

# REVAMPING YOUR LAW SCHOOL STRATEGY

An Academic Success Lecture

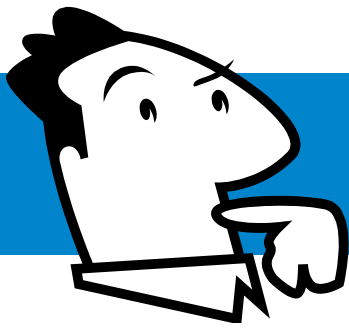


UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
FACULTY OF LAW | AT ALLARD HALL

# Today's Lecture

- Putting December Exams in Context
- Learning from your December Exams
- Canning
- Studying Strategy
- Resources





# Points to Ponder

- Not all great lawyers were great law students
- 90% of the lawyers practicing didn't graduate in the top 10% of their class.
- Success is more attitude than aptitude.
- On the occasion of your first real estate closing, no one around that conference room table is going to ask, so what did you get in Property?
- There are many ways to demonstrate success other than through grades, and it is these other ways which will demonstrate your ability to be a good lawyer

# Putting December Exams in Context

- UBC Law grading rules require that the average marks on December exams fall within a specified range being 65-75% (April Exams and Reg State must be between 70-75%).
- Grades are only indicative of how well you were able to communicate your skills in a particular area of the law to one professor, in a one hour period, on one day.
- Treat December exams as practice exams and learn from them.


# Learning from Your Exams

- Recommend reviewing your December exam in detail with your professor one-on-one.
  - Handout: *Learning from Experience: How to Interpret Your Exam Results and Plan Ahead*
- Purpose of meeting: Learn from mistakes and gain professor's insight into how to improve

# Ask yourself the following questions

- Did you answer the question asked?
- Did you understand the material?
- Did you spot the issue(s)? Did you miss issues?
- Did you set out the rule/test/standard properly and clearly?
- Did you over-rely on your CANS?
- Did you write a clear and coherent exam, using headings and topic sentences?
- Did you allocate your limited time with care?

# Ask yourself the following questions

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- Did you explain each step in your legal analysis?
    - Did you explore the facts of the question thoroughly given the legal principles and issues you identified?
    - Did you cite cases as authority for legal principles?
  - Did you show sensitivity to policy considerations?
  - What aspects of your exam writing were strong?

# Review Your Canning Strategy

- Did you use your own CANS or someone else's?
- Did you complete your CANS in advance of your exam or were you rushing to finish them?
- Was key information readily accessible or was there too much unneeded detail?
- Did you create cheat sheets/flow charts etc?
- Did you have a sense of how everything fit into the big picture or did it seem fragmented?
- In an open book exam, was the format quickly usable?

# Revamping your Study Strategy


- Read Actively Now for Learning rather than highlighting material to learn later
- Cram & forget does not work in law school – ensure you Review Material Regularly and CAN throughout the term.
- Focus in class:
  - Sit where you won't get distracted
  - Ask questions to stay engaged in the class discussion



# Revamping your Study Strategy

- Consider rewriting a December exam question and submitting it to your professor for evaluation.
- Join a Study Group. Request a Peer Tutor.
- Make effective use of Reading Break.
- Ask for help earlier rather than later. Clarify uncertainties with your prof.

# Revamping Your Study Strategy

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- Establish a structured Time Management Routine.
  - Recognize Procrastination and take steps to overcome it.
  - Assess your extra-curricular activities.
    - Important to maintain activities that are rewarding and stress-relieving.
    - Shed ones that are causing you anxiety or stress.

# University Resources

- **Health & Wellness**

<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/>

- Check out UBC Current Students & Learning Commons website for workshops on health & wellness as well as examination anxiety.

- **Counselling Services (located in Brock Hall)**

<http://www.students.ubc.ca/livewelllearnwell/counselling-services/>

- Open every day: 8 am -4;30 pm
- One-on-one counselling- drop-in hours each weekday except Wed
- Group Programs – anxiety, depression, meditation

# Print Resources

## Books (copies in Pam's office)

- H.N. Ramy, *Succeeding in Law School*
- R.M. Fischl and J. Paul, *Getting to Maybe: How to Excel in Law School Exams*
- A.C. Hutchinson, *The Law School Book: Succeeding at Law School (Canadian)*
- C.R. Calleros, *Law School Exams: Preparing and Writing to Win*

## PodCast

- “*Improving Your First Term Performance*”: open up iTunes and then search for "Suffolk University Law School.”

## Handouts

- *Learning from Experience: How to interpret Your Exam Results and Plan Ahead*
- *Various Academic Success Handouts (ask Pam)*

