

Lex | Brevis

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

1L
EDITION



AMARA RIDLEY
LEX BREVIS Editor-In-Chief

**“IF YOU ARE
ABSOLUTELY
DETERMINED TO
MAKE A LAWYER OF
YOURSELF, THE
THING IS MORE
THAN HALF DONE
ALREADY.”** Abraham Lincoln

WELCOME TO LAW SCHOOL!

Welcome to Law School! My name is Amara Ridley and I am Editor-In-Chief of Lex Brevis, the law school's student run newspaper. I hope you are both excited and nervous about what lies ahead this year. I'm sure many of you have visited campus and maybe spoken to a few students and faculty. This edition of Lex is dedicated to you 1L students starting this exciting journey. I hope you find it to be the welcoming, supportive, intellectually stimulating environment that I, and many other students, have come to appreciate.

Hold on to the things that make you unique and to your values. For me, my Native American heritage and beliefs in the importance of family and community are a large part of what sustained me and continues to sustain me. I grew up working with my family and valued a strong sense of community. It was incredibly rewarding to find out our Law School has its own community and the legal community in Western Mass is strong and supportive of students.

Support each other and learn together. One of the hidden gems of being a law student at Western New England University is that there is less emphasis on competition and more emphasis on everyone getting to where they want to be.

Another aspect of this journey is the family and friends who support you. In the next few years you will no doubt miss out on activities with them because you must devote a lot of time to school. Make sure they understand this.

When you see any of us upper class students in the halls, please say hello because you are now a part of this family and we welcome you. I cannot wait to meet you all and see what exciting experiences you have ahead. One of the best things about law school is the people you share it with on and off campus. Our students, faculty, alumni and legal professionals are all here to help you have a productive and valuable experience. Feel free to reach out to any of us and to take advantage of opportunities to immerse yourself in the community.

With warm regards,

Amara Ridley
Editor-In-Chief

Lex|Brevis

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We, at Lex Brevis, are always looking for ways to improve. We would love feedback to better serve our law school community. Enjoy the issue.

Email Amara at LexBrevis@gmail.com

Don't reinvent the wheel



by **MARKETIA WRIGHT**
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First and foremost, congratulations on your acceptance to law school. You are about to embark on a journey that will definitely test your resolve and you will be a better person for it. I am sure you have heard plenty of stories about how difficult law school is based on a number of different factors. Make no mistake, law school is hard and does require a lot of work, but if it was impossible there would be no lawyers. Keep that in mind as you navigate the ups and downs of law school— thousands have come before you and encountered the same situations and have survived— you will too.

If I may, I would like to offer some advice about how to navigate your first year of law school. First, law school is a marathon not a sprint. Do not do too much too quickly. It's smart to keep up and stay prepared for class, but you cannot and should not study 24/7. During your first month, you will probably absorb more information in one class than you did during an entire se-



mester in undergrad. There is a lot of information to take in and you need to pace yourself. Do not be afraid to give your brain a break and step away from the work. This leads to my next snippet of advice. Do not give up hobbies, well... productive hobbies. If you are spiritual or a religious person, do not abandon it now. If you are a runner, make time in your schedule and continue to run. If you like to sew or crochet, make time in your schedule to continue the hobby. Keeping up with your hobbies will give you a break from the work and allow

you to step away and regroup and come back ready to take on more information. Try hard not to fall into or pick up bad habits such as excessive drinking and not getting enough sleep at night. In order to perform at your best, you need to take care of yourself mentally, physically, spiritually, etc.

Moving on from self-care, I want to focus next on your interactions with your fellow classmates, professors, alumni, and staff. The people you encounter and interact with for the next 3 or

4 years can make or break your career. Your fellow classmates are and will become future colleagues, your professors are the individuals who will be writing recommendations for internships and jobs in the legal field, alumni can very well become future employers and administrative staff can be a liaison between you and a future employer.

Let's dig right in and start with classmates. My advice is don't be, for lack of a better term, a douchebag. You're in law school, everyone knows you are smart, there is no need to try and wow professors or your classmates with your legal eagle smarts. Trust me, the professor does not care that you know what "mootness," "exculpatory," or "vicarious liability" means because you worked in a law firm before law school or a relative is a lawyer and therefore you have been immersed in the legal field since birth and that goes double for your classmates. From day one of law school you will begin building a network that you should be able to add to and use for your entire legal career. You can hinder your success greatly by being the "look how smart I am with this story" student. There is a time and place for self-promotion; knowing when and where to do it shows true smarts.

Next on the agenda is interaction with professors, and if you take nothing else from this article remember this.... **THEY HAVE LAW DEGREES...YOU DO NOT... THEY HAVE PASSED THE BAR... YOU HAVE NOT!** Arguing with your professor about anything is a moot point. When I say arguing, I mean in the literal sense. Think of your professors as holding the key that unlocks the door to the legal field. Just because they are professors does not mean they have totally left the playing field. These professors have friends that they made in law school; friends that are still practicing law. Friends that know they are professors and that law schools are a plentiful resource for talent. You want to be the student that pops into their mind when that friend comes calling about an internship position, a summer associate position or a junior associate position they need to fill. You accomplish this feat by respecting the position. I am not saying be a door mat or allow yourself to be talked down to or disrespected, but you have to acknowledge the influence a professor holds within the legal field. Unless you choose not to

practice law once you graduate, your future employers are not interested in what your undergraduate professors had to say about you. They want a recommendation from someone within the legal field to tell them whether you can do the job...PERIOD. Professors who do not like you are not inclined to spend their time writing recommendations.

Moving on to alumni, this will be short and sweet. They have been in your shoes and understand better than anyone what you are going through, especially recent grads. Alumni are a great resource for finding work after your first year is over and so on. I am currently interning at the Springfield District Court with a judge who is an alumni of the School of Law. I met him at a networking event and he said if there was ever anything I needed to let him know. I followed up with him with a proposal about a summer internship and he was amenable. Now, my story is not the norm, the judge is super friendly and approachable, but what I want you to take from it is that if the alumni are offering to help you, take them up on it and if it turns out they were just blowing hot smoke, well lesson learned, now you know they should not be added to your "network."

Last, but certainly not least, your interaction with administrative staff is very important. These are the people you will go to when things are going right, going wrong, or just going. You do not want them to dread seeing you come into their offices. Law school is a lot of work and it is stressful and you will not only need a good support system from family and friends but you will need a good support system from within the law school community. You will have days where you just want to quit and it will be hard for family and friends who have not been to law school to understand your frustrations. This is where the administrative staff can be a valuable resource, because their focus is to ensure your success and a good vent session goes a long way when the person on the receiving end understands exactly what you are going through and helps ease your frustrations.

I hope this advice helps and once again congratulations on your acceptance into law school.

Parenting and Law School

A survival guide.



by **SAMANTHA MASTROMATTEO**
LEX BREVIS Staff Writer

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Congratulations on your acceptance to Western New England University School of Law! Your law school experience is sure to be one of the most challenging and rewarding times of your life. For some of us our lives include a little extra baggage, mine happens to call me “Mommy.”

Brace yourself because the burden of regular law school stresses on top of the everyday responsibilities of parenting are something overwhelming that requires proper planning. As I enter my last semester of law school as a part time 4L, I’d like to share my perspective on the struggle of balancing parenting and law school.

To begin, I’d like to share some of the best advice you will get about going to law school: Start spending time with your children now.

Sounds obvious enough but pretty soon you’re going to have more school work, required readings and papers to read than you can imag-



ine. Law school is not nearly as leisurely as college. When the teacher assigns readings, you are expected to read the material, brief it, and be prepared to talk about it before you get to class. There is no such thing as doing the bare minimum, just showing up and passing. Law school is a commitment that you need to be mentally prepared for if you plan to succeed.

Set up scheduled times to do your work, to do the housework, laundry, read the notices from your

child’s school, take a shower, eat breakfast. . . plan for every aspect of your life in the upcoming year to make sure you are always using your time efficiently. Efficiency is the key to navigating law school with minimal guilt about ignoring your child, because let’s face it, no matter what, we always feel we should be dedicating more time or energy to our children. Law school is going to become such a big part of your life; you are going to miss the days of relentless tantrums and banter with your little ones.

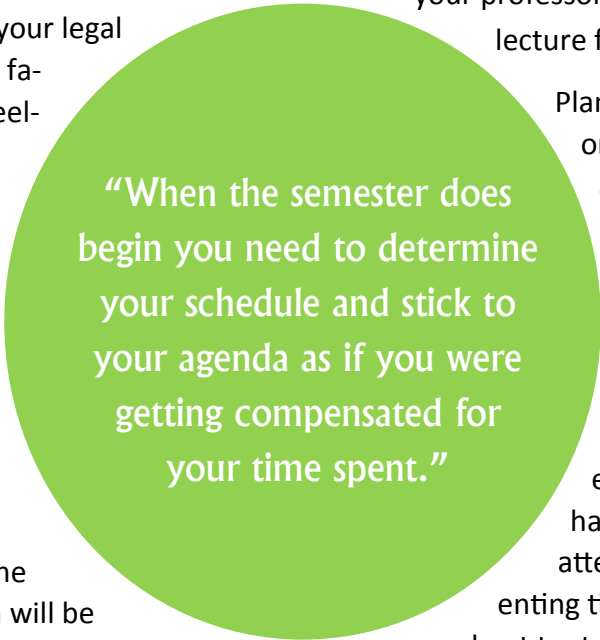
My advice is to accept the fact that you are going to miss them, and you are going to feel guilty. Accept this as a truth you cannot change and waste no more time stressing over it. Let's face it, if you spend time agonizing over your lack of time with your child, you not only didn't just spend extra time with your child, you just wasted ten minutes you could have been perfecting your outline or preparing your notes for a class later in the week.

You are not doing yourself, your legal education, or your child any favors by sitting around and feeling guilty for not spending time with them. You decided to apply to law school, you got accepted, and now have taken steps toward beginning your law school career... Congratulations! Law school is a rewarding experience that helps us to provide a better future for our loved ones. The money you spend on tuition will be significantly wasted unless you put the guilt and self-loathing aside now... before the semester even starts.

When the semester does begin you need to determine your schedule and stick to your agenda as if you were getting compensated for your time. In reality, the time you allocate now to excel in your law school studies will turn into increased wealth, career opportunities and analytical knowledge you will refer back to for the rest of your life. Take any time that you can in the library or at school studying in a non-distracting environment. It is easy to say, "oh yeah I will go home and get this done" but then by the time we get home, after dinner is made, laundry is started, dishes, bath, and bedtime for the little one, the day has gotten away from us,

and the work we needed to prepare for class tomorrow didn't get done!

Now, what about when the little one gets sick? The reality is family emergencies arise. The art will come in overcoming these obstacles while maintaining the composure necessary to excel in your law school studies. If little one gets sick, contact your professor and ask if they can record the lecture for you to review from home.



"When the semester does begin you need to determine your schedule and stick to your agenda as if you were getting compensated for your time spent."

Plan quality time with your little one each week to maintain balance between the overload of school work and the regular bonding you've grown accustomed to enjoying. Spending time with them while you are distracted trying to complete school work gets you frustrated, and causes them to misbehave to attain your undivided attention. You need to plan parenting time and school time separately and not try to comingle the designated

times. That once or twice a week that you will set aside to spend with your child will be the highlight of both of your weeks. You will get to enjoy quality time with your child, and avoid the frustration of trying to retain case law while the little one competes for your attention.

Put your child in afterschool care programs if possible. There are great programs available that will keep your children engaged and active while allowing you extra hours at the library after classes. This is better than having your child at home watching TV, still disrupting you every fifteen minutes, while you try to study at your home.

(Continued on Page 9)

Don't Bucket Me

(LLSA) Latino/a Law Student Association



by **SOPHIA CASTILLO**
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Black. Brown. White. And then, there's us. We come in all shades and speak in all kinds of dialects. We never really know which box to check on applications. People mistake us for different races all of the time. We are the largest minority group in America. We are Latinos.

In the Legal community, it has become clear that the tides have shifted in terms of representation. Not so long ago, the majority of our country's "wisemen" were White, Anglo-saxon men. As recently as 1970 women only made up 4.8% of lawyers and minorities only made up an underrepresented 2%. Recently, however, there has been an influx of women and minorities entering the profession. Women now make up an astounding 36% of lawyers and minorities an approximate 12%.

With women and minorities on the rise in the legal profession, it is clear that diversity has finally made it's way into the trade. The only issue now is that we all make up just one bucketed group: minorities. In order



to pave the way for equality in the future, law schools have created organizations such as The Women's Law Association or the Black Law Student Association. While it remains important that we stand united to fight for equality, we cannot allow ourselves to become "bucketed" into groups.

As Latinos, we tend to be a group that gets bucketed a lot. Even when we applied to Law School — sure, there was a box that said "Hispanic or Non-Hispanic", but there was al-

so another section to check off either American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or White. The US Census does not consider us a race, but rather, an ethnicity meaning that we still fall into the categories of Black or White. When we look to sign up for an organization to support diversity, we are given the option of signing up for programs designed for "Students of Color" which could mean anything.

“As recently as 1970 women only made up 4.8% of lawyers and minorities only made up an underrepresented 2%.”

After coming together as an organized group, the Latinos here at Western New England University School of Law have decided that we will no longer be bucketed as just “Students of Color”. We demand to be recognized as our own entity and have come together to form the Latino Law Student Association (LLSA). The importance of this organization goes beyond recognizing Latino Law students. This is about branching out and letting the community know that all minorities are not the same. We are not all *just* students of color. We are Black, Brown, American Indian, Hawaiian, Asian, and Latino students. Students of Color come in all colors and to bucket us into one category is to misrepresent the very values that we stand for as a Law School Community. We must seek equal representation from all sides of the spectrum.

The Latino/a Law Student Association boasts a diverse membership including not only Latinos from all over Latino-America; the Caribbean; and the US, but also non-Latinos, and we hope to continue growing. We are committed to the advancement and success of the Latino student community and serve as a network of support to help students adjust to Law School.

LLSA hosts a variety of events and speakers throughout the school year. In efforts to reach out to the greater Law school community and gain more diverse involvement, we hold potlucks, alumni mixers, and other social events. We also focus on community service and have created an Immigration Pro Bono Initiative, along with local community partners, to assist local community members prepare Naturalization applications. The organization also hosts speakers to highlight and discuss issues of law that affect the Latino community.

As an organization, the Latino/a Law Student Association prides itself on equality and diversity. We hope to incorporate these values into the law school community and gain the support of all. Please show your support for equal representation in the Legal Community and join the Latino Law Student Association in highlighting the importance of not allowing anyone to be bucketed.

We also focus on community service and have created an Immigration Pro Bono Initiative, along with local community partners, to assist local community members prepare Naturalization applications.”

Human Rights Over Property Rights

National Lawyers Guild



by **CLAUDIA QUINTERO**

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“Human rights over property rights” is the value that drives the National Lawyers Guild, a national association of progressive lawyers and legal activists. The Guild is the oldest association of public interest lawyers, founded in the 1930s, which advances progressive issues such as extending the rights of workers, women, LGBTQ, racial minorities, people with disabilities and all disenfranchised communities.

The WNEU Student Chapter is an active part of the State chapter that advances the mission of the national association. Throughout the year, the student chapter brings awareness to a variety of issues, through panel lectures, events, and social hangouts. In the Fall semester, we build solidarity through roundtables and discussions, and in the Spring, we are focused on participating in RebLaw, a radical lawyering conference held at Yale Law School, and Robert M. Cover Re-



treat in New Hampshire.

The chapter serves more than to bring awareness at the law school; we are a collective of likeminded individuals who support each other through this very difficult journey that is law school. We understand that law school can be daunting and can sometimes run counter to one’s goals to gain skills useful to move-

ments for social change; the guild is a safe space to discuss current social issues and suggest ways to improve the system. If you are interested in joining, please do not hesitate to reach out:

wneunlg@gmail.com, in solidarity
CQ, Co-President.

Student Organizations

- ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK CLUB
- AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
- BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
- CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY
- ENVIRONMENTAL LAW COALITION
- HEALTH LAW ASSOCIATION
- INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW ASSOCIATION
- LATINO/LATINA LAW STUDENT ASSOCIATION
- LEX BREVIS
- NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
- OUTLAW
- PHI ALPHA DELTA LAW FRATERNITY
- PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ASSOCIATION
- SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LAW SOCIETY
- STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION
- WOMEN'S LAW ASSOCIATION

Opportunities for on-campus involvement are abundant at the School of Law. Because of the close-knit community here at Western New England University, you will be able to step up as a leader and gain valuable experience from our school-sponsored organizations.



(Continued from Parenting)

You need to be diligent in your studies during law school as the topics studied 1L year are the same core concepts you will be building on in your subsequent years, and the same core concepts you will need to know for the bar exam. Look at your law school experience as one long study course for the bar exam. This is the foundation of everything you need to know to be successful practicing law. You need to prioritize being present and prepared during your 1L lectures. You want a strong foundation to build on for the years to follow.

But most of all, smile and relax. You know you are doing everything right if you are sitting down reading this article and preparing for your first semester of law school. You are already there, just keep your momentum up and utilize the great professors, librarians and faculty all present with the goal of helping you to achieve your successes!

Good luck, and best wishes!

I wish I knew...

Alumni share what they wish they knew at the start of their careers.

by **Attorney KYLE GUELCHER**

LEX BREVIS Guest Writer

“Measure success, not in monetary gain or in prestige, but with the impact of your work and the effectiveness of your counsel. “

“Failure fosters conviction, fortitude, self evaluation, and hard work: all necessary elements for future success.”

“A law school education marks the start of a lifetime of learning the law and learning what it means to be a lawyer.”

Surviving the Curve

May the odds be in your favor.



by **MAGNOLIA PEREZ ROSARIO**

LEX BREVIS Staff Writer

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Getting into law school is for most of us our greatest accomplishment so far. The excitement of getting in is simply irreplaceable. Every Law student coming in wants to “make it.” From the very first day students are constantly reminded that Law Review is the goal. According to some, Law Review is a reflection of how smart you are; if you “make it” you will probably get the best jobs after graduation.

As a result of this misconception, students work really hard to get the necessary grades to make Law Review, and if they don't make it, they start to feel discourage or incompetent. At least that's how I personally felt.

In College, I was use to getting As and Bs and that made me feel bright. However during my first year of law school, I could not get an A for the life of me. I became discouraged and felt like giving up was an option.



After speaking to a few professors and peers I realized, that I wasn't incompetent, I was just a victim of the “curve,” a grading system that can make the brightest person in the world feel incompetent. That curve that can drop you from an A to a B just because there's a limit as to how many As can be given.

It was then that I understood that “making it” didn't mean I had to be in Law Review or get all As. To “make it” simply

means to give it your all. My grades are not a reflection of my abilities as an attorney or a reflection of my legal knowledge.

My advice to the incoming class would be to work hard and try to get those As but if after giving it your all, you don't, don't worry! Keep pushing because being a lawyer means more than a grade report and no matter what, you too will “make it.”

WHEN IN ROME

When you aren't studying: A quick list of what to do and where to do it.



by **AMARA RIDLEY**
LEX BREVIS Editor-In-Chief
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By now, you should have a good sense of how much work law school can be. While much of your time will be devoted to school, with careful planning and good time management skills you should have time to enjoy what the area has to offer.

NEW YORK CITY

The Law School is only a couple hours from New York City. Go shop, take in the theatre or just sightsee and be back in time for class.

BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME

Basketball was invented in Springfield by James Naismith in 1891. The Hall of Fame is a great place to take in the history of the game and visit popular Samuel's restaurant.

Dr. Seuss SCULPTURE PARK

Along with basketball, Springfield is also the birthplace of Dr. Seuss. The Seuss Museum is located down-



town adjoining several other historic and cultural museums referred to as the Springfield Quadrangle Museums (Museums of Art, Science and History).

RANDALL'S FARM AND GREENHOUSE

Randall's is a local favorite just north of Springfield in Ludlow. It features produce, a garden center, bakery/deli, homemade ice cream, etc.

YANKEE CANDLE VILLAGE

The Yankee Candle Village is north up Route 91 in Deerfield, MA.

BIG MAMOU'S RESTAURANT

The restaurant is considered a hidden gem by some. Specializing in "excellent" Cajun food and located in downtown Springfield.

FOREST PARK ZOO

Exotic & indigenous species, plus educational programs & special events in a wooded park. Forest Park is a neighborhood within Springfield within approximately 15 minute drive from the school.

SIX FLAGS NEW ENGLAND

1623 Main St., Agawam, MA 01001
SixFlags.com/newengland

NORTHAMPTON

Located about 30 minutes from the Law School, Northampton boasts a lively arts scene, shopping, entertainment, dining etc.

MOUNT TOM STATE RESERVATION

“Mt. Tom boasts an unparalleled view of the Connecticut Valley north and south, the Berkshire mountains to the west and the Pelham hills to the east. This 2,161 acre facility offers 22 miles of hiking and walking trails; picnicking; fishing on Lake Bray; and cross country skiing and ice skating in the winter. Mt. Tom also offers a children's play area.” *

HARTFORD STAGE (Hartford, CT)

“One of the nation’s leading resident theatres, Hartford Stage is known for producing innovative revivals of classics and provocative new plays and musicals, including 73 world and American premieres, as well as offering a distinguished education program, which reaches more than 20,000 students annually.” *

CITY STAGE & SYMPHONY HALL

“Symphony Hall is home to Broadway-style theatre, top-quality children’s programming, internationally recognized speakers and numerous concerts and performances. Symphony Hall is also home to the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. At CityStage, Off-Broadway comedies, dramas and musicals are presented October through April in the intimate, 479-seat Blake Theatre. The 70-seat Winifred Arms Theatre and the Lounge @ CityStage host numerous community events, performances and meetings throughout the year.” *

MAJESTIC THEATRE

“Every season at the Majestic consists of five productions (including at least one musical) featuring local actors. In addition to the subscription season, the summer includes children's theater, concerts, plays, open mic nights, and improvisational comedy shows.” *

* content from the respective websites

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Public Safety
413-782-1207

Student Administrative Services
(Financial Aid office)
413-782-2080

Law School Registrar
413-782-1403

Law Library
413-782-1457

Campus Post Office
413-782-1509

Campus Bookstore
413-782-4992

Print Services
413-782-1302

Alumni Healthful Living Center
(Campus gym/athletic center)
413-782-1518

Career Services (Law School)
413-782-1416



SURVIVING 1L

A few tips to get through this new adventure.



by **BARBIE CURATOLO**
LEX BREVIS Guest Writer

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So, having survived my first year of law school, I have a few hard earned bits of advice I'd like to give all of you who are filling the now open positions of brand new baby law students. **The first of which is:**

1. Everything will be okay.

That is what my mentor (and saving grace) would always say. It's fine. Everything is going to be fine. Law school can be a very overwhelming place to adjust to. It can be scary. As opposed to when you were the top of your class, you are in a place full of people who were also at the top of their classes. That can be intimidating. And the classes will try to reinvent you – teach you how to learn the law. It will be unlike any other environment you've been in before. To say that it is stressful is an understatement. You may have a few break downs. You might wonder if this is the place for you, or if you can do it. You can. It will be okay. Law school is a big ad-



justment and we have all been there. You will get through it. And you have people who are there for you. **Which leads me to my second bit of advice:**

2. Know your support system.

There are people who are here to help you: mentors, teaching assistants, professors. Use them. Talk to them. They are there to help you. They want you to succeed. Especially for those who are used

to doing well in school on your own, it can be hard to turn to others. It is easy to feel like you shouldn't need to ask for help. But it is well worth the hurt ego. Everyone has been in your place before, even the most intimidatingly intelligent of professors, and their hints and words of advice will make your life much easier. Take advantage of the opportunity of their free knowledge. Especially when you are paying so much for each class.

Speaking of how expensive classes are, do not waste them:

3. Read for class.

It is imperative that you prepare for class. Not only could you get cold-called at any point and be not only an annoyance to your teacher when you haven't prepared and are struggling through answering questions, but you will be an annoyance to your classmates as well. Do not waste everyone's time. Read for class. And it is also in your best interest as well. Finals can account for 70-80 percent of your final grade. That is a lot of pressure on one test and a lot of studying. You do not want to have to teach yourself the material at the end of the semester when you should be reviewing for the test. Keep up with your work and try to outline and study throughout the semester so it is not all waiting for you at the end.

And if you, for some reason, are not able to do your reading:

4. Tell your professor.

They understand. They will appreciate you being respectful of their time and letting them know before class. You need to be on good terms with your professors as they will be the ones writing you letters of recommendations and helping you make contacts. A good relationship with a professor can be the difference between getting a good internship position or job.

And remember:

5. Take care of yourself.

Find a routine that works for you in which you have time to sleep, eat, and do the things that you enjoy. That may sound silly right now, but when the semester fills up with work it's easy to skip meals or cut sleep. Ignoring your own personal needs will make the stress of school worse. You need to be healthy to do well. So find the time to make yourself food. Bring snacks with you. Do things that make you happy: go to the gym, play music, paint, or play sports. Your brain will work better when you have downtime.

“Find a routine that works for you in which you have time to sleep, eat, and do the things that you enjoy.”

Remember you came to law school for a reason. It is a decision you made because it is what is best for you. So make sure you continue to do what is best for you. Take care of yourself. Use the tools the school gives you in order to succeed. Stay on top of your schoolwork. Ask for help when you need it. Remember that you can do it; you can get through your first year. Before you know it, you will be giving advice to the next batch of new students.

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Keep Balance

Law School by night, working adult by day.



by **JOEVONNE TILLERY**
LEX BREVIS Staff Writer

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As the “unsung” heroes of the law school student body, our experience in law school will differ from the day full or part time students.

I am a part time evening law student, with a full time job and a mom of a now senior high school student. I have crawled, walked, ran, skipped, jumped, slid, fell, limped and jogged in the shoes you are about to wear. So, I felt compelled to write you a letter sharing some fail proof recommendations that can be useful during your law school journey.

While we appreciate the gift of a part-time evening Juris Doctor Program, it can pose a potential challenge to the authentic law school experience. The law school experience entails more than attending classes, reading, outlining, and studying. There are many more academic elements to



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the whole process. We as part-time students are often robbed of the daytime law school perks such as: the various student association activities, academic events, notable legal professional guest speakers, internships, externships, law school clinics, legal as well as judicial proceedings and many other benefits.

1. Attend day events and activities:

The different academic events and functions can be ideal for networking and learning. The beauty in taking the extra step of getting involved is it allows you to add an “extra side dish” to complete the whole meal of the law school experience. While the functions may have a “social undertone,” piecing together the information from the legal events along with your academic work load can provide you with the extra assistance in connecting the study of law. Moreover, many of these activities can help the law make sense to a law student.

2. Network: Yes, networking with other students outside of your section is a gift, open it. You are likely to meet a 2L or 3L student who has had a class with one of your professors. Many of them are willing to provide tips and pointers on how professors test and their lecture styles. All students and law faculty can identify with the life of a 1L student.

3. The Dean's Suite: The Dean's Suite is synonymous with an open-ended line of credit. It would be advantageous to establish a relationship with a member of the administration. This is a great asset for all things relative to law school. Plus, any issues that may interfere with your legal education, they can provide the support or refer you to a source of assistance based on your need.

4. Meet with the Professors:

Communicate with your Law Professors and make appointments for office hours. Professors seem to appreciate students taking their classes seriously. The Professors want you as a student to succeed academically. My greatest appreciation is help understanding their exams, that's GOLDEN!!!!

5. Academic Success Class: Attend Professor Myra Orlen's Academic Success class during the semester for more than mid-term and final exam reviews. Consider the class necessary versus optional because Professor Orlen can teach you how to take notes, manage the work load, organize, issue spot for case briefing, outlining techniques and most importantly, how to read like a lawyer. She provides a clear understanding of how to format IRAC and CREAC. Also, Professor Orlen will help you with time management. I highly recommend the textbooks for

her class, *Succeeding in Law School*, by Herbert Ramy and *Mastering the Law School Exam*, by Suzanne Darrow-Kleinhaust. And the best part is she brings snacks!!

6. The Library: My final recommendation is the Library and the staff. They all deserve a 5-star rating. I have received 80% of my assistance from the Library staff including fellow law students who have helped me with more than scanning a book. In fact, I met a 2L student who worked in the Library that offered me an impressive outline for a class in which she excelled. The Library will help with not only navigating and using the Library but also with the extraneous material for your classes such as, WildPac for past exams, book reserves, information searches, printing, scanning, and copying.

“Moreover, many of these activities can help the law make sense to a law student.”

There are so many different ways that a part-time evening student can succeed in law school. Pick a model or design a pattern that works best for you; use the resources and tools; talk with your school mates and faculty; ask questions; get to know your classmates; and exchange contact information. After all, we are colleagues in the most noble profession in the world.

Law school is competitive but it is also supportive, so use every resource available on campus. In the words of Aristotle “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Lex Brevis

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