

Lex | Brevis

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

11
Edition

Lex | Brevis

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SPECIAL EDITION

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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.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Kerri Ann Manning

LEX BREVIS, Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to Law School! My name is Kerri Manning and I am the Editor-in-Chief of Lex Brevis, the law school's student run newspaper. This special edition is dedicated to you, the incoming 1L class. I hope this issue provides you with invaluable guidance and answers the many questions I am sure you have.

The most important advice I have for you is to do one unpredictable activity per month— something you would never have thought you would do— no matter how small it is. Your first semester will become mundane and you may experience the infamous second semester burnout, but hold fast to that one bit of spontaneity for balance. The first year is a marathon, so the better balanced you are physically, emotionally and mentally, the more likely you are to finish strong.

I will leave you with this final thought: learn who you are and what makes you, you. Use that sense of self or that path to discovering yourself as a guiding light so you do not lose your way.

Best of luck to you during your law school tenure.

Best regards,

Kerri Manning

Editor-in-Chief



by **DEAN ERIC J. GOUVIN**

LEX BREVIS Guest Writer

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Welcome to Western New England University School of Law!

You are starting an incredible journey of personal and professional growth. I know it is Hallmark-card wisdom, but the journey really is what it is all about.

You will acquire a great deal of legal knowledge in law school. By the time you return home for Thanksgiving, all of your relatives will ask you all kinds of questions about all kinds of legal issues and you will be able to make all kinds of reasonable responses (hint: the answer always is “it depends.”)

But the nuggets of knowledge you acquire during your time at the law school are only part of the experience. You will also be acquiring habits of mind that will change how you see the world. Your thinking will become more skeptical, more rigorous, and more insistent on firm evidence.

You will also become acculturated to the legal profession and the rules of behavior – both written and unwritten – that govern the bar. The practice of law is more than just a business or trade: it is a profession.

Professions are different from trades. While there is no absolute definition of a profession, most people who have written about professionalism focus on five factors: (1) professionals possess specialized knowledge and skills; (2) professionals must pass licensing examinations in order to practice their profession; (3) professionals subscribe to aspirational goals to make society better; (4) professionals enjoy a measure of autonomy and a culture of self-regulation; and (5) professionals adhere to a Code of Conduct.

Certainly not all of these attributes are unique to professions – both plumbers and

lawyers possess specialized knowledge and skills, and must pass licensing exams – but the combination of all of these attributes distinguishes a profession from a trade. Items three through five on the list especially address the question of what makes professions different from trades.

There are a number of lessons in professionalism you can work on as you proceed through law school.

First, take your obligations seriously, be prepared, and be on time. Most ethical complaints deal in one way or another with Rule 1.3 of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct, which requires diligence in representing clients. The diligent work habits you hone in law school will pay dividends in practice.

Second, take responsibility for your own learning and master your subjects. Rule 1.1, which deals with competence, is the first rule for a reason – you cannot take on matters where you do not know what you are doing. The intellectual tools you develop in law school to attain competence will also pay dividends in practice. Probably the most important knowledge you can acquire is an awareness of what you do not know.

Third, embrace the Law School's pro bono service program and try to make the legal system better. If you do so, you will get a jump on Rule 6.1, which creates an aspirational goal of pro bono service for members of the legal profession.

Finally, the mark of a real professional is how you treat others. Many professional rules deal with this point and you will be judged throughout your career – by judges, by court personnel, by government agents, by the press, by counsel and by clients – on how well you carry off this professional obligation. Treating others with respect, even if you disagree with them – and even if you do not like them – is the hallmark of a professional.

In law school there will be some people with whom you disagree and maybe even some you do not like. Nevertheless, these folks are going to be in your life for at least the next three or four years. Treat them right because you'll be seeing them for a long time – perhaps for the rest of your career. Your life as a student and as a lawyer will be much easier if you have a reputation for being respectful.

I look forward to seeing you all in and around the Blake law Center. Best wishes for a successful year!

Meet Your Student Bar Association



by JEFFREY HISER

LEX BREVIS Guest Writer

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My name is Jeffrey Hiser and I am your Student Bar Association (SBA) President. I am a third-year law student and I have been actively involved in the SBA since my first year of law school, and I love it. Prior to attending law school, student government groups at my previous schools were never an active part in my life, but now they are.

Perhaps, born out of the significantly smaller and close-knit community here at the Western New England School of Law, but it seems like there is something involving the Student Bar Association that impacts me on a daily basis. Whether it's a student organization event in the commons or tabling for some of the dozens of events that are put on every semester, you'll be hearing from the SBA on many occasions.

You may be asking yourself what is the SBA. On paper, the SBA is responsible for allocating the SBA fees back out to the student groups for their activities. In practice, even though it sounds cliché, we do so much more. Members of the SBA serve as guidance counselors, study help, moral support, and a variety of other roles. In addition, we are the voice of the students to the administration and are the backbone of student groups here at the law school.

The SBA is made up entirely of students who are elected by the greater student community. SBA members then act solely on behalf of the students. The day-program students elect three SBA Representatives to represent the interests of the class. The evening-program students elect one SBA Representative to the same effect. The SBA also has an Executive Board (E-Board) which is elected every year by the entire student body. The SBA E-Board represents the interests of the school as a whole, and will often be your first stop if you have any questions regarding student matters.

You will find your SBA E-Board in the SBA office in between the first-floor elevators, and the library. Feel free to stop in anytime if you have questions, or even if you want to just drop by and say hello. We have an open door policy and invite any student to come in and introduce themselves, hang out, and chat.

The SBA typically meets every other week on Wednesdays at 9:55 pm. These meetings are

open door and we encourage anyone to attend. If there is something you wish to see discussed, feel free to reach out to me or my fellow council members and we will help you out.

If you want to get involved in the SBA or other student activities, there will be an activity fair during the first month of school where you can find out more. Each class will need representatives, and there will be elections at the start of the semester. If there is any advice I can give you, it would be to get involved and enjoy your law school career.

Now you may be wondering, “How can I reach out to the SBA?” Beyond stopping a member in the hall or stopping by the office, there is also a TWEN page where you may submit correspondence. I suggest that everyone join the SBA TWEN page. Not only is it a plethora of great resources, it has all of our contact information. Furthermore, it is a great way to keep informed on what is happening at the school and within the legal community.

I am not in this alone. Besides myself, you can reach out to any of the E-Board members, who will also be able to help you with any needs that you may have. The E-Board looks forward to meeting you each individually and hope to see each of you get involved here on campus. I wish you all the best of luck as you start this great adventure, and again, I want to remind you that you can reach out to me anytime to discuss anything that you want—even if it is not SBA related.



Student Bar Association Executive Board

Back row: Treasurer Paul Stabile 3L, Secretary Shannon Tarleton 2L, Parliamentarian Jeremy Forgue 2L

Front Row: Day Vice President Joseph Masse 3L, President Jeffrey Hiser 3L, Night Vice President Alexander Rudiak

The Imposter Syndrome



by **JOHN MAGISTRO**
LEX BREVIS Staff Writer
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This concept is commonly used to describe those individuals who feel as though they do not belong amongst their highly successful peers due to their own perceived shortcomings. I am sure there are some people reading this article right now who feel as though they do not belong here, like there was a glitch in the matrix and somehow they got accepted to law school and now they sit in their Introduction to the Law class or Torts Class, or even their Criminal Law class waiting to be called out for the fraud they are. For those of you who feel this way, who feel as though they could be unmasked at any moment, I have two pieces of advice for you.

Tip number one: you are not an imposter. Every single person sitting in your class, as well as those who came before and those who will come after, has earned the right to be here. That includes you. You got your bachelor's degree. You took the LSAT. You

jumped through the hoops to apply to law school. And just like every other person in your class, you met the university's standards. You proved you have what it takes to walk through those doors as the incoming class of 2017. Congratulations!



There will be times when it seems as though everyone around you “gets it” while you are sitting there scratching your head. You may find that any number of your classmates always seem to have the right answer. More likely than not, you will find that at least one of your classmates feels completely comfortable being “cold called” or otherwise talking and contributing in class. This does not mean they are a better student than you are. Remember that you are all here because you proved to the school that you have what it takes.

Tip number two: you are not alone. There are bound to be others in your class who feel as though they are not “good

enough” to be in law school. You will not see it just by looking at them; they will not have “IMPOSTER” stamped on their forehead. But they are there among you.

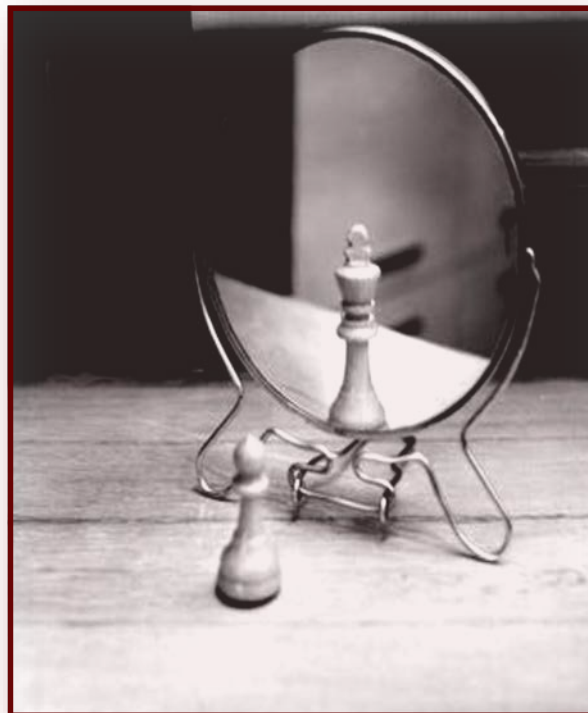
Which brings me to my most important point:

“At the end of the day, you are all in this together for the next three years.”

Have each other’s back. This goes for everyone, not just the ones who feel like they do not belong here. This is not a race or a competition, and there is nothing to be gained by standing by while your classmates struggle. I am not suggesting that you drop everything or go to extraordinary lengths to ensure someone has a complete grasp of the material. What I am suggesting is simply offering your help when you can. If you see or hear that a classmate is having difficulty wrapping their head around an aspect of class, perhaps give them advice. Suggest a different approach to studying or note taking. If you have time, maybe

explain the material to them in your own words (hint: this can also help you understand and retain the information better).

At the end of the day, you are all in this together for the next three years. Look to your left. Now look to your right. These people are your peers, and one day they will be your colleagues. But there is not a single one of you who does not deserve to be here. Because you are not imposters.



Editor’s Note: If the stress of law school, including “Imposter Syndrome,” weighs on you heavily, you can visit Health Services in The Center for the Sciences and Pharmacy, Suite 235. They provide mental healthcare to all students and faculty.

Plan & Commit



by JULIE PAGE

LEX BREVIS Copy Editor

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From the very beginning, here at Western New England University School of Law, I have been blessed with great mentors. Though, I'll spare them the embarrassment with direct reference and, frankly, there are too many to mention. Still, I will share some of what I've learned from these mentors with you.

First and foremost, take the time commitment seriously. Friends and family are important, but if your friends cannot understand that for the next 3 years (4 years if you are a part time evening student like myself), each hour of your day is accounted for, then you have to ask yourself: "Do you really have their support?" I'm not kidding when I say each hour is accounted for, so make yourself a chart. As a part-time evening student with a full-time day job, a 45-minute commute, a home to care for and pay a mortgage on and elders to be attentive to, I needed to have a plan. I took an excel spread sheet and marked off the hours of the day in ½ hour intervals.



In order to make an effective chart, first, I started by allocating the hours I'd be at work. Second, I marked the hours for time spent commuting. Third, I blocked off solid sleep time of at least 6 hours per day. Fourth, I put in important "real world" adult tasks such as chores, church, and dinner with friends or family. Fifth, I put in my class time. Lastly, I counted the hours that were left. I learned that, generally, law school requires 3-5 hours of prep time for every hour of class time, so if I had 10

hours of class time per week, I needed to find 30+ hours of prep-time. In all honesty, as someone with a full-time day job in addition to school, I was able to find 27 hours.

Having created a plan for organizing your time, the question then becomes: “How can I make that happen every week for the next 3 or 4 years?” For me, the answer came in the form of my support system of family and friends.

Here are a few conversations you may find yourself having with friends or family:

1. Feed me!

Advice I received from my mentors, which I now relay to you begins with this: Please feel free to feed me, but don't make me drive far to come to you and don't make me do any planning or choosing. In addition, don't expect me to be able to afford the kind of establishments or past-times I was able to afford before I had textbooks to buy.

2. Have a plan!

Make a plan and invite me to it. Make sure the plan does not hinge on my presence. Know that if I turn you down, as the cliché goes: *it's not you, it's me*, so don't take it personally. Don't get jealous if you see social media postings that include me and that you could have joined in on if you had known, or if, “I had told you”. Don't leave it to me to tell you.

I found certain friends getting jealous when they would see me posting pictures on social media or my being out with other friends. Some understood when I explained to them that it was a “sudden thing,” or that the person was relatively close by, or even that the other person was willing to do the driving. Some friends and family even understood situations in which other people happen to not have children, so getting together was more feasible, in that instance. That being said, the main reason was the other folks had paid attention to what was going on with me and fit into my space instead of expecting me to fit into theirs.

3. Pay attention.

Paying attention is probably one of the most supportive things friends and family can

do. Observe the situation, make a plan, suggest plans, get acceptance of the plan, and, if something happens and plans have to change or be canceled at the last minute, don't be upset.

4. Random acts of kindness.

Sure, cleaning the house of your friend or family member who is in law school, or dropping off food or beverages is a good idea, but so are less physical endeavors, such as sending one-way communications that you don't expect an answer to. Send notes, texts, or even leave voicemails of encouragement. Even if it's corny or trite, it matters. A simple: "Be Awesome," #yougotthis, #aspiringtoesquire, or "breath-hydrate-read-smile" goes a long way for a loved one to show their student they care and support them.

5. Help filter out the noise.

In my experience, I have learned that if you think they may have missed some good news because they were studying, go ahead and let them know, but only if it's good news. Positive feedback is only an emoji away but don't waste your student's time with bad news, media hype, or unnecessary drama. This is easier said than done, but in my experience, this is what I find works for me. I tell people, no matter what the topic is, "if I cannot make an impact on that topic in the next 15 minutes then I probably don't need to know about it right now." While that sounds harsh, it really works.

If someone is sick or having a rough time, telling me about it is fine, because in the next 15 minutes I can send an encouraging message to that person to let them know I am aware and that I care. If it is a situation where I should not be sending such a message to them about their troubles, then maybe I should not know about their troubles. This is one way to tell the difference between gossip and concern or hype verses activism.

6. Real information is real support.

If you know your student is an activist, give them 'real' information. Look at the hype, find the root, fact check, then share. Don't just say, "Did you hear what so and so said?" Your student is in research mode and feeding them hype will just send them down the rabbit hole and achieve nothing except frustration and anxiety. Focus on the action side of activism.

Let your support team be a part of the process.

If you don't have a team then that is okay, because you are a part of a law community that supports one another, regardless. The best way to have a mentor is to be ready to be one.



Parenting and Law School: A Survival Guide



by **SAMANTHA MASTROMATTEO**

LEX BREVIS Guest 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 strug-

gle 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 imagine. 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

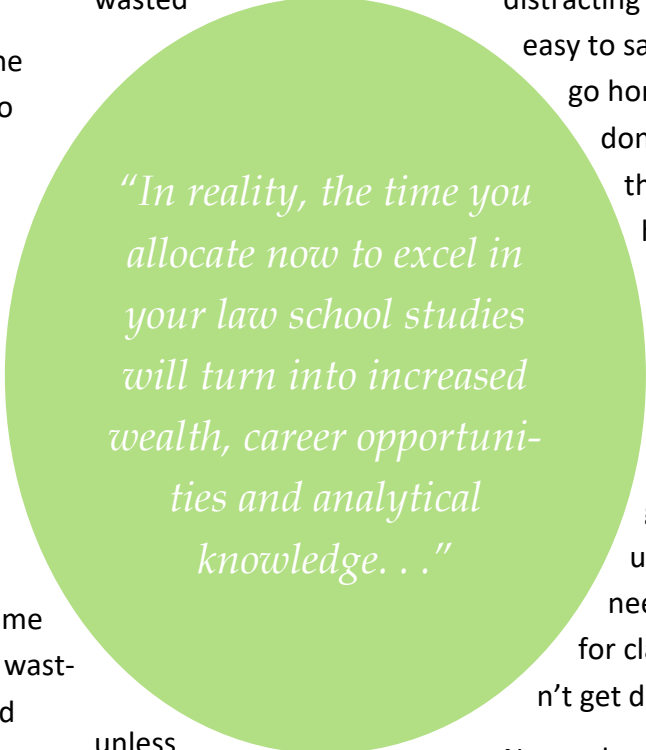
minimum, just showing up and passing. Law school is a commitment that you need to be mentally prepared for if you plan to succeed.

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 through 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 en-

ergy 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



"In reality, the time you allocate now to excel in your law school studies will turn into increased wealth, career opportunities and analytical knowledge. . ."

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 spent. 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.

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.

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!

Surviving 1L: The Blueprint



by **BRENDAN THOMAS CASSIDY**

LEX BREVIS Guest Writer

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Dear incoming 1Ls,

First of all, congratulations on making it into law school! You

have all put in hard work to make it here, and you all deserve some acknowledgement, although your hard work is not over yet.

The first semester of law school is most likely going to turn out to be one of the toughest mental uphill battles that most of you reading this will probably go through in

your life. At least it will feel that way while you are going through it. Getting through your first cold calls, learning



how to read cases, and balancing everything else going on in your life can be really tough and stressful. But does it necessarily have to be that way for you?

This article is going to briefly discuss what I found to be the most important takeaways I learned from my first

year the hard way, so that hopefully you do not have to learn them the hard way yourselves. In this article, I will discuss the importance of time manage-

ment, self preservation of mental health, and the importance of having a social structure, such as friends, study groups, and getting involved in activities on campus.

One lesson I have learned not only from law school, but through my personal life experiences is that having proper preparation and planning can remove a huge portion of the stresses that I endured from my first semester, because I had poor planning and no experience in law school. If I had not realized this early on in that first semester, I doubt my grades would have turned out as well as they have, and consequently be writing this piece on survival in law school. Writing out your schedule can be very beneficial. You'll see how much time you are committing to each subject and your schedule outside of class. If you are not understanding concepts in one class such as Civil Procedure, you can easily adjust your schedule so that you put a little more time in prep for that class, and a little less in a

class you understand, or an outside classroom activity. Time management is important to making it through law school. Having a written schedule is the most logical way of managing your time.

It was imperative for myself that every Friday I would plan out the next week's schedule. I would write down for each day what time I was supposed to be in class, what time I would study, including the subject I was studying for, and if I had a meeting, a plan with someone, where and when the meeting was. But one thing I

forgot to budget time for was time for myself.

If there is anything that should be taken away from what I am writing, it should be to always

budget time for yourself, and your interests. We all come to law school to sculpt our minds into the next genera-

tion of prominent attorneys, but sometimes in that pursuit we all forget to take care of ourselves and the minds we are sculpting. It is important to take time for yourself. If your entire life becomes about your coursework, you will eventually have a breakdown. Studying is important to your success in law school and that cannot be underplayed, but giving yourself even an hour a day to do something you like, go to the gym, go for a walk, fishing, leisure reading, or whatever it is you like to do in your free time -- do it.



Social structure is also important in law school. Humans are social beings, and just because you are pur-

suing a challenging degree program does not mean you should become a recluse and study by yourself all of the time. If you are looking for more time to study, then form a study group. As you will find when you start preparing for exams, there is not always an absolute correct answer to a problem, and it helps to have people to bounce ideas off of. Studying by yourself in that aspect can seem like an echo chamber, where the only answers you are hearing to a problem are your own, when realistically there are other possibilities you might not have thought of exploring. Having a study group in that aspect opens you to other ideas and can make you a better exam taker



in the long run. It also helps to have a study group for notes you may miss something in class that somebody else was able to write down. Having that network will help fill any gaps that you might have, because it is impossible to write everything down. Having a study group also leads to having some solid friends. I am still friends with everyone from my 1L

year study group and we still get together for any class that we all might happen to take.

Another method of gaining a social structure is to join one of the many student organizations that are available on campus. The student organizations all have meetings and events that the members of these organizations would love to have you attend! Joining early on could also mean that you end up running the club in the future, which looks great on a resume. In my 1L

year, I joined the Environmental Law Association, and now I am the President of that very club. I am also Vice President for the Latino/a Law Student Association. From these clubs, I have made some great friends and have had experiences that I would not have had, if I was not a member. As someone who is involved at the leadership level, I

can tell you that we put on these events for the student body, and especially for the incoming class. We like it when new students get involved, and it is a great opportunity to meet some 2L and 3L students so that when exams get closer, these individuals can be great resources to utilize. That briefly covers what I found to be helpful in surviving my first year of law school. It will be a difficult year learning to navigate everything.

If there is one more piece of advice I can give you, it is to remember the end goal; the light at the end of the tunnel. Remember what you want to do with your life and career, and it will make all of your hardships seem less hard. If there is anything you want to talk about in getting through the first year, myself and other 2L and 3L students are very approachable. We are glad to talk to you and be of any assistance we can. You are all always welcome to email me at brendan.cassidy@wne.edu if you want to talk about anything in this article, or 1L year in general! I wish you all the best of luck this year!

Student Organizations

- ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK
- AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
- BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
- CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY
- ENVIRONMENTAL LAW COALITION
- FAMILY LAW ASSOCIATION
- HEALTH LAW ASSOCIATION
- INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ASSOCIATION
- LATINO/A LAW STUDENT ASSOCIATION
- LEX BREVIS
- NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
- OUTLAW
- PHI ALPHA DELTA LAW FRATERNITY
- PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ASSOCIATION
- SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LAW ASSOCIATION
- 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 experiences from our school-sponsored organizations.



Hindsight Insights



by **KERRI ANN MANNING**
LEX BREVIS Editor-in-Chief
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The days leading up to my first day of law school were riddled with fear and apprehension. I sought clarity and affirmations from anyone and anywhere possible. I stayed up for hours on end, wondering if I had made the right decision by walking away from a successful career to pursue a legal career that afforded me no guarantees. After googling all of the questions I had, I found myself knee deep in comment sections on random discussion boards, reading opinions and experiences of people who had attended law school almost a decade before me. What I did not have was the perspective of someone who had just gone through what I would be experiencing, at the school I would be attending. I wanted to know what to expect as a 1L law student attending Western New England University School of Law. Many of you are probably now experiencing what I and many others experienced, but my hope is to alleviate that fear of the unknown. A few rising 2Ls have, graciously, offered their reflection on their past 1L year.

I. What was the best/worst advice you received before starting law school?

Jeremy Forgue:

Best Advice: Practice and use time management. Stressing the importance of getting a routine and making sure you leave enough time to read for class and then review your notes afterwards. It takes up more time than you think.

Worst Advice: Find a study group and stick with it. Each group can change from class to class and at times the group you're with just won't be working for you. Get out of your comfort zone and change it up if you need to for a group that best suits your study habits.

Anthony Farber:

The worst advice I received was that you can slack off after you've been called on by the professor. Wrong choice! The professor may enjoy the comments you make about a reading and will want to hear from you again. You never want to be caught unprepared for class.

Katharine Shove:

The best advice I received before starting law school was to start outlining early. It's easy to get caught up in your daily reading assignments for class, but if you get an early start on outlining and stay on top of it, you won't have to worry about finishing your outline during the study period. You'll be able to focus only on studying for exams and doing practice questions.

Heidi Waugh:

The best advice I received before starting law school was to pick one method of notetaking for the semester and to stick to it. I didn't follow this advice for one of my first semester classes and chaos ensued when I went to prepare for the final exam. Establishing a system earlier on, and maintaining that system is critical to keeping your cool when the stress and pressure of exams starts to build.

The **worst advice** I received was not a direct piece of advice, but more of a general idea that was pushed on the 1L class: do not reinvent the wheel. Several professors and upper-level

students stressed that law school was a different world than undergrad and there are tried and true paths to success – the classic brief, the outline, and study groups.

Although this advice may have been given with good intention, I found it unsettling, distracting, and stress-inducing. I would, alternatively, advise not to reinvent your own wheel – be confident in your ability to learn, and do not abandon practices that have worked well for you in the past. If the standard outline format does not lend itself to your style of learning, it is perfectly okay to organize the information differently. For instance, I did not have an outline for Torts – instead I created a series of flowcharts and graphs that helped me



work with the information and understand the relationship between the cases that we read. If you have found that studying in groups does not work for you, don't feel obligated to join a study group. Trust yourself enough to exercise the practices that you know work and to explore alternative options when you see fit. There is one way of doing things here, it all depends – primarily, on you.

2. What were some of your best practices which ended up having the greatest impact on your first year performance?

Jeremy: Taking time at the end of the week to work on my outline. On Friday's you have a half day. Fight the want to just drink right away and put in 3 or 4 hours of transferring your notes into an outline. It helps SO MUCH towards the end of the semester.

Anthony: The best practices that made the biggest impact were flash card and outlines. Making flash cards in addition to making and revising outlines really helped the

knowledge cement into your brain. Continuous review of both study materials allowed me to retain a lot of knowledge in the little time that was giving for preparation.

Katharine: When studying for midterms and finals, I took a lot of practice exams. All of the professors post their previous exams on the library website. I timed myself, wrote out full answers for the exam questions, and then met with my professors to get feedback. Doing so was really helpful because it allowed me to determine what material I needed to study more and it also helped me get better at issue spotting in different fact patterns.

Heidi: Throughout the semester, I ran countless CALI Lessons and sought out books in the library that had multiple choice and short answer practice questions. After reading the assigned cases for a particular topic, I would complete the corresponding CALI Lesson and carefully review the explanations provided by CALI to clear up any confusion or misunderstandings that I had. I believe this practice had the greatest impact on my first year performance because it forced me to apply the information I gleaned from reading cases and class discussions. This practice was particularly helpful with Constitutional Law because it familiarized me with a variety of real-world examples of the Commerce Clause, for instance. When it came time to take exams, I felt prepared: not only did I know the rules, but I understood how to apply them.

3. Is there anything about your first year that surprised you?

Jeremy: How much outside factors can effect your performance at school. Relationships, jobs, family, and other things can take away from paying attention in the classroom, studying, and even preparation for tests. You have to take care of your home life to be able to fully devote to your studies.

Anthony: I was surprised about how much free time you have to yourself. Don't get

me wrong, you spend a lot of time outside of class preparing for the next day. If you plan accordingly and make a schedule and stick to it, you'll find that you have a good amount of free time for yourself.

Katharine: The professors are incredibly helpful and always willing to meet with you. Don't be afraid to set up appointments with them to go over any material that confuses you, or to simply ask additional questions after class. And don't be afraid to ask questions during class. The professors always welcome questions and chances are that other students probably have the same exact question as you.



Heidi: I was surprised by how truly unhappy I was throughout the course of my first year of law school. The overwhelming workload, combined with the pressure to perform in class and on exams, was mentally and emotionally exhausting. When taking a break from school work meant doing the dishes, I knew I had to restructure my schedule and reincorporate enjoyable activities into my routine. Realizing this was the easy part – it was much more difficult to shake the guilt that came from going for a run or spending time with friends when case briefs were weighing on my mind. Don't be afraid to express your frustration – your family and friends just may surprise you with how supportive they can be.

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