
CHOOSING TO DO A TUTORIAL IN LAW AND LEGAL STUDIES

What is a Tutorial in Law and Legal Studies?

The Tutorial in Law permits a student to undertake study in an area of law in which there are no course offerings or no courses at an advanced level available from the Department of Law and Legal Studies. The Tutorial is a **half-credit course (0.5 credit)** which is supervised by a faculty member. As a form of independent study, students have the opportunity to develop a course aligned with their own interests and to explore alternative research or presentation methods if they choose. Students are responsible to find a faculty member to supervise them in the Tutorial and it is recommended they begin their search well before the start of the term in which they want to take the Tutorial.

A Tutorial in Law and Legal Studies offers a great learning experience if the student is a good fit for it, capable of consistently meeting the requirements of independent research and coursework deadlines without the structure of a formal course, and is able to find an appropriate faculty supervisor with whom they can work well.

What does a Tutorial in Law involve?

- Preliminary course proposal - including a concise statement of the topic area and potential themes; justification for the Tutorial; a preliminary reading list (details below)
- This course proposal must be accepted by a faculty member in the Department of Law and Legal Studies who agrees to supervise the Tutorial
- Students are expected to spend 7-10 hours per week on this course and should meet regularly with their Supervisor during the semester
- The end product of the Tutorial is expected to include approximately 5,000-7,500 words (25-30 pages) of written content plus references and bibliography. The content may take the form of any of the following or a combination of the following as agreed with the Supervisor:
 - research paper
 - discussion papers
 - synthesis paper
 - critical annotated bibliography
 - multi-media project
 - reflective journal writing on assigned material

Is the Tutorial option appropriate for me?

If you have the following skills and attributes, a Tutorial could be a good match for you:

- An area of special interest that you are highly motivated to study or study further
- Ability to work well independently and to self-direct
- Good organizational skills
- Confidence and ability to communicate effectively with your professors
- Strong writing skills

What are the prerequisites for LAWS 4901 / 4902?

Students must be in good academic standing with fourth year standing (14.0+ credits completed) of the Law Honours program. Students must meet the prerequisites for the Tutorial as noted on Carleton Central (including LAWS 3908), plus:

- Written acceptance by a faculty member to supervise the tutorial; and
- Permission of the Department, provided by the Undergraduate Administrator

When and how should students search for a faculty supervisor?

The earlier, the better! Students should approach potential faculty supervisors towards the end of their third year, and no later than a few weeks prior to the start of the term in which they intend to undertake LAWS 4901 or LAWS 4902. Students can research available faculty expertise to find someone who is a match in the area of interest and who is able to take on the supervision by consulting the Department's listing of Faculty Supervision Areas found on the website at:

<https://carleton.ca/law/faculty-supervision-areas/>. This document is updated each academic year to provide a summary of the research areas of available faculty members.

Faculty members accept only a limited number of students to supervise. If students wait until the start of term to find a supervisor, they will have a greatly diminished likelihood of finding one.

Students should identify a list of 3 to 5 faculty members whose research areas align with the proposed research topic and then contact them (via email or in person) to inquire about their availability and set up a meeting to discuss the preliminary course proposal.

If students encounter difficulties in securing a supervisor, whom should they contact?

Students may consult the **Undergraduate Supervisor** (details below) for guidance on supervisor selection, preparing a preliminary course proposal, and any difficulties that may arise during the process. However, it is up to the student to find an appropriate faculty supervisor. As this is an optional course, there is no guarantee that a supervisor will be available.

Note: Only professors in the Department of Law and Legal Studies may supervise a Tutorial. Contract or sessional instructors are not eligible to be supervisors.

THE PRELIMINARY COURSE PROPOSAL

Before the student approaches potential supervisors, they should prepare a 1 to 2 page preliminary course proposal. This proposal should include:

- a concise statement of the topic area and potential themes they want to address in their research;
- a proposed conceptual focus for the work which may be in the form of a research question(s) or overview of issues to be studied within the topic area;
- justification for the Tutorial -- the rationale for the course in the context of existing course offerings;
- the proposed format for the course;
- a preliminary reading list containing several proposed readings for the Tutorial

The purpose of this proposal is not to present a finalized definition of the topic or a full outline of the project, but rather, to provide potential supervisors with evidence of the student's preliminary thinking

on the proposed topic and their suitability to undertake the Tutorial. It will also enable the faculty member to assess their suitability as a Supervisor. As a general rule, the better the student is in providing a faculty member with a clear, concise and tangible idea for their project, the easier it will be for the supervisor to respond with helpful comments and advice and make the decision whether or not to supervise. Once accepted, the proposal will provide the basis for further discussion and refinement of the Tutorial course.

REGISTRATION

What is the registration process?

Once a faculty supervisor has been secured, the student needs to complete the **Tutorial in Law Application Form**, which can be found on our website: <https://carleton.ca/law/tutorial-in-law-honours-research-essay/#tutorialinlaw>. This form must be submitted to the Department of Law and Legal Studies (C473 Loeb Building or Law@carleton.ca) for approval prior to the last day of registration for the term.

The student must then complete a **Registration Override Request** on Carleton Central for LAWS 4901 (or LAWS 4902). The approval permitting course registration will be sent to the student's Carleton University Email Account. The student must then register for the course using Carleton Central.

Can students enroll in LAWS 4901 and LAWS 4902 consecutively?

Students can enroll in both LAWS 4901 and LAWS 4902 in consecutive order -- i.e. one in the Fall term, one in the Winter term. The courses however are self-contained units. Each course requires approval as set out above and a separate preliminary course proposal.

THE COURSEWORK

How and when should students plan their Tutorial in Law?

At the start of the course, students work with their supervisor to finalize a relevant reading list, the evaluation breakdown, and due dates. Any questions regarding style and format should be directed to the supervisor. Good communication is key to a satisfactory supervisory relationship. Students should communicate regularly with the supervisor with a brief update on their progress.

What can students expect from their faculty supervisors?

The expectations for the tutorial need to be discussed and decided between the student and the supervisor early in the semester. Students should keep in mind that the Tutorial in Law is an exercise in *independent work*. It is not the faculty supervisor's task to police the student's work habits or cajole them into making deadlines or attending meetings.

Faculty supervisors will offer feedback and guidance, and make suggestions about additional materials that may be relevant to the topic. When draft work is almost ready to be submitted for review, students should provide advance notice to their supervisor who can then allocate time to review the submission. Students may then reasonably expect the supervisor to provide comments within two weeks. Without such notice it may take longer for the supervisor to provide input because of the many other demands on their time.

Students may also wish to consult the supervisor about publication, networking, and conference opportunities that relate to the work. The supervisor may make a great academic reference.

Is there a dedicated space in which students participating in a Tutorial can convene to discuss their work and share ideas?

While there is no dedicated undergraduate student lounge, the **Chet Mitchell Resource Centre** (D580 Loeb Building) is available for students and faculty members (commonly referred to as the 'Reading Room').

Note: the Reading Room has specific hours of operation and use of the room requires the student to complete a sign-in form (please visit us at C473 Loeb).

COMPLETING THE COURSE

How is the grade for the Tutorial determined?

The faculty supervisor assigns the final grade. Typically, the methods of evaluation are agreed at the outset between the supervisor and the student. The overall quality of the materials produced will be considered in addition to the grading rationale that is decided upon early in the term.

What if I am unable to complete the course?

Students may withdraw from LAWS 4901/4902 up to the last date for withdrawal from half credit courses in the session in which they are registered.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE:

Reach out to the Undergraduate Administrator or Undergraduate Supervisor. Contact info can be found at <https://carleton.ca/law/faculty-staff/> or you may contact Law@carleton.ca.