



# THE MLSA ACADEMIC COMMITTEE PRESENTS: TIPS FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN YOUR FIRST YEAR



## SURVIVING WEEK 1:

1. Lean in and Enjoy your First Week! Orientation can be daunting, but it flies by quickly - Do your best to enjoy all of the action (although online can be a struggle)!
2. Connect with your classmates - Everyone is nervous, even if some seem calm and collected. Your network can carry you through your whole time at Robson and even your legal career!
3. Familiarize yourself! Key Terms, Programs, or online databases are there to help you - take the time to understand what you are being told so you aren't confused later on.
4. Stay Organized! There will be lots of content and tons of events to be at - use your calendar and check your email to stay on top of all of the action!

### Don't Compare yourself to others!

Law school may feel competitive but it's important to focus on your own journey - not what others are doing.

Collaboration is key - your peers are a resource, so don't compete!

### Grades count - but they are not everything!

Grades are different in Law School - yours WILL change. Stay focused on doing YOUR best and trying your hardest rather than being the best.

Law Students are accepted because of their excellence. Keep this in mind when you receive a grade that you are not used to receiving - you will survive!

### Don't re-invent the wheel if you don't have to!

Build on your study style from undergrad to craft new study habits as you navigate first year!  
Don't do a drastic overhaul on your basic skills - they still apply in law school!

Law School is known for changing how you think - that is the point!

That said, Don't lose yourself in the process!  
Keep in touch with your non-law school friends - they can share unbiased opinions, give you perspective and keep you in touch with reality!

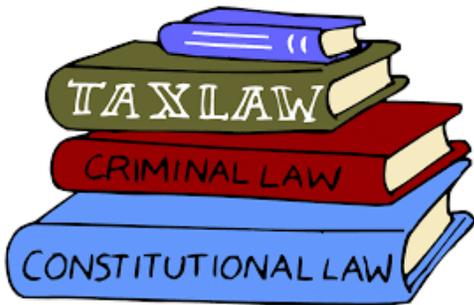
### Stay Engaged!

Content moves quickly so it can be easy to fall behind if you are not engaged in class. Do the reading and show up early (like you would if it was in person)!  
Do the prep beforehand as it is such a large part of your success!

Questions? Comments? Concerns?  
Reach Out!  
[rh.mlsa.academic@gmail.com](mailto:rh.mlsa.academic@gmail.com)

# BRIEFING THE CASE

## AN ESSENTIAL RESOURCE IN YOUR LAW SCHOOL TOOLBOX



Case Briefs can be an essential resource when studying for exams!  
Taking notes will help you retain essential information.

They also save lots of time during exam season:  
you won't have to go back and read an entire case!  
Briefing is a skill that will translate well into your legal career so it is  
a good idea to start practicing during law school!

### F – FACTS

This is the background information of the case.

Be concise - use bullet points to help you remember important information that sets the case apart from others!

### I – ISSUE

What is the legal issue of focus in the case? Usually in question form!

### R – RULE / RATIO

A statement of the rule of law that was applied by the court, when reaching its conclusion or decision. Ratios are typically one to two sentences - They are very important for crafting exam responses! Note that a case may have several ratios - know which one is important to you!

### A – ANALYSIS

How did the court reach their decision? This is where you can be more in depth and include some detail here that you can come back to to understand why this particular decision is important.

### C – CONCLUSION

Was the case decided in favour of the plaintiff or defendant? Or was the appeal dismissed or allowed?

Professors have their own styles, preferences and priorities. Most students make their own system to brief cases. Some students rely on FIRAC, or others may use a different approach for each professor depending on their style - it really depends on you!

Learn what works best for you and plan ahead to learn the most that you can before exam time!

# OUTLINES

Outlines, put simply, are your study notes for the exam.



Everyone does outlines differently – but they are usually a condensed or simplified version of your class notes and case briefs/notes combined.

To Start: take detailed notes in class, and the more you study, the more you condense the information until you are left with a short and concise document you can use to revise prior to the exam!

## TIPS FOR OUTLINE SUCCESS:

1. Start your outlines early on in your term once you have a unit or topic covered. Set aside 30 minutes or so every week for each subject to go back and review material and condense or simplify it. This way you can ask questions of your professors if you are having trouble with a topic and also keep in tune with where you are at in the course and if you need to reach out for help!
2. Use different coloured fonts for different sources of information (Professor, Textbook, Other Outlines etc.) . This helps you keep track of where you found what information.
3. Keep a table of contents for easy access to topics!
4. Consult your friends, online resources and textbooks when information is missing for your outline!

On the MLSA Website you can find the outline bank! The Student Community has your back! Former students over the years have contributed their outlines to the bank to provide a resource for new and returning students! It is filled with great ideas on how to make your own outlines!

Still in need of outline examples?  
Reach out to these resources:

1. The Academic Committee
2. Classmates
3. Your Upper Year Buddy