

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 3903A – Special Topics in Legal Studies (Oral Advocacy)
TERM:	FALL 2026
PREREQUISITES:	Third-year standing
CLASS:	Day & Time: Please check Carleton Central for current Class Schedule. Room: Note this is an “in person” section of the course so you must attend the class to have access to the lecture materials (i.e. the lectures are not recorded or posted online).
INSTRUCTORS:	Stephen Tasson & Vincent Kazmeirski
CONTACT:	Office: Rooms D582 & D588 Loeb Building Office Hrs: By appointment Telephone: None Email: steve.tasson@carleton.ca & vincent.kazmierski@carleton.ca

CALENDAR COURSE DESCRIPTION

The topics of this course may vary from year to year, and are announced in advance of registration.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on developing critical, practical, and effective presentation and oral advocacy strategies and skills for legal studies students. Alongside this focus on skills-building, the course will also briefly explore the historical and contemporary justifications for, and dynamics of, oral advocacy in common law systems. Why does oral argumentation continue to occupy such a central place in legal and political decision-making? Regular and collaborative in-class participation is a core feature of the course design and vital to student success. Evaluations are conducted principally through oral advocacy exercises, including: mootings, debates, committee presentations and more traditional academic presentations.

The legal topics with which we will engage most frequently in this iteration of the course will be the live issue of the regulation of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) in Canada.

KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand the historical development and contemporary justifications for oral advocacy in the Canadian legal system.
- Individually, and with peers, develop confidence, strategies and skills for persuasive public speaking in formal, public settings.
- Develop competency in anticipating and responding to comments and questions in formal, public settings.

- Develop competency in posing constructive comments and questions in formal, public settings.
- Assess strategies for presenting persuasive arguments and for anticipating and preparing for probing questions at moot hearings and professional presentations.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course. All the required course materials (readings, reports, and videos) are **available on the course's Brightspace page**.

EVALUATION

(All components must be completed in order to get a passing grade)

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Department and 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 Department and the Dean.

<i>Component</i>	<i>Course Weight</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Weekly Preparation & Participation	24%	(continuous- see Brightspace)
Academic Presentation & Evaluation	24%	(November 2) (W6)
Moot Presentation & Evaluation	32%	(Saturday November 28)
Debate Exercise & Evaluation	20%	(December 11) (W12)

COMPONENTS

***Weekly Preparation & Participation* (3% per “workshop week” = 24%)**

It is vital that you attend class meetings in order to succeed in this course. Participation in class is a key component of the course and your grade. **You are expected to contribute and come prepared to participate in discussions and planned activities.**

To evaluate your *preparation* for each class meeting a short exercise, quiz or other activity will be made available on Brightspace. These preparation activities are normally submitted directly via Brightspace- though you may also be asked to complete work in class to evidence preparation.

Your *participation* mark is based not only on your basic attendance but your actual participation in the discussions and planned exercises. This doesn't mean that the more you talk the higher your grade on this component. The quality of your participation, active listening, your ability to connect to past interventions by your peers, the readings, etc have a significant impact (a rubric for “general class participation is available on Brightspace).

If you don't think you can regularly attend class or will be uncomfortable actively contributing to large class discussions and small group exercises, then this is not the class for you!

Mooting Presentations and Evaluation (32%)

Building on required readings, video examples, and in-class course work students will participate in a mooting competition exercise. The overall goal/aim is to evidence preparation, awareness and competence. Students will be assigned to different teams and will participate as (1)mooters, (2)judges/questioners and (3)peer evaluators. Marks will be assigned based on performance in each role (eg. Providing specific and thoughtful peer feedback as an evaluator is an important part of your grade on this component). More details, including rubrics, will be provided on the assignment sheet and through Brightspace and we will clarify expectations in class.

Please note: this assessment is scheduled outside of normal class time. Similar to a mid-term exam, this assessment will be scheduled to take place on the weekend.

Academic/Committee Presentation and Evaluation (24%)

Similar to the mooting component, students will participate in a simulated Academic or Parliamentary committee presentation. The overall goal/aim is to evidence preparation, awareness and competence. As with mooting students will be assigned to different panels and will participate as (1)experts, (2)questioners and (3)peer evaluators. Marks will be assigned based on performance in each role. More details, including rubrics, will be provided on the assignment sheet and through Brightspace. Again, we will discuss in more detail in-class.

Debate Presentation and Evaluation (20%)

As with other components the necessary materials will be provided through Brightspace. Similarly students will be assigned roles including (1)presenter, (2)discussant and (3)peer evaluator. This will not involved extensive research as the topic and source materials will be made available to you. Improving your abilities to ask and answer thoughtful questions, as well as to present sometimes complex ideas clearly is the main aims. These are vital skills for your 4000-level seminars and beyond!

Please note: this assessment is effectively a final “practical exam” for the course (see the Undergrad Calendar for information regarding the timing of practical exams: <https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/examinations/>)

SCHEDULE

The complete **Required Reading and Lecture Topics schedule** is available on Brightspace (our online portal). If you have any questions or concerns about these topics or readings, please let me know via email. Please also note these other important term dates:

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.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

The Department of Law and Legal Studies operates in association with certain policies and procedures. Please review these documents to ensure that your practices meet our Department's expectations:

<https://carleton.ca/law/current-students/>

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 (see the Citation Style below).

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)
- using 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 **very serious offence** that cannot be resolved directly by the course 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. Academic Integrity offenses can lead to penalties that are very serious, including a final grade of “F” for the course to academic probation etc. **Recklessly or purposefully engaging in it is incredibly misguided.**

If you are struggling or unsure about how best to use sources in preparing your work in the course, it is far better to contact me and talk to me about resources to help!

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 Instructor and the [Paul Menton Centre](#). Unauthorized use of classroom recordings – including distributing or posting them – is also strictly 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.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

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).

Pregnancy and Family-Status Related Obligation

Please contact 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, [click here](#).

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.

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 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](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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: <https://students.carleton.ca/services/accommodation/>

“Academic Consideration” for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances

Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, you 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 1) beyond a student's

control, 2) have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations, and 3) 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 you believe that my/our decision regarding consideration has been unreasonable, you may appeal this decision to the Chair of Law and Legal Studies within three (3) working days of the decision. The appeal form is located here: <https://carleton.ca/law/application-for-review-of-refusal-to-provide-academic-consideration/>. NOTE: this is NOT a formal appeal of grade. More information about the academic consideration can be found [here](#).

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>

OTHER COURSE SPECIFIC POLICIES

(Please ask if there is any confusion or concern with any course-related policies!)

ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING and SUBMISSION

The course is designed with as much of the “submission” and evaluation processes to be completed orally. In some cases (e.g. peer feedback/evaluation) you will be required to provide written feedback (usually directly through the Brightspace portal). Please be sure to follow the instructions provided

there and if you have questions, please ask! As noted several times, the course design prioritizes peer feedback. This feedback should be both clear (not ambiguous or generic) and constructive (oriented toward helping the recipient in future work).

If additional written work is required in this course, it must be double-spaced, formatted in 12pt Times New Roman or Arial font with standard margins. Assignments normally must include your name and student number and the course code in the document's header. Title pages, bibliographies and extensive footnotes are not usually counted in determining an assignment's word count or page length (when these are stipulated).

I also note that submitting **substantially the same piece of work** more than once for academic credit is prohibited (ie you may NOT normally re-use your own work from a different course/assignment unless you seek and receive written permission in advance).

LATE ASSIGNMENTS & EXTENSIONS POLICY

It is important to stay on top of course work and to communicate with me early if you anticipate issues attending class or being able to participate in class evaluations or exercises. Because the evaluations take place as a whole class, accommodation surrounding evaluations are extremely difficult and therefore there are really **no options for extensions**. Again, if you anticipate issues with non-attendance then this may not be the course for you.

GENERATIVE AI and "CITATION STYLE"

Assignments in the course must be properly referenced and include a bibliography of all sources used in the preparation of the assignment (unless directed otherwise). I understand that, to this point, students have had varying degrees of experience with citation and referencing in their academic work. Regardless, the expectation is that you have a basic ability to reference and cite other's work used in preparing your own assignments.

Specific instructions regarding citation will be provided on assignment sheets/instructions.

As highlighted above, failure to reference properly, using "generative AI" without attribution, or attempting to pass someone else's ideas or work off as your own constitutes plagiarism and may violate the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

*****Documenting "Generative AI" use**

As "AI" tools become more ubiquitous, students may wish to use these tools in the preparation of marked course work. In this course students may use such tools, but only in **specific, limited ways**. Such tools can be used to assist with tasks such as proofreading a final draft for grammar and style. However, students are **not permitted** to use AI to organize or communicate core ideas or personal reflections (obviously). The learning goals and focus of the course are on developing original thought and critical thinking skills, so "AI tools" should not be relied upon for creating the main content of any assignment. Any use of AI must be clearly documented and cited, including the prompts used and how the tool assisted in the process. This **"Statement re AI use" must be added before your bibliography**. (If you don't use these tools to prepare your assignment then you must still declare this). The library has compiled resources related to citing generative AI (see [MacOdrum Library guide](#)).

I reserve the right to request more detailed information re: the process students used to prepare their course work. **This may include answering questions about the work in a one-on-one in-person meeting.**

GRADE APPEALS & ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK REQUESTS

There may be instances where you feel an error has been made in assigning a grade to your submitted work in the course or where the reasons for the assigned grade are unclear or confusing. In such instances you may seek further feedback and/or **informally “appeal” the grade**.

Such requests **must first be directed toward the person who initially graded the work** (in most cases this will be a TA or your Instructor). In cases of appeal, you must establish “grounds” for the appeal (i.e. clearly indicate where you think a mistake was made). Vague allusions to “working hard” on an assignment or what you “normally get in other classes” are not sufficient grounds for an appeal.

If after discussing with your TA, the reasons for your grade remain unclear or you would like **additional feedback** on the submission, then you may contact/ appeal the mark to me (Steve). Normally I ask students to “stop by”/log on during office hours or create an appt. where we can discuss the work/grade.

If the reasons for the grade remain unclear after this meeting, you may formally appeal your grades as part of a formal **Appeal of Final Grade** (this process is elaborated in the Academic Calendar).