

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 2908B – Methodological Approaches in Legal Studies I
TERM:	Fall 2026
PREREQUISITES:	LAWS 1001 & 1002.
CLASS:	Day & Time: Wednesday, 6:05 – 8:55pm
	Room: Zoom, Synchronous. The class link is on Brightspace.
INSTRUCTOR:	Sylva Sheridan, PhD (ABD), MA, BA (Hon,) <i>Gladue</i> Writer
CONTACT:	Office Hours / Location: Office Hours will be held via Zoom on Wednesday from 4:30pm – 5:30pm. There are three TAs for this course: 1. Kyle Cayouette: kylecayouette@cmail.carleton.ca 2. Carmen Rykaart: carmenrykaart@cmail.carleton.ca 3. Adi Joshi: ADIJOSHI@cmail.carleton.ca
	Telephone: NA
	Email: sylvasheridan@cunet.carleton.ca . My email policy is as follows: I will endeavor to return your email with 48 hours.
BRIGHTSPACE:	https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/450759

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AFFIRMATION

ANISHNAABE:

Ni manàdjiyànàinig Màmìwininì Anishinàbeg, ogog kà nàgadawàbandadjig iyo akì eko weshkad. Ako nongom ega wikàd kì mìgiwewàdj. Ni manàdjiyànàinig kakina Anishinàbeg ondaje kaye ogog kakina eniyagizidjig enigokamigàg Kanadàng eji ondàpinangig endàwàdjìn Odàwàng. Ninisidawinawànàinig kenawendamòdjig kije kikenindamàwin; weshkinigidjig kaye kejeyàdizidjig. Nigijeweninmànàinig ogog kà nìgànì sòngideyedjig; weshkad, nongom; kaye àyànikàdj.

ENGLISH

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded. We pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home. We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old. And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, and future.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the legal research process and analysis of legal methodology; finding and analyzing primary and secondary legal sources. Students are strongly encouraged to take this course in the second year of their program. Includes: Experiential Learning Activity. The Law Program at the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University is firmly grounded in a “legal studies” approach which situates law in its social, economic, political and historical contexts. As such, courses focus not just on ‘what the law is’ in a particular area but also on a range of academic and practical considerations. How does the law ‘as it is’ reflect particular (normative) visions of society and distributions of power within it? How and why does law change? How is the law ‘on the books’ operationalized (e.g., by the police or business-people) and experienced by ordinary people in everyday life? How do the narratives of law (e.g., judicial decisions) communicate cultural meanings in our society? How do law and legal processes interact with other institutions in our society? Who creates law – and is all ‘law’ (in the sense of regulation of conduct) formally prescribed law? Engaging with questions such as these requires that students are able to deploy a range of effective research skills and strategies.

The Department offers two research courses to assist students to master their law discipline. This course, LAWS 2908, introduces students to legal materials in legal studies research. By this we mean judicial decisions (cases), legislative instruments (statutes and regulations), government documents (including Parliamentary materials and policy), and secondary sources published in academic journals. It also addresses ‘legal method’ in comprehending and working with these materials. This course is compulsory for all students majoring in a Law or Law Honours programs. A second course, LAWS 3908, introduces students to a variety of interdisciplinary approaches, including the use of social science research sources and methods in legal studies and more advanced consideration of theory in legal research. It is estimated that students will spend approximately 10 hours of weekly preparation for this course, which may include their assessments.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Following the course, students will be confident in the following areas:

1. Find primary legal materials, government documents and secondary academic literature
2. Recognize the quality of legal materials and locate the most authoritative sources of law
3. Develop a fluency in the language of legal authority and policy documents
4. Accurately formulate legal citation using the McGill Legal Style Guide

REQUIRED TEXTS

You do not need to purchase any texts for this course. Though **not required**, I highly recommend that students purchase the 10th Edition of *The McGill Guide*. We will only be using the 10th Edition. This text outlines the fundamental principles of legal citation. It is an essential reference text for anyone conducting research concerning legal issues. You will use it as a guide for other courses in the Department of Law and Legal Studies. It is available for purchase for approximately \$115.00 through the bookstore and online.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

These readings are posted on Brightspace under their respective modules:

- Sherah L. Basham et al, “How to Write an Annotated Bibliography” (2023) 34:2 J Crim Justice Education 289. [pages 289-297; 9 pages total].
- Les Whitbeck et al, “Conceptualizing and Measuring historical trauma among American Indian People” (2004) 33:3-4 Am J Community Psychology 119. [pages 119-130; 11 pages total].
- IFSD “Considerations for the sustainability of Jordan’s Principle” (2025). Please review the document from ‘Executive Summary’ to ‘Conclusion’ [pages 1-45].
- IFSD “Considerations for the sustainability of Jordan’s Principle” (2025). Please review the document from ‘Appendix A – F [20 pages total].
- Richard Devlin, “Mapping Legal Theory” (1994) 32:3 Alta LR 602. [pages 602-622; 20 pages total].
- Vincent Kazmierski & Darren Pacione, “From Law to Legal Studies and Beyond: 50 Years of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University” (2019) 41 Dal LJ 379. (pages 379-409; 40 pages total].
- Bishu Bahandur Khatri & Parbata Devi Karki, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education” (2023) 20:1 Nepalese J Development & Rural Studies 1. [pages 1-7; 7 pages total]
- Collaborative Indigenous Learning Bundle, *Ethics of Research with Indigenous Peoples*
- *R v Gladue*, [1999] 1 SCR 688.
- UBC Faculty of Law – “Introduction to Reading and Briefing a Case” [pdf file – please read entire document]
- ALPN: Please review each of the following pdf files: (1) Ratio Decidendi and Obiter Dicta; (2); Law Reports; (3) Updating Cases
- Debra Parkes, “Precedent Unbound?” (2007) 32:1 Man LJ 135. (pages 135-162; 27 pages long)
- *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* SC 2019, c. 24.

EVALUATION

Element	Value	Due Date	Description
Tutorial Worksheets	20%	Ongoing Due dates	There will be weekly tutorial worksheets for you to complete. Each worksheet is worth 2 marks, for a total of 20% of your grade. There are certain specific due dates – late tutorial assignments will not be accepted.
Case Analysis	40%	October 14, 2026, at 11:59pm	This assignment asks you to write two case analyses on assigned cases. Please pay attention to the specific questions posed as well as the mark allotment as this is indicative on how much information should include.
Secondary Analysis	40%	December 3, 2026, at 11:59pm	This assignment asks you to write two critical response papers on assigned articles. Please pay attention to the specific questions posed as well as the mark allotment as this is indicative on how much information should include.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

GRADING SCALE

I encourage you to review Carleton's grading scale:
<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradregulations/#grading>.

POLICY ON LATE PENALTIES AND REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS

Students may submit a paper late subject to a grade penalty of two marks per day. This begins immediately following the deadline. For example, if a paper is due at 11:59pm on October 1, and it is submitted at 12:01am on October 2, it is considered late. The granting of extensions is at the discretion of the instructor, who will confirm whether an extension is approved and its duration. For information about requesting short-term or long-term extensions, deferrals for final exams, or academic consideration due to illness, injury, or other extraordinary circumstances, please visit the Academic Consideration Policy page. All requests must be submitted to the instructor before the assignment due date or, in the case of exam deferrals, directly to the Registrar's Office. Full details and instructions can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-consideration-policy/>.

POLICY ON STUDENT CONDUCT

I encourage you to review the statement on student rights and responsibilities:
<https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-rights-and-responsibilities/>.

POLICY ON GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The use of Generate AI (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Co-pilot, etc.) is not permitted and will be treated as an academic integrity violation if discovered. As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course. Students can also access resources related to citing Generative AI on the [MacOdrum Library website](#).

POLICY ON CLASSROOM RECORDING

Unauthorized student recording of classroom or other academic activities (including advising sessions or office hours) is prohibited. Unauthorized recording is unethical and may also be a violation of University policy. Students requesting the use of assistive technology as an accommodation should contact the [Paul Menton Centre](#). Unauthorized use of classroom recordings – including distributing or posting them – is also prohibited. Under the University's [Copyright Policy](#), faculty own the copyright to instructional materials – including those resources created specifically for the purposes of instruction, such as lectures slides, lecture notes, and presentations.

Students cannot copy, reproduce, display, or distribute these materials or otherwise circulate these materials without the instructor's written permission. Students who engage in unauthorized recording, unauthorized use of a recording, or unauthorized distribution of instructional materials will be referred to the appropriate University office for follow-up.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 | September 9 | Course Overview and General Rules

Module Outcome	Understand the general rules of citations
Required Readings	E-1

Week 2 | September 16 | Legislation

Module Outcome	Understand how a bill becomes a law.
Required Readings	- E-2 <i>An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families</i> SC 2019, c. 24.
Tutorial Assignment	Response to the series of questions using LEGISInfo.

Week 3 | September 23 | Jurisprudence

Module Outcome	Citing Administrative Bodies & Supreme Court, Appellate and Lower Court Decisions
Required Readings	- E-3 - UBC Faculty of Law – “Introduction to Reading and Briefing a Case” [pdf file – please read entire document] - ALPN: Please review each of the following pdf files: (1) Ratio Decidendi and Obiter Dicta; (2); Law Reports; (3) Updating Cases - Debra Parkes, “Precedent Unbound?” (2007) 32:1 Man LJ 135. (pages 135-162; 27 pages long)
Recommended Readings:	<i>R v Gladue</i>, [1999] 1 SCR 688.
Tutorial Assignment	Complete the practice case brief.

Week 4 | September 30 | Research Presentation – Aleksandra Blake | Law and Legal Studies Librarian

- There will not be any readings this week.

Week 5 | October 7 | Government Documents & Grey Literature

Module Outcome	• Locating grey literature and its application. Distinguishing between government and non-government documents.
Required Readings	• E-4 • IFSD “Considerations for the sustainability of Jordan’s Principle” (2025). Please review the document from ‘Executive Summary’ to ‘Conclusion’ [pages 1-45].
Tutorial Assignment	• Complete an assignment based on a piece of grey literature.

Week 6 | October 14 | Ethics + AI In Research

Module Outcome	• Understand ethical considerations in research
Required Readings	• Review the Collaborative Indigenous Learning Bundle • Bishu Bahandur Khatri & Parbata Devi Karki, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education” (2023) 20:1 Nepalese J Development & Rural Studies 1. [pages 1-7; 7 pages total]
Tutorial Assignment	• Complete the knowledge checks of the bundle and submit a response based on a prompt on ‘informed consent’

Week 7 | October 21 | Secondary Sources

Module Outcome	• Integrating secondary sources into academic writing
Required Readings	• E-6 • Vincent Kazmierski & Darren Pacione, “From Law to Legal Studies and Beyond: 50 Years of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University” (2019) 41 Dal LJ 379. (pages 379-409; 40 pages total].
Tutorial Assignment	• Complete the practice assignment.

Week 8 | November 4 | Theory

Module Outcome	Integrating theory in academic writing.
Required Readings	Richard Devlin, "Mapping Legal Theory" (1994) 32:3 Alta LR 602. [pages 602-622; 20 pages total].
Tutorial Assignment	Respond to a question on the use of theory in academic writing.

Week 9 | November 11 | Guest Speaker: Dr. Helaina Gaspard, Managing Director of the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy

Required Readings	IFSD "Considerations for the sustainability of Jordan's Principle" (2025). Please review the document from 'Appendix A – F [20 pages total].
Tutorial Assignment	Creating a response note to a guest speaker presentation

Week 10 | November 18 | Methodology and Research Proposals

Module Outcome	How to explain and apply method and methodology (qualitative and quantitative)
Required Readings	Les Whitbeck et al, "Conceptualizing and Measuring historical trauma among American Indian People" (2004) 33:3-4 Am J Community Psychology 119. [pages 119-130; 11 pages total].
Tutorial Assignment	Explain various sections of a research proposal which includes designing a research question

Week 11 | November 25 | Annotated Bibliographies & Literature Review

Module Outcome	Understanding the difference between an annotated bibliography and a literature review.
Required Readings	Sherah L. Basham et al, "How to Write an Annotated Bibliography" (2023) 34:2 J Crim Justice Education 289. [pages 289-297; 9 pages total].
Tutorial Assignment	Write an annotated bibliography

Week 12 | December 2 | Extended Office Hours

- There will not a 'live class' this evening. I will hold extended office hours from 6-8pm.

Week 13 | December 9 | Final Course Review

- We will hold our final class, a course review

Fall 2026 Sessional Dates and University Closures	
<i>Please find a full list of important academic dates on the calendar website:</i> https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/	
September 9, 2026	Fall term begins.
September 22, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) for Fall courses.
September 30, 2026	Last day to withdraw from full fall courses and the fall portion of fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment.
October 12, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.
October 26-30, 2026	Fall break. No classes.
November 15, 2026	Last day for academic withdrawal from full and late fall courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for December full fall, late fall, and fall/winter midterm examinations from the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
November 27, 2026	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in full fall term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official December final examination period.
December 11, 2026	Fall term ends.
	Last day of fall classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule.
	Last day for take home examinations to be assigned.

December 9-10, 2026	No classes or examinations take place.
December 12-23, 2026	Final examinations in fall term courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held.
December 23, 2026	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.

STATEMENTS ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit: Students will not be permitted to submit the same piece of academic work (or substantially the same). While inevitably, students will be drawn to studying a certain field of research for their interests, they may not submit an academic piece for another course that was graded. Students **may** write on a similar topic that they previously engaged with. However, the core arguments must be different.

Permissibility of group or collaborative work: There is no group with permitted for this course. All assignments are to be individual.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as ‘*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*’ This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
- sing ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own

- failing to acknowledge sources with proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty follows a rigorous [process for academic integrity allegations](#), including reviewing documents and interviewing the student, when an instructor suspects a violation has been committed. Penalties for violations may include a final grade of "F" for the course.

STATEMENT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

Emergency Resources ([on and off campus](#))

- Crisis/Urgent Counselling Support: 613-520-6674 (Mon-Fri, 8:30-4:30)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 9-8-8, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For immediate danger or urgent medical support: call 9-1-1

Carleton Resources

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: call 613-238-3311, text 343-306-5550, or connect online at <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: call 613-722-6914 or toll-free 1-866-996-0991, or connect online at <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Good2Talk: call 1-866-925-5454 or connect online at <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: for online or on-site service <https://walkincounselling.com>

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the *Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances*, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy and Family-Status Related Accommodations

Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details about the accommodation policy, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities \(EIC\)](#) website.

Religious Obligation

Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please go to: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/discrimination-harassment/religious-spiritual-observances/>.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. You can find the Paul Menton Centre online at: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. Read more here: <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp->

[content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf](#). For more information on academic accommodation, please visit: <https://students.carleton.ca/services/accommodation/>.

Academic Consideration for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances

Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfill the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The University supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically. Medical and/or other extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are beyond a student's control, have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations, and could not have reasonably been prevented.

Students must contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible, and normally no later than 24 hours after the submission deadline for course deliverables. If not satisfied with the instructor's decision, students can conduct an "informal appeal" to the Chair of the department within three (3) working days of an instructor's decision. We have created a webform specifically for appeals to the Chair, which can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/law/application-for-review-of-refusal-to-provide-academic-consideration/>. *Note: This form only applies to LAWS courses and is not the same as a formal appeal of grade.* More information about the academic consideration can be found [here](#).