The First Year of Law School

The first year of law school is both exciting and frightening. Law school is a unique environment. It is unlike anything most first-year law students have ever experienced. The library staff at Washington & Lee wants you not just to survive but to thrive in this environment. To that end we have produced this brief guide to books in our collection. This guide highlights only a selected few of the resources available in the collection. Annie (our online catalog) will assist you in locating other titles on a variety of topics. In order to provide the reader with publication information, the citations included do not conform to the rules of citation stated in The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (Columbia Law Review Ass’n et al. eds., 18th ed. 2005).

The Law School Experience


Covers everything from surviving in the classroom and outlining, to the emotional aspects of being a law student.


Answers the questions you didn’t know to ask and no one else will tell you to ask.


Discusses everything from surviving the first year to seeking employment; includes suggestions from recent law school graduates


Emphasizes a healthy mental approach, good note taking, study aids and study groups.


This volume provides tips to survive the first year and get ahead.

Dennis J. Tonsing, 1000 Days to the Bar: But the Practice of Law Begins Now (Hein & Co. 2003) [KF272 .T66 2003] open reserve collection
Suggests a good practice centered approach to legal studies, including time management and the effective use of study groups.


*Provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to thriving in law school both in and out of the classroom.*

The Academic Experience


*Demystifies the legal essay exam and the legal writing and analysis process*


*Walks students through the process of legal analysis in a concise and understandable way*


*Tips on legal analysis, study skills, the litigation process and beyond the first year chapter titles include “The Second Case in the World” and “Zen and the Art of Exams”.*


*Covers case reading and legal writing specifically for first year law students.*


*Introduces the premise of basic legal questions and the dynamics of legal argument*


*Tips on the approach to legal reading and basic briefing*

*Discusses topics such as taking good notes, study habits, exam performance and preparation.*


*Introduces law students to the self-regulated learning cycle and applies it to the study of law.*


*Teaches eight basic exam techniques and includes sample exam questions.*


*A part of the LexisNexis Understanding series, this title covers many first year subjects.*