

Law School Lingo

Law School and UCLA Law Terms & Abbreviations You Might Need to Know

- **Bar Association:** A professional association of lawyers. There are many types of bar associations based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, geographic location, type of practice and more. Bar associations provide great networking opportunities and some offer law student scholarships.
- **Bluebook:** The Bluebook is the most widely used system of legal citation. Students may use the blue pages in their LRW class; legal journals use the white pages.
- **Brief/Book Brief:** A short summary/synthesis of the main points of a judicial decision. Not rewriting the opinion, but rather distilling it down to its essence.
- **CAE:** The Center for Accessible Education (CAE) provides services to meet the unique educational needs of regularly enrolled students with permanent and temporary disabilities.
- **CAPS:** Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is a student mental health center for the UCLA campus.
- **Casebook:** Collections of cases (or parts of cases) chosen to help illustrate and stimulate discussion about legal issues.
- **Circuit judge:** Refers to a judge who sits on any of the United States courts of appeals, known as circuit courts. The 94 federal judicial districts are organized into 12 regional circuits.
- **Clerkship (Judicial):** A full-time “assistant” to a judge, who usually performs a wide range of tasks including legal research, drafting of memoranda and court opinions, proofreading, and cite checking. They are often responsible for various administrative tasks: maintenance of the docket and library, assembling documents, or other tasks necessary to meet the many obligations of the judge. A judicial clerkship can offer an edge in the legal job market not only because of increased knowledge of the law and court system, but because of the valuable contacts and personal relationships developed during the clerkship experience. Students who have summer positions at non-profit organizations are also referred to as law clerks.
- **Comment:** A Comment is a work of legal scholarship written by a law student, generally during their 2L year. *Yale Law Journal* defines a Comment as a piece of legal scholarship that “should present a concise yet still original argument...respond[ing] to a recent development in the law, such as cases, legislation, law review articles, lawsuits, administrative rulings, and executive orders.”
- **CRS:** Critical Race Studies.
- **EDI:** Equity, Diversity & Inclusion.
- **El Centro:** El Centro Legal is a student-coordinated network of volunteer legal aid clinics.
- **Emmett:** The Emmett Institute on Climate Change and the Environment
- **Experiential courses:** An “experiential course” is: A clinic; a practice simulation course, or other course that may include a combination of live client and simulation instruction; or, an externship or field placement. Students may take experiential courses during their 2L and 3L year.
- **Externship:** Externships are non-compensated positions in settings outside the law school; students receive academic credit based on their work in the field placement. Externships provide experience in and exposure to a legal work setting, linking legal theory with practice. Students enrolled in an externship program typically work for a semester (full-time or part-time) in a nonprofit organization, government agency, or judicial office under the supervision of a licensed attorney. The field placement is supplemented with a classroom component (a seminar).
- **GAT:** Graduate Assistant Tutors; these students lead study sessions for 1Ls.
- **GSA:** Graduate Student Association, the greater UCLA graduate student government organization.
- **Hornbook/Supplement:** One-volume legal treatises which summarize and explain the law in a specific area. They are written primarily for law students on subjects typically covered by law school courses.
- **ICLP:** International and Comparative Law Program
- **J-Term:** Short courses that 2Ls, 3Ls, and LL.M. students can take during winter break.

- **Law Review:** A prestigious student-run journal that publishes articles written by law professors, judges, and other legal professionals on a variety of cutting-edge legal topics.
- **Litigation:** Process for handling disputes in the court system. Litigation is a contested action, where someone else, such as a judge, may make the final decisions for the parties unless the parties settle before trial. Settlement can happen at any point during the process.
- **LL.M.:** A one-year program where students earn a Master of Laws which is a postgraduate academic degree pursued by those either holding a law degree.
- **Lowell Milken:** The Lowell Milken Institute for Business Law and Policy
- **LRW:** Legal Research & Writing, a year-long course taken by all 1Ls.
- **Lu Valle:** UCLA dining services and store closest to the law building. Law school gear and textbooks are also sold here.
- **Moot Court:** Principal oral advocacy competition that aims to enhance and showcase the appellate advocacy skills. Participants have the opportunity to showcase their appellate advocacy and writing skills through competing in various competitions across the country in different areas of law. Of particular interest to those interested in careers in litigation or trial practice.
- **Note:** A Note is a work of legal scholarship written by a law student, generally during their 2L year. *Yale Law Journal*, defines a Note as a work of legal scholarship that "should advance a particular area of legal scholarship beyond its current state, make a detailed argument, and provide persuasive evidence for each of its conclusions."
- **OCI:** On-Campus Interviews, a program coordinated by the Office of Career Services where law firms recruit students.
- **OCS:** Office of Career Services
- **Outline:** A document that boils down all the materials from a course (syllabus, class notes, case briefs, notes from outside reading, statutes, hypotheticals, and other problems) into an organized study aid.
- **PILP:** The David J. Epstein Program in Public Interest Law and Policy. Also refers to the Office of Public Interest Programs.
- **Promise:** The Promise Institute for Human Rights
- **RA:** Research Assistant; students hired by the Library to provide research assistance to faculty projects.
- **Records:** Records Office manages course enrollment, transcript requests, exams, and other registrar-related tasks.
- **Restorative Justice:** A theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes, and emphasizes accountability, making amends, and facilitated meetings between victims, offenders, and other persons.
- **SAW:** Substantial Analytical Writing paper. Every ABA-accredited law school is required to have an upper-division writing project as a graduation requirement. UCLA's is called the "Substantial Analytical Writing," or "SAW," and is set forth in our Academic Standards, Section I(E).
- **SBA:** Student Bar Association, the law school's student government.
- **Section:** The 1L class into several "sections" of students, who will take all their first-year courses with that section, either alone or in conjunction with another first-year section(s) (see: Super Section).
- **SJAP:** Spring Journal Application Process. 1Ls can apply to join student journals besides the Law Review through this process. Law Review goes through the Write-On (see below).
- **Specialty Journal:** A student-run journal around a particular legal area, or legal topics that affect a particular identity group or geographic area. These journals typically accept Notes and Comments.
- **Student Affairs:** The Office for Student Affairs manages academic advising, student organizations, student journals, and many student-related events and information.
- **Summer Associate:** Summer hires at large law firms; paid a monthly salary.
- **Super Section:** Two-or-more 1L sections taking a course or courses together (example: sections 1+2).
- **WA:** Writing Advisor, upper-level students who assist 1Ls in their first year as part of LRW.
- **Write-on:** The process by which students apply to the Law Review at the end of their 1L year.
- **Ziffren:** The Ziffren Institute for Media, Entertainment, Technology and Sports Law.