

LEGALCOMPASS

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WORDS OF WISDOM

TIME-TESTED ADVICE FOR EXCELLING IN LAW SCHOOL

"Make sure to stay organized, keep up with required readings, and devote enough time to schoolwork each week. But remember to keep things balanced by making time for yourself outside of school! Go to the movies, meet friends for lunch, or head to the gym. Balance is key to well-being."

"It's never too soon to start building your professional network. Developing these relationships early can be a huge asset in the future. As a first year law student, you'll have many opportunities to meet new people: fellow 1Ls, upper year students, alumni, professors, and practising lawyers. Don't be afraid to invite someone for coffee, and keep in touch with occasional emails."



WHY ARE LAW STUDENTS LEARNING CODING?

At first glance, it may seem that computer coding and law are two very different and discrete practices. However, there is growing attention on coding for law students and lawyers. The Lincoln Alexander School of Law at Ryerson University even has a required coding intensive course in the second year of the Juris Doctor program. So, why are law students learning coding?

Technology has changed almost every aspect of our lives, and the legal practice is no exception. There is an increasing need to embrace technology and innovation to improve efficiency in law. While the usefulness may depend on the area of practice and client needs, an ability to mine data, automate tasks, problem solve through algorithms, organize information in databases, or enhance security and privacy can all benefit a legal practice.

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WHY ARE LAW STUDENTS LEARNING CODING?

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This does not mean that law students need to become fully fluent in coding to have successful legal careers. Coding is itself a highly skilled and complex career. Instead, developing and sharpening some coding skills can improve an understanding of the extent of possibilities available and how to adapt and enhance workflows to the task at hand. To benefit from these skills would not require a high level of fluency to write code and build systems from scratch. It could include learning enough to customize existing programs or improving understanding of terms and concepts to work closely with skilled coders on developing tools. Even a little knowledge could go a long way!

There are lots of resources available to help understand whether coding is right for you. Check out <https://www.clio.com/blog/programming-for-lawyers/>, the University of Ottawa's <https://www.datascienceforlawyers.org/learning-resources/>, and *Litigating Artificial Intelligence* to learn more.



ONLINE RESOURCES FOR LAW STUDENTS

EMOND RESOURCES

emond.ca

emondexamprep.ca

emond.ca/digital-casebook-collection

emond.ca/lawstudentportal

Law School Manual: emond.ca/LSmanual

Bar Exam Preparation Manual:

emond.ca/CBPmanual

LEGAL NEWS AND GUIDANCE

canlawforum.com

Barrister/Solicitor Licensing Process:
bit.ly/2FzF01s

canadianlawyeromag.com

precedentjd.com

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

CanLII: canlii.org/en

e-Laws: ontario.ca/laws

Justice Department: justice.gc.ca/eng

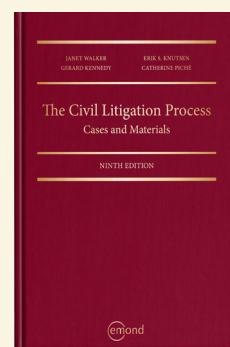
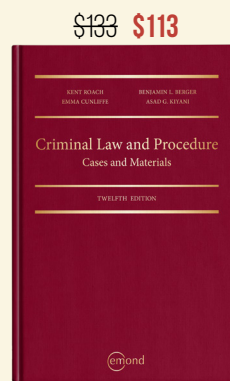
FREE LEGAL GLOSSARY

Backsheet: a part of every court document, it contains the name, LSUC number, address, and telephone and fax numbers of the lawyer who prepared the document, the short title of proceedings, the court and court file number, the fax number of the person to be served (if known), and a large space reserved for court officials to make entries on.

Burden of Proof: the responsibility for proving a fact, proposition, guilt, or innocence; can rest with either party in a civil or criminal matter, according to the applicable rules of procedure.

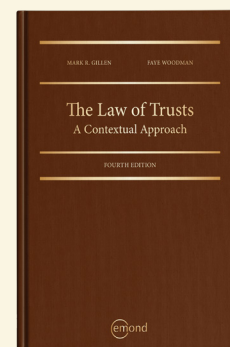
Vetrovec warning: a warning to the jury given where the judge determines that the evidence of a particular witness is called into question and requires special scrutiny; the jurors are cautioned that they may accept the evidence without corroboration, but it is dangerous to do so without independent confirmation of material parts of that evidence.

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LEARNING ABOUT INDIGENOUS LEGAL ISSUES

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its reports in 2015. As part of its mandate, the TRC delivered its Calls to Action to, among other things, promote an awareness and public education of the Residential School System and its impact on Indigenous Peoples, and make recommendations for ongoing individual and collective reconciliation between all Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to address the harms caused from colonialism.

So, how does this impact you as a law student? As part of its report, the TRC released 94 Calls to Action intended to rectify

the harms done by residential schools and correct ongoing wrongs experienced by Indigenous peoples right across Canada. Call to Action number 28 was specifically aimed at law schools. It recommends Canadian law students be required to take a course in Aboriginal peoples and the law. Following this, many courses and specialized programs were initiated in law schools across the country with law students often now required to take these courses.

But why is this important? Why should law students look at this as an opportunity to make a difference? As recent as July 26, 2021 in the case of *Meekis v Ontario*, 2021 ONCA 534 (a claim involving allegations of systemic racism and discrimination in the practices of the Office of the Chief Coroner's Office), the Court of Appeal for Ontario reminded us that the legacy of systemic injustice and discrimination continues today for Indigenous peoples and remains an unwanted but entrenched influence on individual and government decision-making.

As law students, we are in a unique position to change this legacy. Courses in Indigenous law help us to understand that we can create new opportunities for justice and bring significant change to destructive and discriminatory systems, practices, and laws in Canada. We can make a difference. It starts by purposefully engaging in courses and programs (even when they are not required) in a true spirit of reconciliation and a desire to learn. It is through this approach that we, as future lawyers and decision-makers, can make a difference.

TIPS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR POTENTIAL

During Law school it is easy to feel overwhelmed but staying organized and managing your time will reduce your stress. Have you ever tried the Pomodoro Technique or the 1-3-5 Rule?

Find more information here: <https://bit.ly/3jPSPtO>

CAREER INFO

Where do you see yourself in five years? In 2020, roughly 24% of practicing lawyers in Ontario classified as sole practitioners. Almost 16% were employed by the government, 16% were working as in-house counsel, and less than 2% were working in education. Where will you be?

Source: <https://lso.ca/annualreport/2020/home>

ONTARIO BAR EXAM PREPARATION

REVIEW COURSES, PRACTICE EXAMS, AND ADVICE: EMONDEXAMPREP.CA

To prepare for the LSO barrister and solicitor licensing exams, you must study over 1,600 pages of material and answer substantive multiple-choice questions. With Emond Exam Prep's [practice exams](#) and [preparation courses](#), you will learn strategies, tips, and exam requirements that will help you succeed.

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with subject performance analytics, correct answers, and detailed explanations.

Online and in-class exam preparation courses with substantive lectures on the required competencies.

- 1 Essentials
- 2 Facts
- 3 Issues
- 4 Rules
- 5 Analysis

WRITING A CASE BRIEF: STEP BY STEP

IN LAW SCHOOL, YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING MANY CASES FOR EACH OF YOUR CLASSES. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMEMBER ALL OF THE IMPORTANT DETAILS FROM EACH CASE, BUT YOU CAN CREATE CASE BRIEFS TO CAPTURE THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW IN A HELPFUL FORMAT FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

1. ESSENTIALS

Before starting your case brief, make sure to note the name of the case, the year, and the jurisdiction. This will be essential for helping to build your picture of the case law throughout the course.

2. THE FACTS

Begin with a brief description of the case. Describe the dispute between the parties. Make sure you focus on the facts that are relevant to the court's analysis, and cut out those that are extraneous. The facts are how you will distinguish or analogize cases. Ask: Who are the parties? What is the cause of action? What do the parties want?

5. ANALYSIS

Describe how the court applied the relevant rules to the specific facts of the case, and summarize the reasoning the court uses to determine whether a rule applies or does not apply. Knowing the outcome is useless if you don't know how the court reached that decision. The reasoning behind the decision is what you will use to apply this case to hypotheticals and future cases. Ask: Why does this rule apply? Why doesn't this rule apply? What was the ultimate finding made by the court?

4. THE RULE(S)

Determine what rules the court is using to come to their decision. Rules might be statutory or from case law, and multiple rules may be relevant to the decision.

3. THE ISSUE(S)

The "issue" is the question the court is trying to answer in that particular case. You should always formulate it as a question in your case brief, in order to better understand the court's answer.

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EMOND EXAM PREP

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INSPIRATION

"It is the spirit and not the form of law that keeps justice alive." – Robert Collier

"The most advanced justice system in the world is a failure if it does not provide justice to the people it is meant to serve." – Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin

