

LAW JOURNAL MANAGEMENT (JLEP)

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

SPRING 2025

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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 team relationships** with fellow editors and within smaller editorial working group(s).
- Consider the **role of student-run law journals** in legal scholarship.
- Hear **outgoing editors' experiences** in order to inform (but not dictate) 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.
- Have **the opportunity to meet colleagues in similar board positions on other journals** with an emphasis on developing professional collegiality and camaraderie.
- Have an opportunity to **dialogues with representatives from other journals**.

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.
- Kouzes, James M., and Posner, Barry Z. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017.
- Dweck, Carol. *Mindset*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC, 2016.
- 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)
- Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (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)
- Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (2002).
- Covey, Stephen M.R. *The Speed of Trust*. New York: Free Press, 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 Monday, March 3, please respond to this class survey: <https://questionpro.com/t/AT152Z5CWu>

Session 1: **Now – Thursday, March 20 – Transition Meeting One – “Overview” (1 class hour)**
Incoming editors reach out to the corresponding, applicable outgoing editor to coordinate 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 early April to review all remaining details. I ask outgoing editors to please email me after you’ve met.)

Session 2: **Date: Sunday, March 23 (in-person)**
Time: 12-7 pm (6.25 class hours)

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

Introduction and Overview (45 min) (Hemmert, Offutt)

Ice Breaker
Introductions of adjunct and new editors
Outline and purpose of the course
Incoming editors’ expectations and questions
History of JLEP
The role of a student-run law journal and the editorial board
The planned transition between editorial boards
Journal Constitution
Current status of issues

Obtaining New Candidate Members (30 min) (Offutt)

Write-on Process Considerations
Lessons Learned
Biggest Surprises

(Quick Break)

10,000 Feet Overview on Key Editorial Board Functions

Notes - Student Casenote/Comment Selection (15 min) (Turley)

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

Articles Selection and Process (15 min) (Putka)

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

Editing Articles, Research, and Spading (30 min) (Fullerton-Meaney)

Editing professional pieces
Coordinating the editing process
Roles of/interaction with EE or EIC
Usage and consistency issues – JLEP specific rules
Style Guide and the Bluebook
Delegating assignments
Editing student pieces
Spading and the Role of the Research and Articles Committees
Source gathering
Summer spading
Training candidate members
Checklists
Relationships with Authors
Biggest Surprises

(Quick Break)

Symposium and Lecture Events (15 min) (Stovroff, Mackoul)

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

Publication (15 min) (Villacci)

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

Budget Head's Up (5 min) (Offutt, Gordon)

What individual editors need to know

Overview of Production Process (10 min) (Griffin)

Big Picture of Production Process and Flow

Production lifecycle of an article and journal (yarn) (20 min) (Offutt, Hemmert)

(Quick Break)

Small, Working Group Brainstorming Discussions (120 min)

- EIC/EE/ME
- Notes
- Articles and Research
- Submission, Publication, Productions, Research and Editing

(Quick Break)

Managing Up/Down/Sideways, Being a Team (45 min) (Hemmert)

- 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
- Receive StrengthsFinder 2.0 Book

Take-aways (15 min) (Incoming Editors)

Please complete the online "Strengths Finder" instrument & email Stephanie your five "themes" no later than Tuesday, March 25.

Session 3:

Date: Sunday, March 30 (in-person)

Time: 12-7 pm (6.25 class hours) (As part of this class, incoming editors will have time to meet by themselves to further advance their planning. To take advantage of being together, incoming editors are welcome to meet past the time scheduled.)

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

Incoming Editors Group Photo (15 min) (Hemmert)

Check-in (15 min) (Hemmert)

Outreach and Planning (30 min) (Offutt)

- 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

(Quick Break)

Overall Journal Management and Production (30 min) (Offutt)

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

Management Issues and Challenges and Communications (45 min) (Hemmert, Offutt)

- Membership Selection Procedure and Membership Policies
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Motivating Member/Editor Performance
- Maximizing Effective Communication

(Quick Break)

Team Effectiveness (45 min) (Hemmert, Incoming Editors)

Building Trust
Mastering Conflict
Achieving Commitment
Embracing Accountability
Focusing on Results
StrengthsFinder Themes
Team Building

Take-aways (15 min) (Incoming Editors)

Review Game (30 min) (Incoming Editors)

Strategy, Goal Setting, & Working Together (45 min) (Hemmert, Incoming Editors)

Communication
Personal Commitments
Letter to Future
Team Gratitude

(Quick Break)

Journal Business (120 min) (Incoming Editors)

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 24 – Thursday, April 3 – Transition Meeting Two – “Details” (1.5 class hr)

Incoming editors coordinate at least one additional meeting with applicable outgoing editor(s). Topics may include the following details in depth. (Responsibilities for each position may slightly change from year to year. I ask outgoing editors to please email me 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.

Productions: Peer review process, outreach, relationships with authors, being an editorial team member, stepping in where/when needed, 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, 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: Constitutional requirement, specifics about the next Symposium or Speaker Event topic/topics, coordination with other journals, stages in planning and execution of the events, peer review process for symposium issue, 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 candidate members to produce quality articles, leadership and mentoring, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Session 5:

Date: Friday, April 4 – All Journal Joint Session

Time: (TENTATIVE) 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Tentatively, 2 class 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.