

# Faculty of Law - Competencies

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## INTRODUCTION

A “competency” is the term used to describe a cluster of related knowledge, skills, and attributes that contributes to successful job performance. Competencies are typically expressed in terms of visible behaviours. Students develop competencies throughout their entire program through a variety of ways, which include courses and experiential learning such as Co-op, paid and unpaid work.

Using a Competency Framework will:

- Help you to articulate learning goals and provide clarity regarding the development of skills, knowledge and abilities
- Strengthen links for you between academic and workplace learning
- Assist employers to support and enhance your learning (pre, during and post coop work term experience)
- Support and empower your professional development as you prepare for fulltime employment
- Help you to clarify what you are competent in and use this for the process of work search e.g. Resume and Cover Letter development, interviews etc.

UVic Co-op has previously defined 10 core competencies that will contribute to each student’s success during his or her studies. These 10 core competencies have been supplemented with a set of program specific competencies to provide a more comprehensive framework. We recognize that there is no one-way in which a Law student achieves his/her degree. Because of this, the competencies are not exclusive nor exhaustive, and you may wish to choose certain competencies over others. Your co-op coordinator can help you with this process.

You will be encouraged to review and reflect on both the core competencies, as well as the discipline specific competencies, before, during, and after each co-op work term, and to consider how and where you demonstrated these competencies and which ones you wish to further develop. This will help you identify and articulate clear learning goals throughout your degree program by helping to guide discussions around areas of strength and areas for improvement as you progress through your degree program.

## **Discipline Specific Competencies**

### **LEGAL KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS**

*Acquires a foundation of legal knowledge and skills needed for the practice of law and for the many professional roles in which legal training is invaluable.*

- Understands the structure of the Canadian legal system and the legal system in British Columbia
- Examines the basic framework and functioning of the Canadian constitutional system
- Develops knowledge of the structure of the courts and the role of the judiciary
- Appreciates the function of substantive and procedural law
- Investigates the administrative process, the development of tribunals and agencies, and the interaction of these bodies with the courts
- Understands the legislative process and the interpretation of legislation
- Develops an understanding of criminal law, private law, and administrative law
- Understands the forms and functions of major disputing processes – mediation, negotiation, and adjudication
- Acquires knowledge of basic legal research techniques, using various research tools
- Obtains proficiency in legal writing, using proper citation
- Demonstrates proficiency in mootings/oral advocacy

### **CONTEXTUAL KNOWLEDGE**

*Acquires an understanding of the context – social, economic, historical, philosophical and cultural in which our legal system has developed and continues to evolve.*

- Understands the role of the legal profession and the law in society
- Develops an understanding of the relationship of law and government
- Develops an understanding of the role of law in economic and social ordering
- Demonstrates knowledge of barriers to the legal system and issues around access to justice

### **SPECIALIZED LEGAL TRAINING AND SKILLS PRACTICE**

*Explores specialized areas of legal training and gains practical experience.*

- Acquires substantive legal knowledge in various practice areas, including, administrative law, civil procedure, evidence, environmental law, corporate law, and, international and comparative law
- Develops a broader understanding of Indigenous legal issues, recognizing the need in the Canadian legal community for a broader understanding of and academic focus on Aboriginal legal issues
- Obtains clinical experience, substantive legal knowledge, and legal skills through the Environmental Law Centre, the Business Law Centre, and the Law Centre
- Demonstrates proficiency with various forms of legal writing, including drafting, memos, and opinion letters
- Demonstrates skills in advocacy, and skills of the lawyer in interviewing, counseling, negotiating and advocating