judgement (you will have plenty of time for that later in your career). You should be courteous and respectful towards the opinions of your fellow students and should assist your professor in any manner possible in order to make the classroom an open forum for discussion that respects the background and opinions of others and encourages the free exchange of ideas.

Returning once again to the discussion itself, most courses will not place a heavy emphasis on your ability to recall judicial quotes and facts from cases. Rather, what they will be concerned with is to develop your ability to use the reasoning employed by judges to suit the particular argument that you will be making. The purpose of this method is to allow you to think about some of the arguments that courts have found persuasive in the past and allow you to argue from these principles in the future. One of the objectives behind this methodology is to allow you to develop the skills necessary to be able to argue a case from a fact scenario that does not exactly mirror those from previous precedents – skills that are absolutely essential to the practice of law and otherwise. The ability to argue a case effectively is the most important skill that one can acquire in law school whether it is your intention to practice law, study it in an academic setting, or work in a career outside of the legal profession. It is this skill that will receive the most attention in most courses. In other words, the objective is to get you to look at legal reasoning, understand it and critically reflect on it. It goes without saying then that your study efforts should focus on understanding the contexts in which cases were derived, learning the rules or tests that have been developed throughout the cases and then understanding how to critically evaluate them. Once you have done this, you must then consider how arguments fit together and how to argue that these rules should or should not apply when the facts are changed.

As you can imagine, mastery of the law is a long, arduous and time-consuming process. Since we are allotted a limited amount of time throughout the course of your legal education to familiarize you with some of the critical concepts central to most legal subjects, you must invest a considerable amount of time and effort in learning, understanding, and evaluating legal arguments. Your professors will expect you to have a basic familiarity with the material that is assigned and advance preparation is essential to allow you to get the most out of your law school experience. As a bare minimum (and I **stress**, bare minimum), you should strive to attend all of your classes regularly. Remember that admission to this school and profession is not to be taken lightly and that your actions in the future will have consequences on the lives of those that you wish to help. That is why law schools have high standards for admission and why you have been selected to come here. You owe it to yourself and your community to make the most out of this experience. As a professional, you are expected to perform at a level of excellence and you have the right to demand that same standard from others.

As is the case with life in general, the study of law is a skill that can be taught and learned. While the process can be quite daunting, it can also be very rewarding and satisfying. Admittedly, the study of law may seem quite strange (if not downright bizarre) to you

initially. Part of the exercise is to learn some of the discourse that is employed in the legal field and learn how concepts and ideas from different areas of the law can be borrowed and copied in others in addition to learning how some of it fits together. The experience is one that may force you to rethink how you approach subjects when compared to your undergraduate experience. This is normal and while you may be intimidated by the material and the setting in the beginning, you will see that as time progresses, you will become more comfortable with it (although you may not always agree with it). Just remember, that the skills you learn in law school will be ones that you will constantly be refining throughout the course of your career whether within or outside of a legal practice.

Good Luck and Enjoy!

# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM LAW I AT WINDSOR

Minoo Alipour Birgani, Class of 2010

Congratulations! You've been accepted to one of the most intellectually vibrant and socially conscious law schools in the country.

Whether you got 99 or 31 percentile on your LSAT makes no difference now. In the coming year, you will be educated, challenged, tested, supported, stressed, amused and occasionally entertained but you will certainly have one of the most rewarding and fulfilling experiences of your life.

You may be a 21 year-old recent graduate with no work experience or international travel under your belt; you may be a mother of two who has been outside the education system for longer than most students have been in school; you may be a PhD candidate in science, the kid most students called 'the nerd' in high school. Over the next eight months, regardless of your background, you will experience the same level of difficulty, anxiety and pressure. It will push you to the limits you never thought you had before. Yet in late April, when you come out of the moot court having just finished your last final exam, it will feel extremely gratifying to know you're forever done with Law I. These eight short months will pass you by in the blink of an eye, arguably define your career and set the stage for the lawyer you choose to become. Here are a few humble tips to help you through Law I at Windsor:

**What goes around comes around** – Because the stakes for doing well are high, people take reciprocity quite seriously. If they feel like you're taking advantage of their notes or good will, they may be personally offended. You're going to be seeing the same group of people for three years, into your career and maybe even beyond that, be there for them if you want them to be there for you.

**Get involved but don't over do it** – There are countless opportunities to get involved with the community. It's tempting to join many clubs or volunteer for many events because you are eager. Take a step back and think about it before you commit. Law school is stressful and time consuming, so be smart about what you really want to do with your free time.

**Get a car** (or make friends with those who have a car) – My good friend Caitlin told me this. Windsor is a difficult town to get around in. Public transportation is primitive and there are no major supermarkets around law school. If you have a car, be kind to others. They'll be good company during those dull shopping trips.

**Go to as many social events as possible** – If law students know one thing, it's how to party! Well, at least on those hand-full of occasions they get during their punishing schedule. For the sake of your sanity, make an effort to go out to the social events.

**Take advantage of resources available to you** – From academic success program and tutorials to health resources, much is at your disposal and you will find yourself in need, so don't be shy.

**Get a good set of course notes to refine and revise, but make your own case briefs** – The key to understanding complicated legal cases is to simplify and put them in your own words. Once you learn to do that, compare your work against a good set of notes from upper year students. But don't rely on other people's notes too much. Sometimes, a recent decision changes the law completely. You don't want to rely on law that's been overturned.

**Be smart when studying** – What distinguishes an A and a C student is not how much work they put in but how effective they've been when studying. Learn to read what you must. Write out your answer to old exam questions and discuss it with your professor. They can help you figure out what you need to do to write a good law exam.

**Talk to your family and friends as often as you can** – Life in Windsor for many students could get very depressing as most are away from their family and friends. The level of depression is at its peak when you come back after the Christmas break. Stay connected to your family and friends and talk to them about your experience. They will help you get through things.

**Stay away from the hype** – It's hard to explain what the hype is but it's what makes you feel inadequate or pushes you to do things you don't really want to do. Don't let it get to you!

**Don't fear mooting** – Your first year moot is one of the most hyped up events of law I. Think of it as a chance to get to know yourself and what you want to do with your career. Do you want to be a litigator or a solicitor?

**Reputations are made and ruined in law school. Professionalism begins on your first day** – That's what I was told in Law I and I think it's the best advice I can give to new students. You don't have to cheat on your exam to be considered unethical. If you don't play fair, little by little your colleagues will keep away and soon no one will want to work, study, or share notes with you. You will go to class with the same students for three years so treat them as you want them to treat you.

**Enjoy** – students tend to have a love/hate relationship with Law I. Make yours a loving one and enjoy it as much as you can. You don't get a second chance!

## FORMER WINDSOR LAW STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS ON THEIR FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Looking around during Orientation, it became clear that my success prior to law school had been perpetrated exclusively by fraud and that I would inevitably be exposed sometime before Thanksgiving. It seemed that everyone was more on the ball than I, and knew infinitely more about the law, law school and the city of Windsor. This impression began to wane, however, before the end of Orientation.

I found that once I got to know people, and the guards came down, I wasn't the only 'duck': calm and serene on the surface, but paddling like hell underneath. I found that my thoughts were often similar to the Professor's when questions were answered in class, and that some people actually asked me for my opinion or advice. After a while, I realized that Law I was a pretty similar experience, emotio-academically anyway, for most.

The most difficult part of Law I, one of the sources of stress and frustration, stemmed from being a learner all over again. Suddenly, all the skills and knowledge I had attained as an undergrad were no longer required. I was confronted with the unique styles and methods needed to learn the trade of law. A new library system, legal, not essay, writing, and hypothetical-based exams, all combined to take me back to Square One. As an adult, and former decent student, I wasn't used to making mistakes, not knowing what I was doing, and feeling generally overwhelmed by a unique system which, of course, seemed unmasterable. While most unnerving, this situation actually had some positive aspects, in hindsight.

I remember handing in an assignment and actually feeling good because it was the best I could do. It wasn't great, and while sounding corny, I knew I'd tried my best, used all the knowledge I had so far, and that it would simply have to do because I didn't know enough yet to do any better. Having come to terms with this was oddly fulfilling. The key, however, seemed to be simple patience. Looking back, I realize that I began to come around to this law thing early in the new year. Everything just kind of began to fit into place. Classes made more sense, cases became easier to read, sleep came a little easier, and I began to feel like I even knew something. I think that you spend the first term of law school immersed in fear of the unknown and the second you use the newfound knowledge of the system to play it a little in an effort to regain sanity and cut down on the workload.

The other thing I found a factor in Law I was what I call 'collateral' stress. Stress can be contagious, and 'collateral' stress is that which I inherited from others who were stressed. I often had to step back and tell myself that just because others were 'stressing', it did not mean my workload required I too be stressed. I had to remind myself constantly that everyone works at a different pace, has a different level of confidence in their abilities, and

handle things with a different amount of stress. I found some to be hysterical about what I considered trivial, and others to be somewhat too casual, or at least that was the impression they gave. As hard as it was to do, Law I made me rely on my own abilities and what I felt was the right way to proceed for me. Contrary to my first impression, the sanity-saving thought became “you’ve gotten this far doing this the way you are, why should that stop now”. I did fine, with a few pointers along the way.

As hard as it’s going to be, remember, Law I is one big boat and everyone’s in it together. Be patient — the big picture will come soon enough, and, most of all, in the face of all adversity, DON’T BELIEVE THE HYPE!

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The Orientation Committee asked me to write a short synopsis of my Law I experience. As I sat staring at the blank computer screen, pondering the many experiences which could easily fill ten pages, it suddenly occurred to me that the operative word of the foregoing request epitomized my Law I — *SHORT!* Not only did it fly by faster than you can imagine, but I spent the entire time feeling short, short on time, short on space, short of words, and always short on sleep. In fact, here’s a little list of shortcomings which I would suggest any incoming first year get used to right now.

Get used to:

- § not having quite enough time to get all your readings done;
- § trying to shorten a 12-page case into a one line ratio so you can remember it for the exam;
- § never having enough time to finish an exam;
- § trying every trick in the book to shorten your memos to fit the word count;
- § feeling not only short on words but at a total loss when 2 moot judges ask you questions at the same time;
- § personal space?? — don’t forget the law school community is pretty small (please note, this is by no means an exhaustive list).

The funny thing is, as much as these are the complaints you will hear around the school every day, the biggest shortcoming of all is that it goes by in too short a time. I wouldn’t have admitted this last May, but it was a lot of fun; I enjoyed school and am looking forward to next year.

Not only was it fun, but it felt good; it felt like I belonged here. They say everyone is carefully selected to create the right community here at Windsor. Well, you may be

doubtful about that now, maybe even in December you will still be doubtful but eventually you will come to realize it's true. The realization may come to you over Christmas holidays as you're explaining to your family this minute idiosyncrasy of criminal or constitutional law (maybe even property), and when you look up after 15 minutes, they are all looking at you like you're from Mars. They won't have a clue what you're talking about, but you will because the concept finally clicked the night before the exam. You will know that you are in the right place. (At least that was how it happened for me).

So if you're concerned you may not have made the right choice, at least feel secure in knowing we chose you and we're confident in our choices. This confidence, however, does acknowledge human frailties — we know first year is tough, so don't be afraid to ask for help whenever you're feeling a little short.

## **EXCERPTED FROM DONALD YAP**

### **PRESIDENT OF THE HONG KONG LAW SOCIETY, 1991**

We have established, in rather broad brushstrokes, the challenges which lawyers must face. We must now begin to talk about what constitutes competence in this changing world. Certainly knowledge of the law is important and the more law that one knows the better. But within this context one has to remember the function of law. It is a tool used to solve problems not simply a body of knowledge. The measure of a competent lawyer is not an estimate merely of what law he or she knows but rather how that knowledge can be used to give effect to the legitimate goals of clients. If one cannot do this, the ability to recite volumes of legal principles will be of little help.

Secondly, competence requires an understanding of the context in which legal problems arise. Sophisticated analytical skills must be complemented by two things, first, an understanding of the psychological, social and financial dimension of any situation, and second, an ability to respond to a client on this level. Law strives for certainty in a complex, subtle, ambiguous and indeterminate world. But if a lawyer seeks only narrow legal answers, he may be incapable of understanding the full context of the client's needs. Understanding the context is essential to the implementation of workable solutions.

Third, competence requires the ability to change. Peter Johnson, the Chairman of the Training Committee in England, spoke recently of the following problem. "A profession, when asked to change, cannot remember why things were done in that way to begin with and then proceeds to say that change will be difficult". We must reassess our approach and be willing to embrace appropriate change.

Change requires introspection, objective self-appraisal, a commitment to learning, and an ability to question the traditional approaches we use as professions. We must ensure that our standards of practice meet the ever changing requirements of our clients.

Thus, a competent practitioner is one who only knows law but also knows how to use it to serve the interests of clients effectively. He or she must see legal work within the context of the day to day needs of clients, not just within the framework of textbooks, law reports and briefs. The competent practitioner must be open and responsive to change. Finally, and most importantly, he or she must set a high standard of practice and strive for excellence.

## **EXCERPTED FROM STEPHEN NATHANSON**

### ***“PROBLEM-SOLVING IN PROFESSIONAL LEGAL EDUCATION”***

Problem-solving is probably one of the most important skills required by a lawyer. Lawyers are hired to solve legal problems, so problem-solving skill is at the centre of what they do. Yet problem-solving is difficult to master because it is arguably the most complex of skills embracing more of what a lawyer has to know and be able to do than any other skill. Before being able to solve their clients' problems, lawyers have to know a great deal of substantive law as well as how to perform a range of legal skills and transactions. In addition, they have to know how to deal with ethical, as well as non-legal, issues which frequently arise in the course of solving their clients' problems. Lastly, as most experienced legal problem-solvers know, legal problem-solving involves more than just applying known solutions to recurring problems; it means finding novel solutions to an endless variety of non-recurring problems encountered in practice.

## EXCERPTED FROM JAMES ELKINS

### *“RITES DE PASSAGE: LAW STUDENT ‘TELLING THEIR LIVES’”*

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I have just completed one week and one day of legal education. I have absorbed more information this week than in the whole of last year.

I have so many thoughts and impressions floating around. I am excited, challenged by my classes and experiences. I really love what I am doing. High school and college were boring.

...

I feel that I have an ability for law and intend to work hard to develop it. Self-respect at work and the respect of colleagues are in important part of job satisfaction. The important thing is to be able to do things that matter to people.

...

I believe that a person can change and learn new things, new ways of looking at things, and still adapt these new changes in his old life, becoming a richer person. We all change and we must adapt. Anything we do changes us, only death is static.

I now stand at the vantage point of being nearly through my first semester. I think I have learned how to stand both inside and outside the law school environment, and hopefully the law as well. This is difficult to explain. We come to law school and are inundated with work, placed under great pressure and competition. I have enjoyed it immensely. But it goes beyond learning. The process is designed to change us, to mold us into lawyers. The change is good and necessary. They call it “thinking like a lawyer” and it is necessary to be a good lawyer. However, not to be aware of the changes while they are happening is frightening because others have control over you. They attempt to mold you to the Apollonian, lawyer model. We even come to accept injustice in a judicial decision as logical, even right.

The pressures are great, and easy to give in to. But by being both an insider and an outsider, I can value the changes while exercising control and subjecting them to my own judgment. In this way I combine an objective, authoritarian model of law with the subjective parts of myself from which I can make moral judgments.

...

Rather than being submerged in the legal environment, I feel that I am involved.

. . .

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In law school you have a feeling of being. I am not really sure how you get it or who gives it to you, but you have a feeling of accomplishments, or at least you think that one day, you will accomplish something.

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We are so willing to sacrifice ourselves, our values — to become a person whose characteristics we are as yet unaware. The mere fact that we don't know where our professional development is leading us does not stop us from advancing full speed. Rather than harmlessly spinning our wheels, we are driving at breakneck speed over unfamiliar and dangerous roads. I fear there is no return.

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What must a person sacrifice to be a lawyer? While the physical sacrifices of school are demanding and perhaps necessary, it is a deeper sacrifice that I speak of now. It is a sacrifice of all he is for what he may be?

There seems to be a movement in law school falling into the narrow rut of "thinking like a lawyer". I have no desire to be radical, or different from the majority. It is simply that I want to be educated as a lawyer, but to think like myself. "Group think" is not appealing, and it is my hope that when I leave law school I will still be known as a person who is a lawyer instead of a lawyer who is a person.

I am willing to sacrifice for the end, but unwilling to sacrifice self. If one leaves law school as a lawyer but has sold himself to attain that end, he becomes nothing more than the end. Life becomes little more than a series of predetermined moves. I want to maintain the ability to face new dimensions, to seek new goals and ultimately this is more important than being a lawyer.

## **HELPFUL HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM UPPER YEAR LAW STUDENTS**

1. Start working on assignments early.
2. Do not fall behind on assigned readings.
3. Go to EVERY class and take good class notes.
4. Do old exams as practice.
5. Keep study groups small --- 2 to 3 people max.
6. Exam preparation starts the first day of classes --- don't wait until the last minute, it won't work in law school.
7. Don't be afraid to ask questions in class.
8. Don't leave things to the last minute or you will become overwhelmed!
9. Take some time to relax (but not too much time) --- do non-law related activities.
10. Have fun --- enjoy the social aspects of law school and the next 3 years will be great.
11. Don't get caught up in the stress of others.
12. Have fun, balance work and play.
13. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
14. Treat law school as a job. Arrive at 8:00 a.m. and leave at 6:00 p.m. and you'll be done for the day.
15. Learning happens outside the classroom too! Take advantage of the Academic Success Programme. Look for notices advertising guest speakers.

***GOOD LUCK!!!***