

LAW JOURNAL MANAGEMENT (JLEP)

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

SPRING 2026

PROFESSOR: STEPHANIE HEMMERT

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly publication in the legal profession is unique. With few exceptions law student editors – not professors, scholars, or other paid professionals – select and edit the articles that appear on the influential pages of law journals. Student editors gain invaluable editing and management skills over the course of their tenure. However, all too often, their institutional knowledge is lost when they graduate. Law Journal Management is designed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge between outgoing and incoming editors and to improve the management of GMUSL journals as a whole.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will accomplish the following.

- Begin to **build team relationships** with fellow editors.
- Consider the **role of student-run law journals** in legal scholarship.
- Hear **outgoing editors' experiences** in order to inform (but not dictate) your decisions.
- **Discuss lessons learned**, hints, tips, and tricks with outgoing editors.
- **Gain an overall view of JLEP law journal management** and identify things to think about for each function, including selecting articles, peer review, communicating with authors, editing articles, publishing the journal, selecting journal membership, and motivating journal membership.
- **Obtain specific knowledge** applicable to your editor position.
- Have **the opportunity to meet colleagues in similar board positions on other journals** with an emphasis on developing professional collegiality and camaraderie.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- [W&L Law Journal Rankings](#)
- Scholastica, [New to Law Review: Everything you want to know but can't find online](#), YouTube (May 28, 2020).
- The Arbinger Institute, *Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box*. Oakland: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2018.
- Kouzes, James M., and Posner, Barry Z. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017.
- Dweck, Carol. *Mindset*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC, 2016.
- Haskell Murray, [Advice for Law Review Editors](#), Above the Law, April 25, 2015.
- Alfred L. Brophy, The Emerging Importance of Law Review Rankings for Law School Rankings, 2003-2007, 78 U. COLO. L. REV. 35 (2007).
- Christian C. Day, The Case for Professionally Edited Law Reviews, 33. OHIO. N. U. L. REV. 563 (2007)
- Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (2007).
- Natalie C. Cotton, Comment, The Competence of Students as Editors of Law Reviews: A Response to Judge Posner, 154 U. PA. L. REV. 951 (2006)
- Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (2002).
- Covey, Stephen M.R. *The Speed of Trust*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS

Law Journal Management will be graded on a pass-fail basis. Those passing the course will receive one academic credit. To receive a passing grade, you must:

- Attend class meetings as required by Academic Regulation 4-1. Attendance will be recorded.
- Participate in class discussion.
- Attend individual meetings as described by this syllabus (Reminder: Academic Regulation 4-1 requires each student to be responsible for maintaining a record of his or her attendance in each class, which includes a record of the individual meetings).
- Meet deadlines and other editorial requirements set forth by the journal.

SCHEDULE

By Wednesday, February 11, please respond to this class survey: [JLEP Survey](#)

Session 1: **Now – Saturday, February 14 – Transition Meeting One – “Overview” (1 class hour)**
Incoming editors reach out to the corresponding, applicable outgoing editor to coordinate a meeting during this time. The purpose of this initial meeting is to review editorial responsibilities, receive relevant documents, and begin to discuss the position and lessons learned from an overview perspective. (You will meet again in March to review all remaining details. I ask outgoing editors to please email me after you’ve met.)

Session 2: **Date: Sunday, February 15 (in-person)**
 Time: 12-7 p.m. (6.25 class hours)
 Room: TBD

Please note that the day and order of some topics may switch, but the following is our initial plan.

Introduction and Overview (55 min) (Hemmert, Girard) (approx. 12-12:55 p.m.)

Ice Breaker
Introductions of adjunct and new editors
Outline and purpose of the course – big picture v. drill-downs
Incoming editors’ expectations and questions
History of JLEP
The role of a student-run law journal and the editorial board
The planned transition between editorial boards
Journal Constitution and Big Picture Expectations
Production Lifecycle of an article and journal (yarn exercise)
Responsibilities by Position
Current status of issues

Managing Up/Down/Sideways, Being a Team (35 min) (Hemmert) (approx. 12:55-1:30 p.m.)

Distinctions between Managing and Leading
Communication and Working Style Preferences
Building a cohesive team
Lead where appropriate, follow where appropriate
Concerns/Challenges/Expectations
Scheduling Editorial Board Meetings and General Membership Meetings
Receive StrengthsFinder 2.0 Book
Positioning JLEP

(Quick Break)

Budget and Subscriptions (30 min) (Woodward, Girard) (approx. 1:40-2:10 p.m.)

- Budget cycle
- Sources of Funds
- Formulating & Presenting Budget Requests to the SBA
- Treasurer responsibilities
- Subscription fulfillment and expanding subscription base
- Customer relations
- Biggest Surprises

Obtaining New Candidate Members (30 min) (Girard) (approx. 2:10-2:40 p.m.)

- Write-on Process Considerations
- Pros and Cons of Different Size Editorial Boards
- Lessons Learned
- Biggest Surprises

(Quick Break)

Articles Selection and Process (45 min) (Cannon, Girard) (approx. 2:50-3:35 p.m.)

- Article Solicitation
- Article Selection
- Peer Review Process
- Exclusive Submissions Agreements
- Editing and the Role of the Articles Committee
- Ideas for expanding published materials
- Challenges and Lessons Learned
- Biggest Surprises

Strategy and Setting Goals (30 min) (Hemmert) (approx. 3:35-4:05 p.m.)

- SMART Goals
- Application
- Short term (1 year) and long term (2-10 years) goals
- Delegating and Communicating

Editing Articles, Research, and Spading (45 min) (Mancini) (approx. 4:05-4:50 p.m.)

- Editing professional pieces
- Coordinating the editing process
- Roles of/interaction with EE or EIC
- Usage and consistency issues – JLEP-specific rules
- Style Guide and the Bluebook
- Delegating assignments
- Editing student pieces
- Spading and the Role of the Research and Articles Committees
- Source gathering
- Summer spading
- Training candidate members
- Checklists
- Relationships with Authors
- Biggest Surprises

(Quick Break)

Notes - Student Casenote/Comment Selection (30 min) (Cupp) (approx. 5:00-5:30 p.m.)

- Timeline and Scholarly Writing
- Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations of the Notes Editor
- Editing and providing meaningful feedback
- Topic selection and summer assignments
- Comment selection
- Biggest Surprises

Outreach and Planning (30 min) (Girard) (approx. 5:30-6:00 p.m.)

- Faculty Advisors
- Campus presence
- Outreach to Alumni, and external organizations
- Administrative matters
- Journal Website
- Constitutions, handbooks, and other institutional materials
- Communication with journal members
- Maintaining relationships with other journals
- Short and long-term planning
- Biggest Surprises

(Quick Break)

Publication (30 min) (Warner, Fromm, Girard) (approx. 6:10-6:40)

- Publication Schedule
- Working with the publisher
- Final Edits and the Macro
- Biggest Surprises

Take-aways (15 min) (Incoming Editors) (approx. 6:45-7:00 p.m.)

Please complete the online "Strengths Finder" instrument & email Stephanie your five "themes" no later than Tuesday, February 24.

Session 3:

Date: Saturday, February 28 (in-person)

Time: 12-7 p.m. (6.25 class hours) (As part of this class, incoming editors will have time to meet by themselves to further advance their planning. To take advantage of being together, incoming editors are welcome to meet past the time scheduled.)

Room: TBD

Please note that the order of some topics may switch, but the following is our initial plan.

Incoming Editors Group Photo (15 min) (Hemmert) (approx. 12:00-12:15 p.m.)

Check-in (15 min) (Hemmert) (approx. 12:20-12:35 p.m.)

Symposium and Lecture Events (30 min) (Ladzinski) (approx. 12:35-1:05 p.m.)

- Selecting a topic and location
- Possible Partnership
- Finding speakers and commentators
- Logistics (food, audio/visual, materials, registration)
- Ideas for improvements
- CLE
- Biggest Surprises

Management Issues and Challenges and Communications (35 min) (Hemmert, Girard)
(approx. 1:05-1:40 p.m.)

- Membership Selection Procedure and Membership Policies
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Neuroscience of Motivating Member/Editor Performance – SCARF Model
- Maximizing Effective Communication

(Quick Break)

Overall Journal Management and Overview of Production Process (35 min) (Girard)
(approx. 1:50-2:25 p.m.)

- Editor-in-Chief and Executive Editor Responsibilities
- Working as a Team
- Big Picture for All Team Members
- Current Status of Issues Revisited
- Lingering Questions

Production lifecycle of an article and journal (yarn revisited) (20 min) (Girard, Hemmert)
(approx. 2:25-2:45 p.m.)

(Quick Break)

Team Effectiveness (35 min) (Hemmert, Incoming Editors) (approx. 2:55-3:30 p.m.)

- Building Trust
- Mastering Conflict
- Achieving Commitment
- Embracing Accountability
- Focusing on Results
- StrengthsFinder Themes
- Team Building

Take-aways (15 min) (Incoming Editors) (approx. 3:30-3:45 p.m.)

Review Game (30 min) (Incoming Editors) (approx. 3:45-4:15 p.m.)

Working Together (45 min) (Hemmert, Incoming Editors) (approx. 4:15-5:00 p.m.)

- Communication
- Personal Commitments
- Letter to Future
- Team Gratitude

(Quick Break)

Journal Business and Small, Working Group Brainstorming Discussions (110 min)
(Incoming Editors) (approx. 5:10-7:00 p.m.)

- Putting Individual Strengths to Work
- Brainstorming and Planning
- Goal Setting for Year
- Decision Points (e.g. article selection committee members, info session plan)
- Small Working Group Brainstorming Discussions
 - EIC/EE/ME

- Notes
- Articles and Research

Session 4: Monday, March 1 – Thursday, April 9 – Transition Meeting Two – “Details” (1.5 class hr)

Incoming editors coordinate at least one additional meeting with applicable outgoing editor(s). Topics may include the following details in depth. (Responsibilities for each position may slightly change from year to year. I ask outgoing editors to please email me after you’ve met.)

EIC: The publication timetable from article selection to distribution and the role of each Editor during the process, journal policies, participation and discipline, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

EE: The publication timetable, journal policies, the role of each Editor during the process, editing responsibilities and schedule, communication tips with authors, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Managing: Balancing the budget, making SBA requests, obtaining reimbursements, maintaining and expanding to the subscriber list, collecting and depositing payments, faculty advisors, Board of Advisors, campus presence, alumni outreach, external organization collaborations, maintaining relationships with other journals, budget, website, outreach, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Submissions: Proactive strategies for finding articles, working with the Selection Committee in selecting articles, circulating articles for consideration, setting and achieving benchmarks, maintaining relationships with other journals, being an editorial team member, stepping in where/when needed, and lessons learned.

Publications: Maintaining relationships with other journals, meeting the publication timeline, working with the publisher, making the final edits, being an editorial team member, stepping in where/when needed, and lessons learned.

Productions: Peer review process, outreach, relationships with authors, being an editorial team member, stepping in where/when needed, and lessons learned.

Symposium: Constitutional requirement, specifics about the next Symposium or Speaker Event topic/topics, coordination with other journals, stages in planning and execution of the events, peer review process for symposium issue, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Articles and Research: Meeting deadlines, setting and achieving benchmarks, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned. Source gathering, the spading process and timeline, managing time, setting and achieving benchmarks, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Notes: Working with candidate members to produce quality articles, leadership and mentoring, being an editorial team member, and lessons learned.

Session 5: Date: TBD, likely either Friday, April 10 or Friday, April 17 – All Journal Joint Session Time: Tentatively 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Tentatively, 2 class hours)

This session will bring the incoming editors from all of the journals together along with some of outgoing editors. The purpose is to meet those who have similar editor functions, discuss and share ideas and information with each other in small group roundtables, and set the stage for developing professional camaraderie.

Remember to please submit course feedback via the electronic link you will receive. We use your feedback to help shape future classes.