

# Ask a Law Student: Surviving 1L

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# What does “1L” mean?

## What will I be doing as a 1L?

“1L” refers to someone who is in their first year of law school, and is a synonym for “first year law student.”

- After you finish 1L, you go to 2L and 3L

As a 1L, you are learning the basics of learning and thinking as someone who will enter the legal sector (e.g.: as an attorney, someone in policy, or other law-related career).

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# 1L Academic Year Timeline

Sept. & Oct.	Nov. & Dec.	Jan. & Feb.	Mar. & April	May & June	July & Aug.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Welcome to law school!</li> <li>-Start settling in + meet folks</li> <li>-First student org meetings</li> <li>-First memo likely assigned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Enjoy Thanksgiving!</li> <li>-Start thinking about exams</li> <li>-Take exams/write memo</li> <li>Finish 1L Fall!</li> <li>Enjoy break, start clinic/job apps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Work on job and/or clinic applications, interview</li> <li>-Start 1L Spring Semester classes</li> <li>-Hear about Journal, Moot and Mock Trial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Continue job apps</li> <li>-Prepare for Mock Trial/Moot Court</li> <li>-Wrap up trial and/or appellate brief</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Prepare for exams</li> <li>-Write on for journal(s)</li> <li>-Finish 1L Year!</li> <li>-Start summer job/clinic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Continue/end summer opportunity</li> <li>-Start/apply for OCI</li> <li>-OCI</li> <li>-Rest and get ready for 2L!</li> </ul>

# 1L Classes + Grades

During 1L, your classes are chosen for you. These will be fundamental building blocks (sort of like general courses) that everyone takes.

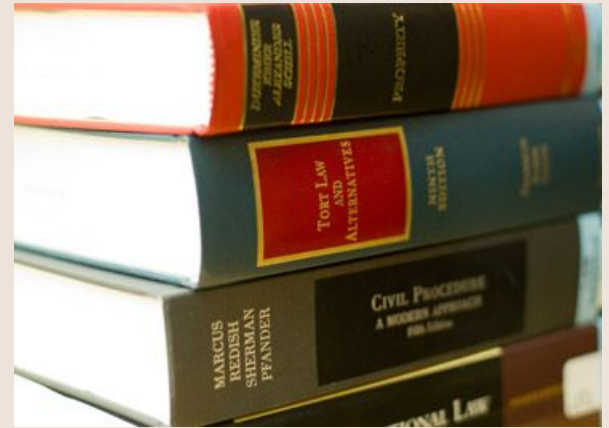
Examples of 1L classes:

- Civil Procedure
- Property Law
- Torts
- Legal Research and Writing
- Contracts
- Elective

Law school classes are graded on a curve

- average grade for each class is calculated, and then the assigned grades to each student are curved around that average grade.
- Grades are important and strongly impact first career opportunities, but they're not everything.

This can be stressful: reach out to professors or academic programming available on campus if you're struggling with material: they are there for a reason!



# Cold Calling, On-Call, Outlining

Classroom participation is a big aspect of law academics.

“Cold calling” is when a professor calls on someone in class even if the student hasn’t raised their hand.

- Each professor and/or institution is different

“On call”: a student is expected to thoroughly know the material assigned for that class.

“Outlining”: process of compiling everything someone has learned to create a large, master note-document that can be used for (most) exams

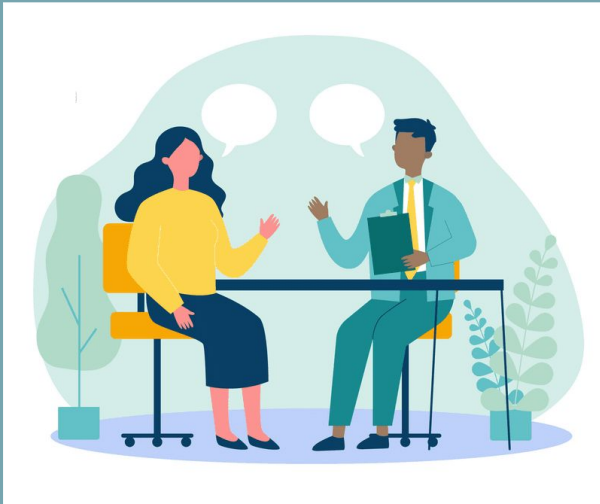
- Many student organizations have outline banks to utilize
- Everyone can outline differently



# On-Campus Interviewing (OCI)

On-Campus Interviewing occurs twice during the school year (summer and fall).

- When is OCI? OCI usually occurs July-August after your 1L year, but applications open towards the end of 1L year or at the beginning of the summer.
- What is OCI? Students apply for opportunities and if selected, employers interview students on campus.
  - OCI Employers most often dependent on regional connections of the law school. Other options are available too.
- This is a major opportunity to secure employment for the first summer after your 1L, but is NOT the only way.
  - OCI accounts for a very, very small fraction of jobs and is not the only path for employment!



# Journal, Moot Court, Mock Trial

Journal, Moot Court, and Mock Trial are all 2-year commitments that students can get various class credit for.

- Moot Court and Mock Trial are great experiences to argue either at the trial level (Mock) or appellate level (Moot) for folks interested in litigation.
- 1Ls apply for Moot Court and Mock Trial in 1L Spring.

Journals publish various amounts of law review articles each year.

- No oral advocacy required. Journal is all writing.
- Journal members work on writing their own piece all year, and complete other editing on various publications.



# Law School Involvement, Clinics/Internships + Networking

Take advantage of opportunities to get involved! This can help make law school feel less intimidating and more comfortable.

- Law school orgs are great to connect with folks with similar backgrounds and/or interests.
- Take advantage of affinity based law school orgs and pay attention if schools have them (e.g.: Black Law Students Association, QLaw, Women's Law Student Association)

Keep an eye out for networking opportunities—they're a huge part of the legal field.

- Many firms have networking opportunities during the year

Law school clinics are great experiences to do during 1L Summer (sometimes) or during 2L/3L. Students have their own clients under the supervision of a professor.

- 1L is also a great time to apply for internships with judges, law firms, or other legal sectors! These opportunities are usually available starting in 2L Fall.



# Taking Care of Yourself

Find community and use your support system! Law school is hard and isn't meant to be done alone.

- Friends + study groups
- Non-law community: friends, family, significant others, (pets, too!)

Prioritize taking care of yourself!

- Stay connected to your hobbies/means of decompressing
- Prioritizing mental, physical and emotional health
- Imposter syndrome is real - but you're at the school for a reason.
- Ask for help if you need it or who to ask if you don't know
  - Reality of high rates of depression, anxiety, and substance abuse

Don't feel pressure to conform to what everyone else is doing - you know yourself best!



Question + Answer  
ask away!