

Legal Concepts and Skills

In this subject, CALI has Lessons, Podcasts and eLangdell Press Texts.

CALI Lessons:

Coase's Irrelevance 'Theorem'

This lesson tries to explain Coasean irrelevance (which is often known as the "Coase Theorem").

Lesson Completion Time: 45 minutes to 3 hours

Author: Nicholas Georgakopoulos, Harold R. Woodard Professor of Law, Indiana University - Indianapolis School of Law

Ethical Considerations for Legal Memo Writing

This is one in a series of lessons directed at the ethical and professional considerations associated with the production of particular lawyering documents. This lesson is intended to introduce first year law students to the ethical and professional considerations associated with the preparation of predictive, interoffice memoranda. It is assumed that students are familiar with predictive, interoffice memoranda. No prior instruction in professional responsibility is required.

Lesson Completion Time: 45 minutes

Author: Melissa Weresh, Professor of Law and Director of Legal Writing Drake University Law School

How to Brief a Case

This is an exercise designed to introduce first-semester law students to the basic elements of a typical case "brief" and to teach them general methodology for writing their own briefs. The exercise consists of three parts: (1) an introduction to the purposes and uses of a case brief; (2) a detailed examination of each of the ten components of a typical case brief (with examples); and (3) two actual cases that students are asked to read and then to brief, using the methodology described in this exercise. A sample brief for each of the two cases is also provided, thereby allowing students to correct and modify their briefs by way of comparison.

Lesson Completion Time: 2 hours

Author: Edward Martin, Professor of Law, Samford University Cumberland School of Law

Statutory Interpretation

This lesson introduces the student to the doctrine and processes involved in interpreting state and federal statutes. Statutes are a critical part of every substantive area of the law, so this is important background for every law student, lawyer and judge.

Lesson Completion Time: 30 minutes

Author: Ronald Brown, Professor of Law, Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law

Where Does Law Come From?

This is an overview of the branches of the U.S. government and how they make law.

Lesson Completion Time: 30 minutes

Author: Diane Murley, Professor of Law, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University

Writing Better Law School Exams: The Importance of Structure

This program is designed to be useful to students interested in improving their exam-writing techniques. In much of the written work done by lawyers (including writing exams as students), a special form of writing is used. The program begins with an explicit discussion of that form, and the structural implications it has. Within that specific context, the program goes on to discuss the tasks to be performed, the tools used in performing those tasks, and methods of sharpening those tools. The program concludes with some interactive opportunities to try the techniques described.

Please note that this lesson uses flash and is unable to be viewed on a non-windows device. Scoring for this lesson is also unavailable at this time.

Lesson Completion Time: 1.5 hours

Author: William Andersen, Judson Falknor Professor of Law Emeritus. University of Washington School of Law

Podcasts:

Exam Taking Skills, Outlines, and Advice for Law Students: Panel 1 PodCast

CALI's Director of Curriculum Development, Deb Quentel, spoke with six law professors about outlines, studying for class, preparing for exams, time management, and how professors grade exams. The conversations were recorded as podcasts. While these podcasts are not intended to take the place of a conversation with your professor, the professors hope that these podcasts give law students additional insight into the exam process.

Panel 1: Professors Ron Eades, John Farago, Patrick Wiseman

Run Time: 21:38 minutes

Authors: Ronald Eades, Professor of Law Emeritus, Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville; John Farago, Professor of Law, City University of New York Law School; Patrick Wiseman, Professor of Law Georgia State University College of Law

Exam Taking Skills, Outlines, and Advice for Law Students: Panel 2 PodCast

CALI's Director of Curriculum Development, Deb Quentel, spoke with six law professors about outlines, studying for class, preparing for exams, time management, and how professors grade exams. The conversations were recorded as podcasts. While these podcasts are not intended to take the place of a conversation with your professor, the professors hope that these podcasts give law students additional insight into the exam process.

Panel 2: Professors Ron Brown and Joe Grohman

Run Time: 12:19 minutes

Authors: Ronald Brown, Professor of Law, Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center; Joseph Grohman, Professor of Law, Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center

Exam Taking Skills, Outlines, and Advice for Law Students: Panel 3 PodCast

CALI's Director of Curriculum Development, Deb Quentel, spoke with six law professors about outlines, studying for class, preparing for exams, time management, and how professors grade exams. The conversations were recorded as podcasts. While these podcasts are not intended to take the place of a conversation with your professor, the professors hope that these podcasts give law students additional insight into the exam process.

Panel 3: Professor Darryl Wilson

Run Time: 11:48 minutes

Author: Darryl Wilson, Professor of Law, Stetson University College of Law

Podcast: Preparing for Your First Semester of Law School

Professors Brown and Grohman, are the authors of many CALI lessons. Additionally, both teach 1L courses. In this podcast they share their experiences and insights on time management issues for law school students, preparing for class, how to brief a case, research tips applicable for 1L writing assignments (and the eventual practice of law), how to develop an understanding of the law, and techniques and tips for studying and preparing for the final exam.

Run Time: 24:33 minutes

Authors: Ronald Brown, Professor of Law, Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center; Joseph Grohman, Professor of Law, Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center

Tips for Multiple Choice Exams in Law School Podcast

Prof. Burnham, author of a number of CALI lessons and podcasts provides students with advice on multiple choice exam questions. Prof. Burnham goes into the different aspects of a multiple choice question: the stimulus, options, key, and distracters. Additionally, Prof. Burnham discusses the different types of multiple choice questions such as questions that test a student's ability to recall information, those that draw on materials discussed in class, and those that require analysis. Students are taught how to respond to the call of a question, apply IRAC to multiple choice questions, as well as different tactics for eliminating options in a question. At the end of this lesson students will know how to decipher what type of question is being asked, how to spot the specific issue in the question, and how to eliminate the other choices.

Run Time: 11:14 minutes

Author: Scott Burnham, Curley Professor of Commercial Law, Gonzaga University School of Law

Top 10 Tips for Successfully Writing a Law School Essay

In this podcast, Prof. Jennifer Martin discusses the top ten mistakes law students make in law school examinations. These are poor issue spotting, poor issue spotting, poor knowledge and understanding of the law, poor application of the law to the facts, giving only conclusory answers, lack of organization, errors in the facts, failure to understand the role you are given in the examination, padding, fact inventing, and question begging. Included in this discussion is guidance on spotting the issues, avoiding being bottom line oriented, how to use the facts, how to approach a question, and using words efficiently. Prof. Martin also discusses the hallmarks of a good essay answer. These answers are lawyerlike, responsive to the question asked, logical, thought out, well organized, fact and issue centered, and use cogent reasoning and good rule application.

Run Time: 11:20 minutes

Author: Jennifer Martin, Associate Professor of Law, Saint Thomas University School of Law

Factors That Influence Law School Success

Professor Glesner Fines speaks with an entering law student about the factors that influence law school success, including resources, attitude, cooperation and challenge.

Run Time: 11:00 Minutes

Author: Barbara Glessner Fines, Associate Dean & Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Law

Exam Writing and Briefing Cases

Professor Glesner Fines speaks with a 1L student about how to brief a case and the relationship between briefing a case and writing an exam.

Run Time: 10:18 Minutes

Author: Barbara Glessner Fines, Associate Dean & Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law
University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Law

Outlining for Law School Exams

Professor Glesner Fines explains how create an outline for your law school class that reflects what you have learned and prepares you for your exam.

Run Time: 11:31

Author: Barbara Glessner Fines, Associate Dean & Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law
University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Law

Improving Exam Taking Skills by Reviewing Last Semester's Exams

Professor Glesner Fines explains why you should re-visit last semester's law school exams to improve your performance this semester and to ensure that you know the subject for use in law practice. Her suggestions include how best to review your own exam and how to prepare for a meeting with your former professor to discuss your exam.

Run Time: 12:00 Minutes

Author: Barbara Glessner Fines, Associate Dean & Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law
University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Law

The Relationship Between Law School and Jobs

Professor Glesner Fines discusses the relationship between law school and jobs.

Run Time: 8:45 Minutes

Author: Barbara Glessner Fines, Associate Dean & Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law
University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Law

eLangdell Press Texts:

Law School Materials for Success

Author: Barbara Glesner Fines, Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Ruby M. Hulen Professor of Law UMKC School of Law

Length: 25, 930 Words, 89 Pages in PDF

The first year of law school is, for many people, one of the most significant transitions of their adult life. Law school demands a lot as it helps you make the transition from your prior identity as student (or as some other occupational role) to your new identity as an attorney. To meet the demands of law school, it is often helpful to have the big picture before you begin – a sense of what it is you are trying to do as you prepare for classes, participate in those classes, review and prepare for exams, take exams, and then begin the cycle once again.

Law School Materials for Success is designed to give you the essentials of that process. It is purposefully brief – most law students do not have the time for an extensive examination of the study of law school. Rather, they need a source for some basic, critical advice and some pointers on where to go for more if necessary. That is what this book and the accompanying podcasts are designed to provide