

LAW JOURNAL MANAGEMENT (JLEP)

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

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INTRODUCTION

Scholarly publication in the legal profession is unique. With few exceptions law student editors – not professors, scholars, or other paid professionals – select and edit the articles that appear on the influential pages of law journals. Student editors gain invaluable editing and management skills over the course of their tenure. However, all too often, their institutional knowledge is lost when they graduate. Law Journal Management is designed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge between outgoing and incoming editors and to improve the management of GMUSL journals as a whole.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will accomplish the following.

- Begin to **build a team relationship** with fellow editors.
- Consider the **role of student-run law journals** in legal scholarship.
- Hear **outgoing editors' experiences** in order to inform your decisions.
- **Discuss lessons learned**, hints, tips, and tricks with outgoing editors.
- **Gain an overall view of law journal management** and identify things to think about for each function, including selecting and editing articles, publishing the journal, and selecting journal membership.
- **Obtain specific knowledge** applicable to your editor position.
- Invited to participate in a **dialogue with representatives from other journals**.
- Have **the opportunity to meet colleagues in similar board positions on other journals** with an emphasis on developing professional collegiality and camaraderie.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- [W&L Law Journal Rankings](#)
- Scholastica, [New to Law Review: Everything you want to know but can't find online](#), YouTube (May 28, 2020), <https://blog.scholasticahq.com/post/new-to-law-review-webinar/>.
- The Arbinger Institute, *Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box*. Oakland: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2018.
- Covey, Stephen M.R. *The Speed of Trust*. New York: Free Press, 2006.
- Dweck, Carol. *Mindset*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC, 2016.
- Goldsmith, Marshall. *What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (2007).
- Kouzes, James M., and Posner, Barry Z. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017.
- Lencioni, Patrick. *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (2002).
- Haskell Murray, [Advice for Law Review Editors](#), Above the Law, April 25, 2015.
- Alfred L. Brophy, The Emerging Importance of Law Review Rankings for Law School Rankings, 2003-2007, 78 U. COLO. L. REV. 35 (2007).
- Christian C. Day, The Case for Professionally-Edited Law Reviews, 33. OHIO. N. U. L. REV. 563 (2007)
- [Natalie C. Cotton, Comment, The Competence of Students as Editors of Law Reviews: A Response to Judge Posner, 154 U. PA. L. REV. 951 \(2006\)](#)
- [James W. Harper, Why Student-Run Law Reviews?, 82 MINN. L. REV. 1261 \(1998\)](#)
- James Lindgren, Reforming American Law Reviews, 47 STAN. L. REV. 1123 (1995)

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS

Law Journal Management will be graded on a pass-fail basis. Those passing the course will receive one academic credit. To receive a passing grade, you must:

- Attend class meetings (attendance will be recorded) as required by Academic Regulation 4-1.
- Participate in class discussion.
- Attend individual meetings as described by this syllabus. (Reminder: Academic Regulation 4-1 requires each student to be responsible for maintaining a record of his or her attendance in each class, which includes a record of the individual meetings.)
- Meet deadlines and other editorial requirements set forth by the journal.

SCHEDULE

By Sunday, January 22, please respond to this [class survey](https://questionpro.com/t/AT152Zvj1A) (<https://questionpro.com/t/AT152Zvj1A>)

Session 1: **Now – by Saturday, February 25 – Individual Mtg One – “Overview” (1 class hr)**
Incoming editors reach out to the applicable outgoing editor to schedule and hold a meeting during this time. The purpose of this initial meeting is to review editorial responsibilities, receive relevant documents, and begin to discuss the position and lessons learned from an overview perspective. (You will meet again in March to review all remaining details). (I ask outgoing editors to please send me a message after you’ve met.)

Session 2: **Date: Sunday, February 26**
Time: 1-4 pm (with break) (3 class hrs)
Room: TBD

Please note that the day and order of some topics may switch, but the following is our initial plan.

Introduction and Overview (50 min)

- Ice Breaker
- Introductions of adjunct and new editors
- Outline and purpose of the course
- Incoming editors’ expectations
- The role of a student-run law journal and the editorial board
- The planned transition between editorial boards
- Journal Constitution
- Production lifecycle of an article and journal

Obtaining New Candidate Members (30 min)

- Write-on Process Considerations
- Lessons learned
- Biggest Surprises

Articles Selection and Process (25 min)

- Article Solicitation
- Article Selection
- Exclusive Submissions Agreements
- The Peer Review Process
- Editing and the Role of the Articles Committee
- Ideas for expanding published materials
- Challenges and Lessons Learned

Biggest Surprises

Notes - Student Casenote/Comment Selection (30 min)

Timeline and Scholarly Writing
Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations of the Notes Editor
Editing and providing meaningful feedback
Topic selection and summer assignments
Comment selection
Biggest Surprises

Symposium and Lecture Events (25 min)

Selecting a topic and location
Finding speakers and commentators
Logistics (food, audio/visual, materials)
Ideas for improvements
Biggest Surprises

Take-aways (10 min)

By Friday, March 3, please complete the online "Strengths Finder" instrument & email Stephanie your five "themes."

Session 3: **Date: Saturday, March 4**
Time: 1-4 pm (with break)
Room: TBD

Please note that the day and order of some topics may switch, but the following is our initial plan.

Check-in/Review (10 min)

Editing Articles (25 min)

Editing professional pieces
Coordinating the editing process
Relationships with Authors
Roles of/interaction with EE or EIC
Usage and consistency issues – JLEP specific rules
Editing student pieces
Biggest Surprises

Research and Spading (30 min)

Spading and the Role of the Research and Articles Committees
Source gathering
Summer spading
Training candidate members
Checklists
Style Guide and the Bluebook
JLEP-specific rules
Delegating assignments

Outreach and Planning (25 min)

- Faculty Advisors
- Campus presence
- Outreach to Alumni, and external organizations
- Administrative matters
- Journal Website
- Constitutions, handbooks, and other institutional materials
- Communication with journal members
- Maintaining relationships with other journals
- Short and long-term planning
- Biggest Surprises

Budget and Subscriptions (25 min)

- Budget cycle
- Sources of Funds
- Formulating & Presenting Budget Requests to the SBA
- Treasurer responsibilities
- Subscription fulfillment and expanding subscription base
- Customer relations
- Biggest Surprises

Publication (30 min)

- Publication Schedule
- Working with the publisher
- Final Edits and the Macro
- Biggest Surprise

Managing Up/Down/Sideways and Being a Team (35 min)

- Effective Goal Setting and Planning for this year, next year, and in 10 years
- Distinctions between Managing and Leading
- Building a cohesive team
- Communication and Working Style Preferences
- Lead where appropriate, follow where appropriate
- Delegating
- Communicating
- Concerns/Challenges/Expectations
- Scheduling Editorial Board Meetings and General Membership Meetings

Take-aways (10 min)

Session 4:

Date: Sunday, March 5

Time: 1-at least 5 pm (with breaks) (4 class hrs) (As part of this class, incoming editors will have time to meet by themselves to advance their planning. To take advantage of being together, incoming editors are invited/encouraged to meet further afterwards.)

Room: TBD

Please note that the day and order of some topics may switch, but the following is our initial plan.

Check-in/Review (10 min)

Overall Journal Management and Production (30 min)

- Editor-in-Chief and Executive Editor Responsibilities
- Working as a Team
- Big Picture for All Team Members
- Current Status of Issues
- Lingering Questions

Overview of Production Process (25 min)

- Big Picture Review of Production Process and Flow

Team Effectiveness and Working Together; Management Challenges and Communications; Strategy and Goal Setting (90 min)

- Building Trust
- Mastering Conflict
- Achieving Commitment
- Embracing Accountability
- Focusing on Results
- StrengthsFinder Themes
- Team Building
- Discussion of Membership Selection Procedure, Membership Policies, and Disciplinary Procedures
- Improving Member/Editor Performance
- Maximizing Effective Communication
- Letter to Future

Journal Business (Incoming Editors) (at least 60 min)

- Putting Individual Strengths to Work
- Brainstorming and Planning
- Goal Setting for Year
- Decision Points (e.g. article selection committee members? info session plan?)

Session 4: Monday, March 6 – Thursday, March 16 – Individual Mtg Two – “Details” (1.5 class hours)

Incoming editors should schedule and hold at least one additional meeting with outgoing editor(s). Topics may include the following details in depth. (Responsibilities for each position, though, may slightly change from year to year.) (I ask outgoing editors to please send me a message after you've met.)

EIC: The publication timetable from article selection to distribution and the role of each Editor during the process, journal policies, participation and discipline, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

EE: The publication timetable, journal policies, the role of each Editor during the process, editing responsibilities and schedule, communication tips with authors, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Managing: Balancing the budget, making SBA requests, obtaining reimbursements, maintaining and expanding to the subscriber list, collecting and depositing payments, faculty advisors, Board of Advisors, campus presence, alumni outreach, external organization collaborations, maintaining relationships with other journals, budget, website, outreach, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Submissions: Proactive strategies for finding articles, working with the Selection Committee in selecting articles, circulating articles for consideration, setting and achieving benchmarks, maintaining relationships with other journals, outreach, being an editorial team member, stepping in where/when needed, and lessons learned.

Publications: Maintaining relationships with other journals, meeting the publication timeline, working with the publisher, making the final edits, being an editorial team member, stepping in where/when needed, and lessons learned.

Symposium: discuss specifics about the next Symposium or Speaker Event topic/topics, stages in planning and execution of the events, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Articles and Research: Meeting deadlines, setting and achieving benchmarks, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned. Source gathering, the spading process and timeline, managing time, setting and achieving benchmarks, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Notes: Working with the candidate members to produce quality articles, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Session 5: **Date: Tentatively, Friday, March 31– All Journal Joint Session
Time: TIME TBD (Usually 1.5-2 hours)**

This session will bring the incoming editors from all of the journals together along with some of outgoing editors. The purpose is to meet those who have similar editor functions, discuss and share ideas and information with each other in small group roundtables, and set the stage for developing professional camaraderie.

Remember to please submit course feedback via the electronic link you will receive. We use your feedback to help shape future classes.