



A New Outlook for Second Semester

Now that you've received your grades from your first semester exams, you may be left with a lot of mixed feelings. Whether you are relieved, overjoyed, devastated or just confused, now is the perfect time to reflect on how you arrived here and where you want to go next.



Review your exams. Professors have different systems for providing feedback on exams, so check with each professor. Some will meet with the student; some do not meet but prepare a memo or model answer that they give to students; some have other ways they provide feedback. Please do not be embarrassed to reach out to your professors about how you did on the exams. Professors realize that law school exams are different from what most students have encountered, and it can take some time to figure out how to do well on law school exams. If you can review your exam with your professor, ask yourself (and the professor) what your central challenges were? Did you fail to identify issues? Did you identify issues but fail to list the relevant rule of law? Did you identify the issues, list the relevant rule of law, but fail to apply it to the facts of the question? Did you do all of that, but go off-topic? Making an honest evaluation of where you fell short will help you to tailor your second semester study plan (and exam answers) to address those issues. Remember to also ask what you did that worked well!


Make The Law School Study Progression Work For You!

Brief properly → Take good class notes → Review and synthesize daily/weekly, and take note when concepts coalesce → Outline to tie everything together → Think about hypotheticals to solidify the relationships and parts → Create a brief check-list for exam-taking → Practice with hypotheticals and practice exams!



Make a new plan for second semester. This may look completely different for each one of you. If you were successful in first semester, your "new" plan might be to keep doing what worked! If you felt like you were unprepared for exams, work backwards to identify where more time and effort is needed. If you worked constantly but didn't see your desired results, consider how you can retool your studying to suit your learning style. If you would like some ideas about identifying your own learning style and applying appropriate study techniques, check out: <http://homeworktips.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/a/1styleqz.htm>. The key may be figuring out how YOU will best learn in the context of the law school study progression – more group time, more hand-written notes and outline, more charts and diagrams – or perhaps less of some of these things.

A New Outlook (cont'd)

 **Review your attitudes.** Don't presume that your grades have accurately predicted your ability- in law school, in the legal profession or in life generally. Exams are so challenging because they only capture a moment in time – and cannot possibly reflect all of the things you bring to the table as a future lawyer. If you are feeling discouraged, take some time to gather your sources of support – the BU Law support network, friends, family, a catalog of prior successes, etc. If you find that spending all of your time with law students is

*Use the BU Law support network, including your:
student advisor • writing fellow •
faculty contact • Student Affairs
• Career Services • Pappas Law
Library • BU Health Services*

adding to your stress, find a way to add some balance to your life by doing something you love or taking breaks away from the Tower. If you find you are feeling depressed (which is very common as we head into the dark, cold winter months), or are having trouble eating, sleeping and managing daily life, please contact Behavioral Medicine at (617) 353-3569 or www.bu.edu/shs. If you don't take good care of yourself, you won't be able to take care of your education.