

Tips for Students from Students

HOW TO BEST PREPARE FOR CLASS

Specifically in anticipation of answering cold-calls from professors

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Speaking generally from my experience, no professors in my first year classes cold-called people. Some went down a list alphabetically or just asked a question and waited for a student to put up their hand. **Even though I was not called on, I wish I had put up my hand more often.** I think there is a great benefit to speaking through a case's facts or issues aloud with an audience. Even though it might not feel like it, it is not a problem to get something wrong when answering a question – that is by far the best way to learn and help others around you learn. If you're too intimidated to put your hand up in class (I was) then I'd suggest visiting your professor in their office hours. That way they know your face and you can practice asking questions and speaking through issues in an even safer environment. Speaking aloud also helps with your public speaking skills and analysis on the spot – something very useful if you are thinking of going into litigation (or even solicitor's work as you would probably be expected to speak about the law in a boardroom or with clients).

To best prepare for class, I would brief all my case readings with the FILAC or FIRAC style and maybe include a question or two per case of things I didn't understand or wanted more information on. It is great to have questions because then if you're called upon you can defer to a question first or approach the question with more of a workshopping tone with the professor. Lexis case briefs or case commentaries are also especially helpful when breaking down big SCC decisions or anything you might want more context on – these help draw links between the greater themes of the case, or how this case might relate to current jurisprudence. They can also help you check your work as you go – if you brief a case and then see another person has pulled out different issues it's a great thing to revisit in the case itself. It is so important to try and understand as best as you can the importance of each case as you go, because it'll feel way too overwhelming to try and understand those things by the time exams hit.

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