

CANONS OF CONSTRUCTION

big book

of course reviews

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ADVOCACY AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

Advocacy (Kelly, Kirk)

Advocacy is an excellent class to get the pre-articling jitters out about appearing in Chambers. Liam and Mike have endless banter and stories to tell. Our class was entirely 3Ls and the course is assignment and presentation based, including a Chambers application before an ABQB master and one portion of a trial before an ABQB justice. The course requires very little work, which is a big benefit in 3L, but the assignments often feel like they are arbitrarily graded. You do not receive any instruction on how to draft the written work or any real practice or instruction on oral advocacy. Thus, those who get high grades tend to have prior experience in drafting or oration. Overall, I recommend the class, but not if you want better than a B+.

Interviewing and Counseling (Acton)

Historically, this was a highly sought after course because it was taught by both Barbara Acton and Lynn Parish. They worked as a great team together where Barbara would have stories, be more fun and keep the mood up. Lynn is more of a classic instructor who is regimented, theoretical, and focused on the activities. However, this past year was taught by only Acton and it was not a good course. Class time was often wasted on technical difficulties and needlessly long breaks in the middle of class. We received almost no helpful feedback and classes would often end an hour or more early. Many students felt they barely learned anything, but at least it was an easy class where we did not have to do much.

Mediation Advocacy (Kobewka, Hilborn)

This class is not as beneficial as one might expect. It's composed of creating several documents in preparation for a mock mediation at the end of term, but the professors give you next to no instructions and assume you know how to draft these documents already. While it is an easy B for most students, their grading is woefully imbalanced as they will pick apart trivialities and minutia for some, but not for others. Avoid.

Techniques in Negotiation (Kash)

Any class taught by Brian Kash is a course that you should take. Classes are interactive and engaging with preparations to negotiate and actual negotiations. He also shares stories from his practice related to negotiation and professional ethics issues. There is an email negotiation and a paper in which you apply negotiation principles from the textbook to an example from popular culture. Very good class, as it teaches you practical and soft skills in the most uncomfortable and memorable way possible: by messing it up the first time so you never forget.

CORPORATE LAW:

Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions (Maharaj, Grout)

A recommended course for any student that wants to practice as a corporate solicitor. Obviously, corporate M&A is but one slice of practice in the corporate world, but it's a big slice. The course is generally favorable to people that prefer to work through a series of projects rather than cram for an exam at the end of the year. The projects are practical (ie., advising on a possible business combination) and force you to engage with relevant and applicable materials (ie: not just some wonky textbook). A word of warning, though—the expectations are high (the instructors are practitioners at a local LARGE firm—and therefore have correspondingly LARGE expectations in the quality of work they grade). Thumbs up for those of you who want to dive into the deep end of the business/corporate law world.

International Business Transactions (Reif)

I would recommend this course for a student who seeks the elusive easy B. There is no substantive engagement on a class-to-class basis needed. Guest speakers were engaging and very helpful for developing an understanding of the course material.

Commercial Transactions (Wood)

The most useful part of this course was the assignments. The assignments tasked you with completing the sort of work that a solicitor might actually be engaged in. The majority of your learning will come from trying to figure out the assignments. This is a great class for spreading out your workload over an entire semester, as each assignment is due approximately once a month and each covers around a third of the class.

Bankruptcy and Insolvency (Wood)

This course has an option for grading. Students can elect to complete a short paper on some topic relating to bankruptcy. Students taking this option will receive 50% of their grade from the paper and 50% from the exam. The alternative is the traditional 100% exam. This is a good class for students looking to maximize their learning. Professor Wood is very knowledgeable and offers a fair amount of practical advice. I enjoyed the course. The readings are lighter than other classes and fairly interesting. This course compliments well with PPSL and Judgment Enforcement as all three deal with the same types of things, though each is distinct. It would be a mistake to try and learn this course from the CAN, but it might still be possible. The exam was fair. A useful course for anyone thinking generally about commercial law because insolvency is a live issue and having a knowledge of this could help protect clients. Additionally, the content covered would be hard to pick up on one's own after law school (if you didn't have the help of a senior) because of the interplay between statutes. Overall, an interesting course.

Bankruptcy and Insolvency (Lund)

Lund starts the class with music to set the tone, which says a lot about her teaching style—which is very engaging, but if you miss something in class, it probably won't be on the slides. She does practice questions in class, which are super helpful and low stress even for a slacker like me who doesn't do any readings. There's an optional assignment if you don't want to have a 100% final.

Corporate Securities (Meshel)

Corporate securities is an essential course for anyone looking to practice any form of business law. Professor Meshel is a great teacher who gives you detailed explanations and a robust amount of information. You feel that the class gives you a good basic knowledge of securities law so you won't be completely lost during practice.

Professor Meshel speaks quickly, so paying attention and having a CAN from a previous year to help catch notes you missed is a necessity. Her exams are very fair and straightforward, so it makes studying the material less daunting.

Corporate Reorganization and Restructuring (Wood)

This course takes off from the restructuring part of the Bankruptcy course (same textbook too, but different sections). It focuses on drafting pleadings/court documents and mootings (at the courts, in front of a judge). Even though the course focuses on the CCAA and "big" restructurings, you learn about all the parties in an action, so I'd say it's useful for people going to any sized firm with an interest in bankruptcy or restructuring.

PROPERTY LAW:

Personal Property Security Law (Wood)

Recommended course for both potential barristers and solicitors as personal property security has implications in banking, real estate, construction, and general litigation work. While the entire course could be summarized with two words: "register everything;" it is still useful to understand the common pitfalls of securing interests in collateral in order to avoid making the same mistakes in your own practice. Most of the cases in the case book seem to cite Professor Wood. Wood really is an expert in the subject matter, who really cares about the subject and more importantly cares about his students understanding the subject. To a lot of people, the subject matter of the course is dull, and there are some cases in the readings which feel like they never end. A recommended course, as it is likely easier to learn this in law school than in practice. Wood is a great professor, he provides clear presentations and his online text is phenomenal—if you study it, you can do very well. Also, the only professor who seems to use the calendar in TWEN (hint: this is where the readings for classes are found). The midterm is closed book, but the final is open book. He also does quizzes (not graded) in class that are helpful in preparing for the exams.

Judgment Enforcement (Lund)

Great course. There are some classes that contain information that everyone should know, lawyer or not. Judgment enforcement is one such class. Anna Lund does a great job balancing theory/case law and the practical aspects of judgment enforcement. In terms of work, the assignments are short, but still take time and effort. Attendance and participation are taken into account so absentee students take note. She is fair, a good lecturer, and her slides are very comprehensive. While it is not a prerequisite, you will have an advantage over your peers if you have taken PPSL before taking Judgment Enforcement.

Real Estate Transactions (Kortbeek)

The grade is determined by a 100% final. The exam is closed book, except for an unaltered course syllabus. The readings are either cases or real-world precedents and real estate forms, and Nancy incorporates lots of examples of how principles play out in practice into lectures. I feel like I'm learning a lot of good "need-to-know" information for both practice and just real life. Just be warned, though—the LSA CAN is super out of date, so best to ask around to get an updated CAN if you want one, because most of the class is just Nancy lecturing, with minimal powerpoints.

Intellectual Property (McDonald, Yoo)

This course is recommended for any student who wants to maximize their knowledge of intellectual property and generally wants to sound impressive by saying they took IP to their non-law friends. The course summarizes the four main areas of IP law: copyright, trademarks, patents and industrial design. Taught by practitioners, McDonald and Yoo have lots of stories about their experiences in IP law that help to make the material more interesting. The class is split into two papers approximately 10 pages each, one about patents or industrial design and the other about copyright or trademarks. Students should be warned that the marks for the first paper came back very slowly (like one week before the second paper was due) and had minimal feedback—so it could be difficult if you are not the most confident about writing a research paper.

Intellectual Property (Hutchison)

The main benefit of taking this class is that Hutchison literally wrote the book on intellectual property, so it is an area that he knows extremely well. While the material covers the four main areas of IP law, Hutchison spends roughly half the class covering copyright law. Hutchison's lecturing style can be difficult to engage with (it kind of comes off like he doesn't want to be there himself), but he is open to meeting with students and seemingly has an easier time explaining the material in a one-on-one setting. Evaluation is a 100% final, which in previous years has reportedly been curved harshly. Also note that the LSA CAN is several years out-of-date, although this class is fairly straightforward and easy to follow.

Musicians and the Law (Hutchison)

Only recommended for students who are actually interested in music or entertainment law, or perhaps intellectual property law. This is not a snoozer of course. There is constant work throughout the term, and a CAN will not help you. With low enrolment, it's likely that you'll get a good grade, but it's not guaranteed A. It may seem counterintuitive, but this was one of the most practical courses that I've taken in law school. The course requires you to learn an area of law, prepare for a negotiation, conduct a negotiation, and then draft a contract that captures the results of that negotiation. Also, it's fascinating subject matter—you get to read cases about The Doors.

Trusts (McInnes)

A highly recommended course with an absolutely fantastic, above-and-beyond knowledgeable professor who literally wrote for/edits the textbook that the SCC references when it has a trusts case. The course begins with a clear introduction that situates trust law within the wider legal system in Canada. While some of the subject matter can feel technical and unrelatable, McInnes goes out of his way to provide a holistic approach to the area of law and it eventually all fits together. Lectures run at a fast pace, and it would be wise to do a quick review of your 1L notes on equity and trusts before the first class. There is an optional midterm, and avoiding the optional midterm is not detrimental. (Also, his dry humour will help you get through your day easier.) If you're on the fence about this course, take it. And don't be deterred by people who say it's hard—it gives you a lot to chew on, for sure, but that's part of the fun of it.

***Wills and Administration
(Bonora, Lafuente)***

The professors attempted to take a different approach to teaching this class by making the major project a drafting assignment rather than a final or paper. Students are paired up with a classmate and are tasked with drafting a will, power of attorney, and personal directive based on the estate planning document provided by their partner. The professors originally planned to draft genuine wills, but after students complained about revealing personal info, the wills were for fictional people, although they hope to change this for future classes. The other major assignment students have is the presentation of a case, which is straightforward; students choose their case at the start of the year so there is plenty of time to prepare. This was a really interesting class thanks to the approach the professors took. They are lawyers at Dentons, so their knowledge and passion for the material is apparent. It helps make the three-hour long classes entertaining and engaging. If there is an issue with the class, it is that there is so little feedback on how to improve on the drafting assignment. I couldn't tell you what I did wrong or what I did right. It's nice to get the drafting experience, but it felt like it could have been done better.

***Wills and Administration
(Klaray, Gordon)***

This course is really interesting if you are interested in wills and the administration of estates. The professors are both very engaging with lots of real-world stories to make the material more engaging, although Klaray tends to jump around a lot. The material isn't too onerous as there are just a few cases to read each week and they are also covered sufficiently in class. Some slides are uploaded to TWEN as PDF documents, which can make it difficult to use them for making CANs. Klaray and Gordon went through extensive reworking of this course to make it have logical developments in the course material as opposed to jumping around materials. They also incorporated practical tips. For example, on what to look for in a client's capacity when making their will so that you won't get in trouble later and how to get the beneficiaries to sign off on an interim distribution order. The mark is based on a 100% open book exam.

RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT:

Environmental Law (Jefferies)

If you have any interest in environmental law, this is the BEST class to take. It's a good introductory course to environmental law, covering diverse/fascinating environmental issues. Also, if you have any interest in international law, this class will provide an in-depth analysis on a topic that has ever-increasing relevance in global affairs. International environmental law is Professor Jefferies' area of interest, so he is really passionate/knowledgeable about it. It is an exam-based course with an optional midterm (multiple choice/short answer) that is fail-safe and a final exam (some multiple choice, some short answer/long answer, some hypotheticals).

Basic Oil and Gas Law (Percy)

Although not an easy "B" class, this class is great for people looking to increase their knowledge on this area of law. If you are looking to work in energy law, this course is an obvious choice. You could probably pick up an Oil and Gas CAN and learn the course from there, but it's a pleasure to listen and interact with Professor Percy.

Basic Oil and Gas Law (Jefferies)

I know, I know, oil and gas is supposed to be dead, right? So why should you take a class on it? While it is true that Canada is beginning its movement away from fossil fuels into renewable energy for the foreseeable future oil and gas will be playing a pivotal role in Alberta's economy, and accordingly for a lot of firms as well. Jefferies is a great professor that truly works hard to make sure that students understand the material and to make it interesting. Broadly speaking, the course is split into two parts. At the beginning it is a lot of property law learning who owns what in an oil and gas reservoir; then it transitions into learning all about PNG leases and learning how to avoid the common pitfalls. Split into an open book, failsafe quiz (in COVID times, at least) and final, this class is not an excessive amount of work. An obvious yes for anyone looking to work in Calgary or in the Energy group at a firm with an iconic prof.

Water Law (Percy)

Water law is a subject that Percy has a real expertise and interest in, and this is evident throughout the course. The readings are light, and this is a paper-based class. While water and law are often not considered together, the course is very informative, very interesting, and hopefully will be useful in practice. Additionally, Percy offers a list of suggested paper topics, and always has an open-door policy and is eager to help students in all stages of their paper.

CRIMINAL LAW:

Advanced Criminal Law (Beresh)

If you're interested in criminal law, this course is a must. The readings are super interesting and the assignments are straightforward. Brian Beresh gives encouragement and is passionate about helping students succeed. He also has fascinating stories and insights that he shares with each class. Listening to other students go over the cases assigned for reading was a little boring, but it's a small price to pay for all the other stuff you get out of the course. The main assignment was a factum involving issue spotting and analysis using the cases read in class—it was good fun!

Advanced Criminal Trial Advocacy (Sparks, Tate)

This course is a lot of work. You have to want to practice criminal litigation, or else you will not enjoy it. That said, those interested in criminal law will find that this course is an absolutely essential course to take. Suggest taking this course in third year because it draws on so many other classes: Evidence, Sentencing, Criminal Procedure, and Advocacy. It is very much a “learn by doing” class and there is a ton of information to process. The simulated trial moot is several hours and takes place on a Saturday in March. This course is amazing, at times very difficult yet extremely educational.

Criminal Procedure (Aloneissi, O'Neill)

The teaching was incredibly disorganized and had a lower level of instruction than full-time professors (as is the risk with sessionals). Most of the class time was spent answering completely irrelevant hypotheticals that had no relation to the course material. Further, much of the material is almost an exact repeat of first year criminal law. My notes were extremely disorganized and lacking any substance which reflected the disorganized nature of the lectures. You absolutely cannot rely on the CAN to do well on the exam but you also cannot rely on your notes. Little to no exam prep or expectations are given by the instructors. This class turned me off criminal law and I would recommend avoiding it.

Criminal Procedure (Penney)

Penney teaches in his flipped classroom model, expecting students to do the readings and watch his topic videos before attending class. He provides little formal instruction in class and mostly relies on class problems to help students understand the concepts. Class problems consist of different fact scenarios that students use to answer questions on TopHat. However, there are no marks for in-class participation as it's a 100% final. Definitely recommend it if you are interested in practicing criminal law and Penney is an excellent teacher.

Advanced Evidence (Seaman, Quinlan)

An in-depth examination of interesting and controversial areas of evidence (credibility of unreliable informants/child witnesses, etc). A small class focused on open discussion. Two instructors—one Crown, one defence—so you get an interesting and broad perspective of the topic. This paper course also requires submission of weekly discussion questions based on readings prior to class.

Law and Policing (Allan)

Law and policing taught by Malcolm Allan was the highlight of my law school experience so far. The class was a three-hour seminar and each week was a mini-course on a different topic related to policing. From emergency scene management to the use of force, interrogations, and homicide investigations, the speakers brought in were very knowledgeable with an obvious passion for their work. The atmosphere was very relaxed and the topics were interesting. If you want to get an appreciation for the work police officers do, and to see things from their perspective, a highly recommended class. There is an additional bonus of not having any readings and being a pretty low-stress class.

Sentencing (Moreau)

One student's take: Provides a helpful overview of Sentencing law in Canada from respected Crim practitioners. Towards the end of the semester there were some great guest speakers that really added to the course. Definitely a must-take if you will be practicing Crim.

Another student's take: I did not get the feeling that Moreau was actually interested in seeing students succeed on the assignments; he did not provide clear instructions on what he was looking for and more or less just expected you to figure it out on your own. His slides were very detailed, but there were way too many of them. The lectures were long and boring; which is unfortunate, because I feel like the material, if presented in the right way, could be very interesting and fun. If you're trying to protect your GPA, you might be better off taking something else and just reading a book on sentencing law.

Wrongful Convictions (Beresh)

Wrongful Convictions is a really unique opportunity for people who are either interested in criminal law, or interested in working on a hands-on file where you get to assess evidence.

This class is run with Innocence Canada, a national organization dedicated to filing miscarriage of justice applications to the federal Minister of Justice on behalf of offenders who were likely wrongfully convicted.

It is a night class taught by Professor Beresh once a week in a 3-hour increment with one 10-minute break. The class consists of one assignment and a short weekly journal on how you feel about the assignment—only that “one simple assignment” involves the class being divided into two groups (of about 6-8 people each) with each group being given a file to work on that has been approved by Innocence Canada to determine whether there is a possibility for the applicant's wrongful conviction.

The rest of the semester is spent working through the evidence in those cases—reading trial transcripts, looking at medical reports, financial statements, text messages, etc—and working with your group to find weaknesses in the evidence or possible avenues for fresh evidence.

The group writes a joint report on their file for the end of the semester, and every week you have to submit a 1/2 page or full page journal entry on your thoughts/feelings about your file. Beresh also lectures once a week on different topics that highlight ways people can be wrongfully convicted, bringing in

different guest speakers throughout the semester.

Bear in mind that this class is more work than the average course and there is a lot of evidence to review. While the class has only one assignment— a group memo about the application— going through the application requires combing through trial materials sent by Innocence Canada. Transcripts can range from 400 – 600 pages. The materials vary in length but are usually extremely long. I had to read through and analyze about 950 pages of the trial transcript to determine whether anything relevant can be used for the group project. However, some documents provided are irrelevant, so you don't have to read every single thing, and you also have lots of people to share the workload with. That being said, among 6-8 people, that totals up to thousands of pages of documents.

The lectures themselves can be very interesting, but sometimes become an outlet for Professor Beresh's complaints about the justice system and practices that lead to wrongful convictions.

What is eye-opening are the guest lecturers, who provide an in-depth and real idea to students about what occurs behind the scenes of a case from the perspective of police, expert testimony, and prosecutors. It can be an engaging class, but fatiguing at times.

All in all, Beresh is an extremely experienced defense lawyer and always has interesting stories to tell during class, so the class itself is never dull. Overall, I would recommend this class if you want something unique on your transcript and are up for a challenge.

LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW:

Employment Law (Funk)

There's a reason this class gets filled up by 2Ls every spring during enrollment time. Even though Funk teaches at 8 AM, her energy and excitement to be there will probably make you forget that you never get to see the sunlight anymore. A comprehensive course that is essentially an application of contract law, you look at the ways that an employee can be terminated and the damages that flow from it, what duties an employee owes to an employer after they leave and various other topical discussions including whether Uber has employees or independent contractors. Readings are long comparative to other courses but have interesting fact patterns and are generally from within the last 20 years, meaning plain English. There's a 100% open book final but warning, there is no Funk CAN currently on the LSA website (though this may change soon and Adams' CAN is a sufficient substitute).

Employment Law (Scott, Lemon)

Interesting and varying approaches of the two professors, who both present the course material in a fairly engaging way. Employment law felt like a lot of repetition of basic tests, but applying those tests to interesting fact scenarios was actually a lot of fun. Reading wasn't too heavy, and it wasn't particularly difficult to get the gist of topics by just going to class and maybe doing some light skimming of the TWEN resources provided. The profs are two lovely practitioners who know their stuff and can teach it in a way that makes sense. If you're on the fence, take it—there are no bad profs currently when it comes to taking Employment Law.

Labour Law (Nekolaichuk)

This class was very straight-forward and the exam was extremely fair. It is not the most interesting subject, but it was useful and the professor was very thorough and knew what he was talking about.

Labour Arbitration (Nugent)

Labour law is not a prerequisite for this course. Through his lectures, Professor Nugent provides students with a foundational understanding of labour law, as well as discusses current and interesting cases. All of the assignments are relatively short in length and are practical, as they mimic the work that you would be given as a student in a law firm. I thoroughly enjoyed the mock arbitration and Professor Nugent provided excellent, constructive feedback. The skills developed in this course are not only applicable in the labour law context, but are applicable to any context which involves the need for thorough research and the use of written and oral advocacy skills.

TAX AND INSURANCE LAW:

Taxation (Sprysak)

A highly recommended course for everyone who has, does, or will pay taxes in their lifetime. Sprysak is very approachable and brings his sense of humour into the classroom. Tax law can be scary/boring but he doesn't expect any previous knowledge and goes through the material (very) clearly and at a pace that everyone can keep up with. The course structure and minimal required reading mean that all you have to do to get a B is show up and sort of pay attention. Sprysak also allows a one sheet "comfort sheet" in the exam that results in some students claiming they have the entire course on one sheet, font size 4. A thoroughly practical class, which even if you do not want to practice tax law will teach you when to pick up the phone to find a tax lawyer.

Corporate Taxation (Dolson)

Only take this class if you are interested in practicing tax. Taking this class out of interest is NOT a good idea. The professor is incredibly smart, nice, and helpful; however, the lectures themselves are quick and describe the subjects as though we have all practiced accounting. This is not a progression from Basic Tax. The final exam is quite challenging and a combination of tricky multiple choice questions and written response. The curve is also particularly challenging as all accountants that are in law school will inevitably take this course. Nevertheless, many different parts of corporate tax are covered and the majority of it is pertinent to tax practice.

Estate Planning (Sprysak)

Everyone who really liked Tax Law, might draft wills in the future, or is interested in financial management should take this course. Estate Planning isn't the cakewalk that Tax Law is, but it's still not a particularly challenging class. Like its predecessor, the majority of the notes are provided on TWEN, and there are minimal readings. Getting a high B or even an A is entirely possible if you put in a moderate amount of work.

Accounting for Lawyers (Sprysak)

This course is a great accompaniment for Introductory Tax. Sprysak covers the role of financial statements and other calculations that are used in Income Tax determinations. If you've taken accounting in undergrad, there will be lots of overlap in the first half of the course, but then Sprysak will cover novel material such as Trust Accounting and bookkeeping for law firms. It is not a particularly difficult class, and can only serve as an even greater foundation for the other tax, trust, and estate courses offered by the faculty.

Insurance Law (Billingsley)

Dean Billingsley's insurance class is a non-required course for anyone not purposely avoiding a 100% final. It's not the class for you if you plan to skip class and learn from CANs, but this class will be valuable if you plan to practice in any sort of civil law. Dean Billingsley's lectures, regardless of topic, are some of the clearest and most practical on offer. She alone would be a good reason to take this class. Apart from Dean Billingsley's skill as a professor, her course content also has an edge over other insurance classes. Apart from substantive insurance law, Dean Billingsley covers the insurance system's unique statutory rights and procedures in detail. Litigating an insurance issue can evolve into a multi-action, multi-party mess. Studying insurance law with any professor here is a very good choice.

Insurance Law (Grose, Paetz)

A highly recommended course for any student who has an interest in tort or contract law. Insurance law is a great combination of both. This class is great to learn straight from the CAN. My computer crashed two days before the exam, but I still did quite well on the exam with a borrowed CAN. Both instructors are very approachable and get straight to the point with the cases. There is no philosophy of the law with this course; they teach on a need to know basis.

FAMILY AND HEALTH:

Family Law (Johnson, MacKenzie)

This course is taught by two practitioners who are obviously well-experienced in the area of family law practice. In non-COVID years the class is composed of a family law assignment and a final exam. The assignment isn't very hard and it is nice to only have a 70% exam as opposed to a 100% one. However in 2020/2021 due to COVID the format was changed to a 100% final. Additionally, no slides or visual aids were used in class. This made the class difficult to follow at times. The instructors expect you to keep up with the fast pace so make sure your typing skills are up to par, as this class also was not recorded. You will likely have to produce a property division statement on the final! Both professors tell good stories about practicing.

Family Law (Friedland)

This class is really good for providing a sociological viewpoint into Family Law, which is heavily statutorily based. As an academic, Hadley is really knowledgeable on how and why the laws have changed to reflect the current conditions. She touches on some aspects found in actual practice but the class mostly centers on an academic understanding of Family Law. She also posts easy-to-follow-along slideshows for every class on TWEN and the readings are manageable (if you even choose to do them), with a 100% final. She is also one of the few professors who will discuss child welfare.

Family Law Practice Issues (Hebert, Stokes)

Only students who have a strong interest in family law should take this course. It gives you a strong understanding of family law court forms. The assignments are interesting, but there was not much guidance provided by the professors in completing them.

Biotechnology Policy (Caulfield)

The course would be good for anyone with an interest in science, especially those with an interest in how public opinion and media affect policy on emerging issues. It would also be good for someone who wants a straightforward paper course or a course where they don't have to take notes. Professor Caulfield prefers papers that are around 20 pages, which is shorter than a lot of other paper courses. The course is led by a lecture, although Professor Caulfield encourages questions and discussion. He is a good presenter and keeps the lecture lively. No prior knowledge is required, as all the lectures cover background before covering policy. Some of the topics covered were stem cells, cloning, biobanks, and genetic testing. Overall, the course was useful to learn about emerging issues in biotech and gain insight into the critical role public perception plays in government policy creation.

Health Care Ethics and the Law (Nelson)

This class is awesome for those who are interested in legal issues in the health care context. It's probably not for those looking for a fluff course or an easy A, but you will learn a lot. It is an enjoyable class. It's a three-hour class once a week, and the readings take about one to two hours. Reading the materials is not absolutely necessary for you to be able to participate in class, but it definitely helps you get more out of the class. There were only about 15 people in the class, and most of the class consisted of discussion with a few group exercises here and there. Talking and sharing your opinions is a huge part of this class, so if you're not comfortable with that, this class might not be for you. Also, be sure to start your paper early! There were lots of lively class discussions about interesting and modern issues involving the ethics and law surrounding health care. It was cool to hear everyone's different views on issues and it really helped me gain some perspective on some topics. Professor Nelson can be a tough marker and a little harsh with her comments. That being said, her grades seemed pretty fair. However, be wary of Nelson's penchant for nit-picking any presumptions you make in your paper no matter how obvious.

Law and Medicine (Nelson)

If you want to take this course, it is recommended that you have at least some interest in health law and medical torts, as the material in this class is quite focused on medical policy and malpractice issues. You can do as much or as little reading as you want. Class participation can easily be done without doing the readings, but you will get more out of it if you at least skim the readings or find a brief online.

Medical Malpractice Law (Forster, Miller)

The cases in this course are very technical. I would recommend this class only if you are actually interested in medical malpractice law, as the issues are very, well, specific. The prof does make the content easy to understand, and a lot of marks come from attendance-based participation, which is nice. You also get to choose your own topic for the paper, which is nice, but the final paper is quite long—15 pages, 1.5-line spacing.

PUBLIC LAW:

Constitutional Litigation (Feehan, McDaniel)

The class is a great choice for a student who wants to take a more practical course and has an interest in litigation. I took it because I wanted the moot experience but didn't think I would have the time to devote to a competitive moot, and it worked well for that purpose. The course was challenging and there wasn't a lot of handholding, but it is still fairly easy to get an average grade in the course (~B) since the workload is not crazy. If you want to do really well in the class, it will take some extra effort and saving it until 3L may be a good idea. The lectures can be a bit dry; this is unfortunate, given the compelling and dynamic nature of constitutional law. Further, the assignments are not explained properly and end up taking more time to complete for that reason.

Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Law (Szigeti)

This feels like an undergraduate course in the best way. Szigeti provides a 40-minute lecture each class, after which two students do an interactive learning game/presentation about the material. The prof provides an interdisciplinary look at the principles of immigration and law. Another bonus is that there is no required textbook and he posts all relevant materials on TWEN, although sometimes it can be difficult to understand what to take away from each reading as he does not spend much time on them in his lectures. This class does have a distinctive slant towards an almost theoretical approach to Immigration Law, which might be good for some and bad for others. The in-class

presentation is worth 30% of the final grade, participation is worth 10%, and the remaining 60% is a final.

Municipal and Planning Law (Noce)

This is an excellent course if you're looking for something lighter for your schedule in terms of workload. This course is an in-depth study of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) along with many stories from Noce about his practice and his time as a city councilor. There are not many notes to make during the lectures other than noting sections of the MGA to review. The coursebook was reasonable in length, though readings are not really necessary as everything is explained in class. There is not a lot of reading and you don't even have to do it to do well. The assignments are interesting and practical. There is a portion of the mark based on attendance and participation, and participation is encouraged and appreciated, so don't take it if you are not big on that. If grades are super important to you, it is not hard to do well in the class, but everyone does well, so it's going to be hard to really stand out. All in all, this class is one that is easy to pass, and Noce admits that on the first day. Noce was also passionate about giving students tips on professional development, which were an added bonus to the class.

Public Law and Practice (Stam)

I really enjoyed this course and thought Dave Stam was a great prof for it. Dave made this course really practical and useful for people who will be working for the government and those who will be suing the government. This class also had minimal readings which you were not expected to read before class, instead Dave would point to and review specific paragraphs of the cases which were important and would recommend reviewing them after class. Dave is a very approachable prof who makes himself accessible to students. His lecture style for this class was no powerpoints, and he had a 100% closed book final for this course, but I found that the exam was very fair. Would recommend this class!

Mental Health and the Law (Cochard, Qureshi)

Mental health and the law is a year-long course that incorporates both classroom and experiential learning. The instructors, Amna and Judge Cochard, are truly passionate about this area and share with students their first-hand experience when working in Mental Health Court. In the first semester, different speakers come in to discuss various topics including forensic psychiatry, FASD, the Mental Health Act, and Trauma Informed Lawyering. In the second semester, students shadow duty counsel in Edmonton's Mental Health Court. In this students get to listen in on client calls and watch duty counsel work their way through the docket list.

The assessment in first semester consists of two papers and participation - so it is a low maintenance class throughout the semester as you just need to attend class. In second semester, we were able to shadow 4 half days of Mental Health Court. I was hoping we would have more days to get more experience, but it is how it worked out this year with numbers and COVID. Hopefully students in future years get more time in Court as I think that would be really beneficial. Through this course you also get a chance to visit the Edmonton Remand Centre which is a great learning opportunity for any law student.

If you are interested in the area, take this class. If you want a low-maintenance paper course to avoid finals, take this class. If you want a pass/fail second semester course, take this class. If you don't like night classes that go for the full three hours, avoid. If you don't like papers, avoid.

INTERNATIONAL LAW:

Public International Law (Harrington)

This is the foundational course for international law and the first half can be a little basic if you have previously studied international relations, with introductions on states and treaties. Usually, Professor Harrington holds a midterm exam worth 20% before proceeding with the remainder of the course which becomes much more interesting. However, due to COVID, the midterm was changed into two short assignments worth 10%. The final exam is worth 80% and the format is "restricted open book": you can bring the course text and one sheet of paper. Overall, I would recommend this course if you have any interest in international law or if you just want an exam-based course to break up your schedule. If you want to do well, then you really need to do the readings, highlight meaningful parts, and put them into your notes. Also, make sure you attend her review sessions!

International Dispute Settlement (Harrington)

This is a paper-based course that requires smaller related assignments such as a bibliography. Prof Harrington gives helpful feedback through her step-by-step paper writing assignments and devotes some classes to research techniques and citation help. This makes her class excellent for people who might not have written a law school paper before. She has amazing stories that make the class worth attending and she is a great instructor who is realistic about expectations around readings. She also brings in relevant world events and gives context and background to them.

Public International Law (Reif)

An enjoyable course, even for those who have no particular interest in the subject. Reif's slides are helpful and detailed. There is both a paper (relatively short) and an exam. If you only take one international law class, this is definitely the one to take because it covers everything and gives you a good basis.

International Human Rights Law (Reif)

Pretty standard paper course, but with a presentation. Some of this class is a repeat of Public International Law. The second half of the semester is student-led seminars, where everyone has to present on their paper topic. Reif is great if you need help with your paper. You don't strictly need to do the readings, but it will help your participation grade.

International Criminal Law (Harrington)

The course focuses on the International Criminal Court and its predecessors, as well as the crimes specific to international law, such as genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. This is a great option as long as you are not intimidated by writing a big paper. The assessment is a 7000-word paper with a few smaller elements submitted throughout the term. Topics can be broad, allowing you to pursue almost anything of interest. Professor Harrington also sets aside a few classes to do research and writing seminars to explore research techniques specific to international law. She also posts a lot of really helpful information on the TWEN site. The lectures tend to be stand-alone seminars on individual topics, which makes each class really interesting.

OTHER:

Anti-Corruption Law (Hutchison)

This is a great paper class. The course content is quite interesting, as it covers access to information, whistleblowers, and press freedom. Hutchison also organized a guest lecture with two investigative journalists, which was definitely a highlight. The classes consist of discussing course content, and there are lots of interesting topics to pick for a paper. Students also conduct a presentation on their paper, which is relatively straightforward.

Canadian Human Rights Law (Raso)

A blend of employment, constitutional, labour, and admin law, all under the banner of human rights. A great class to tie everything you've learned in other classes together and explore those ideas through a human rights lens. Interesting material and not too onerous course work.

Law and Social Media (Yahya)

This class accepts five students per year, and it consists of a blog project that is entirely student run from Sept-April. If you like writing and research enough to complete a 500-700 word blog post each week for the entire school year, then you should consider applying. It is a great class if you prefer weekly assignments to an exam, but you have to be diligent in completing your work and attending meetings. The topic for next year has not yet been decided!

Remedies (Lavoie)

Do not be intimidated by the theory that Professor Lavoie weaves into this course because the content is truly interesting and immensely useful for anyone who wants to work in litigation. The course is based around a reconceptualization of remedial law, but the bulk of what you will learn is the *actual remedies*. Lavoie is fun and spirited about the content and will literally give everything to help you understand. Although many of the cases are ancient (1800s to early 1900s), these cases remain the conceptual basis for the modern remedies and are 100% relevant and useful even in light of modern tweaks by the Supreme Court of Canada. Class time is used efficiently, but he does seek discussion to help students connect together the theory with the remedies themselves. Exam is very fair, like any Lavoie exam. Highly recommended.

Statutory Interpretation (Hutchison)

This is a challenging course. The subject matter is dry and Professor Hutchison's teaching style does not help with keeping students engaged in the material. This class utilizes his own written textbook which helps explain the issues in a much clearer way than the actual in-class discussions. Reading ahead is highly recommended for this class, if only so because you will be lost otherwise. The evaluation of the course was two short papers where you are asked to interpret a fictional statute, as well as an in-class presentation. Overall I found it to be a useful class that bleeds into nearly every other course I have taken, but it is one I feel you will only get something out of if you are aware of Hutchison's teaching style and don't mind it.

The TRC, Law, Justice and Reconciliation (Lightning-Earle)

This course was life-changing in many ways and an eye-opener to the true depth of Canada's oppression of Indigenous peoples. However, if you are easily upset or disturbed by difficult histories and inhumane acts, this may not be the course for you as it is oftentimes upsetting. Course comprises participation, a short research paper (12 pages), and a case presentation. Koren is a very fair grader and more interested in you internalizing the information than being able to regurgitate it or match her personal views. She wants you to see the truth but engage with it yourself. Highly recommended course for students who do not have the Indigenous course requirement and for those with the requirement as their choice of course.

Animals and the Law (Sankoff)

Great overview of how animals are treated in law (answer: very poorly). The course focuses mainly on the legal developments of animal law but also incorporates ethics and philosophy. Professor Sankoff is very passionate and knowledgeable about the topic, which makes you feel more invested in animal law. Recommended for those who appreciate interactive classes and professors who try to make a difference in the world. A typical Sankoff discussion question might be "what would Kant say about bull-baiting and why?"

Language Rights (Kingston)

Super interesting class about language rights in Canada taught in French. 100% worthwhile for those who want to improve their French-speaking skills and overall professional capacity in French. Participation is 20% but introvert-friendly. Professor Kingston asks you to prepare a case summary presentation for every class, but he doesn't cold call or expects you to know the readings inside out for every class. Highly recommended for students doing the Bastarache (language rights) moot if they like having overlapping materials in their courses.

Digital Law (Szigeti)

Professor Szigeti has made an interesting class filled with modern hypotheticals of how the law interacts with emerging technology. The class is not particularly difficult but is extremely work intensive. The workload includes writing three 1000-2000 reflection papers on the weekly readings, 20 hours of community service learning, a semester end presentation, and participation marks. Professor Szigeti assigns about 5-8 hours of reading every week. Another problem is that much of the discussion can be difficult to follow for individuals that are not as familiar with emerging technology, as much of the material assumes a somewhat high level of tech proficiency. It is one of the most interesting classes I have taken as Szigeti tries to spur discussion regarding current developing law on emerging technologies, privacy, and artificial intelligence. I would highly recommend this class if you can handle the harsh workload, it is almost a quasi-jurisprudence class focused on the relationship between technology and the law.

Low Income and the Law (Lund, Weaver)

Review #1

This class is an amazing and unique opportunity. You receive 3 course credits. One pass/fail course in the fall that comprises a weekly placement session (at Legal Aid or Edmonton Community Legal Clinic). Two courses in the winter - one pass/fail course where you continue your weekly placement and one graded, weekly seminar where you discuss various topics on poverty law and access to justice and write a 25 to 30 page paper. The actual placements are in criminal, family, immigration, and civil law (particularly social benefits/landlord and tenant).

The fall semester has periodic sessions taught by Professor Lund, and the weekly seminar in the winter is taught by Professor Weaver. Both professors are extremely kind, knowledgeable, and invested in students' learning. The topics covered are eye-opening to the way it analyzes the law. There are some downsides to the course. For one, it takes up at least 8 hours per week (which is more than the average course).

Another issue is the placements. It seems that some students have very hands-on opportunities to interact with clients, draft documents, complete legal research, and speak to matters in court/tribunals. However, these opportunities are largely directed by the comfort levels of their supervising lawyers, if they are willing to delegate certain types of work, etc. So some students seem to have more opportunities than others.

Also, bear in mind that with COVID-19, there has been less opportunity for hands-on work and more observing (particularly if you ask for a criminal placement). This may be a consideration for students applying in 2022-2023.

Review #2

This course presents a great opportunity to gain some experience working in law, however, unfortunately some of the placements have been hit or miss—some placements are great, and some are seriously lacking. When going through the interview process for this course you have a chance to pick/indicate your preference—do your research about the placements beforehand. The parts of the course that are led by both Professors Bell [*who is retiring this year, but will be replaced by Professor Lund*] and Weaver are excellent. There is a high expectation to participate in class, however both professors lead discussions, making it pretty easy.

JAG Internship

This has been the highlight of my law school experience so far. I was able to travel out to CFB Edmonton one day a week, and completed several research projects in areas of Administrative Law, Operational Law, and Military Justice. The lawyers in the office are all very supportive and they love having a student. Everyone in the office took their time to get to know me and ensure I had a good experience. I do not have a single negative from this experience, and would urge anyone to consider it.

Lawyers and Leadership (Paton)

Professor Paton provides an amazing deep dive into how lawyers can become effective leaders, no matter the context. Most of the classes are guest lectures from prominent leaders in the legal industry and discussions regarding weekly readings. The professor assigns a significant workload in weekly readings, generally ranging from 100 pages to 200 pages a week, with a take-home midterm, participation marks, term paper, and presentation. While the workload is steep, Professor Paton is unparalleled in his lectures, he is passionate about the material and seems genuinely trying to help students become better lawyer leaders. I would highly recommend the class if you can handle the workload, it is one of the few classes that can teach skills that translate skills beyond the practice of law and develops students to become more well-rounded individuals.