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Class of 1962 Fifteen Year Report Alumni Comments

University of Michigan Law School

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University of Michigan Law School, "Class of 1962 Fifteen Year Report Alumni Comments" (1977).

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I am temporarily inactive due to dismissal from a state department resulting from that department's female director's (licensed attorney) insistence that I subject my legal thinking and work to a man (licensed attorney) with lesser seniority under civil service and part of his brain not developed. It appears that I will be reinstated about the first of April, 1977, after civil service grievance procedures are completed through the hearing level. The problem of male preference will remain.

I cannot over emphasize the importance I place on having studied at U. of M. Law School. You taught me to think and gave me the analytical and substantive tools to become a good lawyer. The "National Law School" broad perspective is much more valuable than the "trade school" approach. The "How to do it" can be easily learned on the job in an existing firm. My only regret is that I do not think I would be accepted as a student today. I would have to tell my children that they would also have a tough time getting in!

I am very thankful for having had the opportunity of attending Michigan and am very proud of the school, I believe the professors and staff have strived to preserve the sense of excellence which prevailed when it was a smaller school.

Problem type exams and issue spotting were considered totally irrelevant when we were in school. I now see them to have been indispensable.

Two sons are in family P.C. firm with me - 1 U of Mich, 1 Harvard grad. Both daughters attended U of Mich - 1 in medicine and 1 in education.

I am very pleased that you are doing this survey to further improve the law school. I would be very interesting to see the results. I do want to comment that one of the more important benefits to me personally would not show up in this type of questionnaire. Due to the contacts and business friends and associates that I made at the law school, I have been involved in numerous business enterprises in the state of Michigan, although I have always resided in the state of Indiana.

Through these associations and contacts I became a major owner of banks, apartment buildings, business buildings and other investment opportunities which have monetarily compensated me even greater than our very profitable law practice.

Michigan Law was not very much fun, but drudgery, instead. I believe it could be corrected somewhat, with better learning produced by at least:

1. Better student-faculty relations & friendships
2. Less of the case method.

Looking back-- Lit School was very enjoyable--Law School really wasn't. Maybe (quite possibly) it was because I had totally run out of money by the time I was into Law School and I couldn't borrow any more. At any rate, I hope that students in Law School at Michigan today don't have to spend nearly all their time (including study time) working for bed and board. I am sure a law student can learn a lot of and about law just talking to his friends and fellow students if he has free time in which to do it.

Comments (2)

✓ Greater emphasis should be placed on effective writing both legal and non-legal. Writing should be clear, concise and geared to the person who will read it. Law graduates should know how to draft a simple agreement quickly, correctly using defined terms. Law graduates also should also be able to weigh the importance of a given problem and be able to allocate a proper amount of time to its solution.

✓ The University of Michigan Law school was the greatest opportunity of my life and I believe my clients obtain the benefits of my excellent education. I learned to analyze and think and not just.

✓ Greatly appreciate Michigan's high standards and reputation.

✓ This questionnaire, like many others similar to it, does not list trust banking as a separate area of employment and I always end up under "other." I am sure there are enough graduates in the field that it could be recognized. Much better for the ego!

✓ I hold my Michigan Law education in highest esteem. I hope that the Law School has not and will never abandon the traditional case law approach to legal education ~~to~~ and that "pass/fail" seminars in "Law and....[some b.s. or other]" are not in the curriculum.

Dichotomy and apparent contradiction in various preceding answers may be attributable to

a. Immediately after law school engaged in private practice of law for 8 years, 1st as employee and later as partner--small firm in general practice specializing in corporate law.

b. In 1970 left law to join business as President and CEO. Our law firm ~~has~~ had previously acted as company's general counsel.

✓ Law is a fascinating field of endeavor. Unfortunately the trial practice is becoming highly aggravating due to the crowded dockets, unskilled judges, untrained lawyers, and unscrupulous attorneys. The expense of private practice in relationship to the fees that can be charged is also contributing to making law a less attractive vocation.

✓ I object to quota admissions and mandatory passing of students.

✓ The practical aspects of practicing law were completely unknown to me after graduation. I did not know how to draft a complaint, or what to do with it once drafted. The legal profession must create an "interne" program so that new lawyers can learn how to practice.

The technical legal training at U of M was excellent.

✓ Today, "national" law schools are common enough so that I would encourage anyone to attend such a law school in the general area where he expects to ultimately live & practice.

✓ Being one who probably did not have the most desirable pre-law preparation and who also had what I consider to be fairly average intellectual abilities, I feel fortunate to have done as well both at Michigan and in the practice as I have.

(cont)

(cont)

I imagine--and hope--that the information I've provided here may encourage your admissions officer to continue putting weight on other factors besides LSAT scores and academic standings in selecting at least a portion of each new class.

I attended law school from June 1960 through Sept. 1962--including three summers--I would not recommend this accelerated program to others. When the copies of the results are distributed, it would be interesting and informative to have a list of the current addresses of my 1962 classmates.

Article XVI, Curricula: I would not hazard a guess as to where law school curricula should be reduced. I do note, quite emphatically, that a young lawyer destined for a general practice with small or medium sized corporate clientele (a large percentage of UM law grads) should have the best possible background in federal and state taxation. Secondly, from experience over the past few years in employing U of M grads (and others), the ability to express one's self clearly and with economy of words is an uncommon but extremely important attribute.

Article XVIII (F): My negative answers here do not reflect dissatisfaction either with the profession or the school. Long term, the historical independence of lawyers will, as witness current direction, be eroded by a combination of factors, including federal and state income and business activities, taxation, administrative regulation, and such matters as competitive price competition.

My time at the U of M was enjoyable, worthwhile & rewarding. It was a very satisfactory experience I hope my children will be able to enjoy.

The socratic method of instruction and other adversary aspects of legal training in and out of law school produces or aggravates, with other contributing factors, an abrasive quality in many lawyers that reduces their ability to deal effectively with other people, both within and outside their law firm environment. I refer particularly to lawyers in firms--where my observations have been made.

It would be helpful in obtaining lawyers in other cities, to have a list of names & addresses of classmates.

One additional area I found lacking in my training as a lawyer apart from professional ethics (I remember the dean talked to us one hour about ethics), is the area of billing, client-lawyer rapport, office procedures. No one teaches how to practice law. It is assumed that will be learned by trial & error.

Also, I find the accountants better trained to make business decisions for corporate clients because of tax background.

~~Qxxxxxx~~ It is difficult to answer XVIII A and B (what of law school training and what teachers contributed most) after 15 years. Quite frankly, I believe that my total education at Michigan and my exposure to brilliant scholars was the major contributing factor to my present job position and ability. No single course or teacher can be said to be more important than another course or teachers.

XVIII A.--Very difficult to answer--I feel that I was taught well enough so that when a client tells me a story that I can ferret out what the important legal problems are. Beyond that I was taught how to research the problem and make judgments as to which way the law (courts) might go.

In everyday practice, I very often observe what I feel to be the main advantage which I enjoy as a graduate of Michigan Law School. That advantage is the ability to work with a problem, legal or other, in which the obvious result would appear to be adverse to our position, and yet find a satisfactory and acceptable solution. That solution is sometimes found in the Court of Appeals and other times merely in a different approach to the situation.

I disliked ~~the~~ intensely the trade school orientation of U of M Law School, though I recognized it was one of the best trade schools. I did not want to know whether a particular type of contract could be enforced at law, I wanted to know why some contracts are enforceable and some not. What separates the promises in the eyes of the law. If my child were interested in law that is what I would want her to learn.

Your review of various respondents and non-respondents should include an analysis of Martindale-Hubbel listings. The final question should have inquire about the last 2 years--This is most important for those attorneys who are still sharply increasing their earnings. Possibly I am over emphasizing my earnings during the past 2 years which are in the \$40-49,000 range.

183

I doubt if any stablished study would fit my special situation. I came to U of M Law School after spending 10 years in hospitals for check diseases. The majority of time on a floor at the U of M Medical Center. Law School for me scored as a halfway house between the hospital world and the real world. I would have made it in neither without 14 years of Catholic education. To the Nuns who taught us--nothing was impossib.e--

Upon graduation I had no long-term career objective such as, "I want to be a partner in a girm." Rather it was a short-term reality of, "I have a wife, one child, another on the way, & I have to support them." My choice of employment at that time has proved to be a very good one despite the lack of soul-searching analysis.

I was very unhappy as a lawyer, but this was due in part to:
(1) A very high pressure law firm which was oppressive in many ways
(2) Dealing with clients in a small town.

In response to F above, I believe the study of law is valuable in a wide range of applications but at the moment we have an over abundance of lawyers which discourages seeking a law degree as a practical matter.

There should be some way to insure that law students or recent graduates can get formalized practical training in dealing with clients under professional supervision similar to medical internship programs.

Comments (5)

Over the years I've appreciated the preparation U of M gave me for both the practice of law & the bench--It gave me quite an edge over the competition.

Need (1) More money available so students can work less

(2) More opportunity for students other than law review, etc. to get exposure to faculty and law related experience.

I consider my legal training at the U of M Law School as the most essential ingredient to my success as a banker. Even today, although I chose to leave active legal practice for banking, I am evenly divided as to which profession would provide me with the most satisfaction. In time I may return to active practice--even at age 55, or thereabouts. I departed active practice (in Bryan, Ohio (15 miles from Edon)) in order to (return to Edon (small community of then 750 people located in rural northwestern Ohio) to) save the local bank from being sold to outsiders. I was born and grew up in Edon and my mother still lived there, my father having died during my first year at law school. Edon had little industry and the bank had resources of about \$3,500,000.00; it was the challenge that brought me home. The bank and the community have prospered, but not solely because of my efforts.

During the last seven or eight years the government (both federal & state), through its administrative agencies, has showered the business community with an ever-increasing barrage of regulations which, because they are often not based on readily ascertained common law legal principals or logic, necessitate voluminous amounts of time to comprehend sufficiently let alone commit to memory. It is my opinion that emphasis on this aspect of the law would be extremely beneficial to practicing attorneys and to those entering any phase of business after graduation from law school.

Also, in my opinion, even though I participated in all law school functions pertaining to trial practice I was not truly prepared for trial practice; suggest that all students have the opportunity to participate many times in actual trials (all phases) while in law school.

Due to the complexity of living in today's society which increasingly becomes entangled in legal snarls, particularly at the hands of bureaucratic government, it is extremely doubtful whether three years law school training and academics can adequately prepare the law student today.

I think the law school is spending too much emphasis on extras, and not enough on hard core courses, such as property, tax, and contracts.

I consider myself very fortunate to have chosen the U of M Law School. It was a major factor in my being hired by the law firm of which I am now a partner. Although my law school record was not outstanding, I have found that I was very well prepared for law practice.

Much of my activities have been directed toward venture capital related activities therefor it is difficult to exclude the income, although it does not reflect legal revenue, I have however, per your request.

Law School courses were not practice oriented enough when I attended school. Real Property, for example, was taught too much as a history of the subject almost. Hopefully courses are now more realistic & practical combining various factors to make the course relate to real life.

✓ Since the value I feel that I derived from law school did not relate to legal training, rather to intellectual training, I would choose a location for my child, to the extent such a choice on my part was appropriate; where the greatest intellectual stimulation was possible. This would most likely be Boalt Hall, University of California at Berkeley. While Michigan is perhaps one of the greatest law schools, give me an intellectual or an inquiring mind and a Dr. Nord Bar review course and I will produce a better lawyer than 3 years in Ann Arbor and I will do so in 1/3 the time. Concentrate on the minds of your professors, not your curriculum. Hire a priest, Truman Capote, etc.

✓ kRegarding F, I really have no feelings one way or the other about whether my children would want to study law. It would depend solely on their own interests. If they did want to study law, I would hope they would at least consider U of M.

✓ The members of our law firm all perceive that there has been a change in the composition of the U of M Law School student body, especially in the last 5-7 years. The students undoubtedly carry exceptional undergraduate scholastic and social achievement credentials. However, in our contact with U of M Law School students, particularly in the annual interviewing process, we find fewer and fewer prospective graduates who also have the "total person" attributes which we feel are necessary to successfully and meaningfully practice law in our size firm and community.

✓ I believe the theory given to me at Michigan was marvelous. Unfortunately as a young attorney coming out of law school into practice you have no clinical or practical experience. I should think somewhere in the curriculum you could add some courses which would give experience in practicing the law. Otherwise it is an absolute necessity to serve a type of apprenticeship. When I came out of law school I thought I was equipped to practice. Little did I know that I still had to learn to practice which took a number of years.

✓ I think Michigan provided a good education that makes graduates at least try to do better work than the average. The fact that the students were good undergraduate students and from a cross section of schools nationally probably contributed more than anything else to its quality.

✓ I think the Michigan curriculum is very well balanced, at least as it was 15 years ago. If the number of courses are increased in some areas, it may tend to put students in a specialty prematurely, and leave them weak in another fundamental area.

✓ However, I think there should be one course, possibly for no credit, but required for a degree, in the area of legal ethics, if active, conscientious practicing attorneys are available to teach it, so that students may be forewarned of the many practical pitfalls to which active lawyers may be victims; particularly the distinction between advocacy and coverup of illegal acts; and the potential conflicts of interest which corporate and business lawyers may face.

Never liked the harrassment approach to teaching 1st year students. There is far too much law to be learned to play games with the students. Teach the law, leave the games to PARKER BROTHERS.

Need more practical, so a graduate will have worked through the steps of a dissolution of a marriage, a collection case, a real estate transaction, an admin hearing, etc. (using Mich. law, since procedure is available locally).

One of the smartest moves ever made by me was the choice to attend the University of Michigan. Both undergrad and Law School are the greatest, in my humble opinion.

I do not believe the present law school curriculum should be decreased. Rather, it should be increased, at the very least, along the lines indicated in part A. I also believe that the law school curriculum should be expanded to a four year program. (Professional Responsibility, Legal Internship, Non-law courses in government, finance philosophy, or other courses of possible relevance to lawyers).

I think law has been a very excellent choice for me. Although I was not an exceptional student, the training I received was beneficial and I believe I have ~~become~~ become a "late bloomer."

As likely everyone else, I'm very eager to see the results of this survey. I'm very curious about the reasons for changes in positions, etc., made by members of the class. In my case, I was ensconsed solidly in a good firm in New York City doing mainly patent-trademark litigation, as I wanted to do, without ~~any~~ thought of change, until in May '76 a unique position was offered to me and I made a fundamental change, not only from firm to corporation but really out of the "practice" of law to administering the provision of legal services. It has been a very interesting change. I need ev ery bit of the law training and practice experience that I've had to do this new work, plus some other talents.

I now find the practice of law to be less than completely satisfying and plan to leave it and go into business for myself.

I feel additional emphasis could be given to the practical aspects of the practice as well as trial work, and possibly psychology, medical aspects of personal injury cases and related matters.

Your survey does not attempt to find out from your alumni the facets of their experience at the Law School which were least pleasant and rewarding. In brief, your survey asks too many questions, the answers to which are likely to be self congratulatory and unlikely to be food for your "going to school" on your alumni's views.

I knew there was a reason why I ignored this project the first time - since you were so insistent here it is. As you can see, the questionnaire fails to accommodate any who, through choice or chance, are not involved in and earning money from law practice in one form or another and have a consistent history along those lines. It is perhaps a complaint peculiar to your female graduates of several years ago-or perhaps peculiar only to me-that our professional choices are limited by parenting responsibilities and the

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Comments (8)

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✓ migratory pattern of husbands. Confronted by new bar exams to be taken ~~xxx~~ every few years, some simply re-direct their abilities to volunteer and civic activities. I assume this does not have a place in an "institutional audit" of past performance-or the selling of Michigan Law School.

XVIII. Post graduate Information

A. What of your Law School training is contributing most meaningfully to your present job ability?

B. J. George's comment that you have to analyze your opponent's case!

Legal analysis and legal writing - also legislation course in freshman year.

Emphasis on analysis of legal problems

Ability to analyze problems presented.

Taxation

Sound grounding in basic principles in the various First year courses (contracts, Property, etc.). Ability to analyze legal problems.

U. of M's good reputation gets the interview.

Learning a new approach to problem solving that began with undergrad math studies.

Legal training

Ability to think, write & speak analytically; basic knowledge in important subjects i.e. torts, prop. etc.

The entire process.

More than anything, I think the high quality individuals on the faculty inspired, through example, a desire for a reasoned analytical approach to problems.

Restitution, Future Interests, Introduction to Legal History.

How to use library. Campbell Competition.

Socratic analysis.

Training in Procedure, Evidence & Trial Practice. And in Torts and Personal Injury.

Basic analytical reasoning.

Case system for its training in analysis; Socratic method of teaching system; examinations.

Ability to analyze an area of the law in which I have no prior familiarity.

Law Review experience & exposure to excellent group of students & professors; both of which contribute to ability to analyze, write, etc.

Discipline of law school, pursuit of excellence by professors, breadth of curricula to which I was exposed (I was in the 1959 freshman class which had legal history, legislation etc. and took criminal law as seniors)

Ability to analyze - discern issues - be imaginative in seeking solutions to hard problems.

Methodology of problem solving and legal research.

----- Constitutional Law and Criminal Law courses; overall training for analyzing problems & organization of thoughts.

Generally instilling in me a pride in being a lawyer and a flexible intelligent human being.

Pressure training.

Legal research & writing training.

Broad understanding of the legal system and its function in everyday situations.

Course in legal analysis.

Taxation & Commercial Courses, General Ability to think, understand and handle legal concepts.

The ability to reason logically.

Procedure & Writing.

Contracts, corporations & business related courses.

Case analysis ability.

Real Property and Business Organizations Courses.

I feel my practical education began after law school.

The ability to think analytically and the thought process developed during class hours under pressure.

Development of critical analysis of problems.

Commercial law courses.

As Prof. Alan Smith said: "To learn always to ask 'WHY?'"

Nothing special.

Corporate, Contracts & Commercial Law.

The ability to think a particular problem through correctly, seek and find the correct answer.

Quality of training in analyzing issues and legal theories.

If you mean specific courses - Contracts, Property, Evidence.

Ability to analyze material.

Nothing more meaningful than any other.

Endurance.

Learning to reason without emotional non-logical considerations.

Background in taxation.

Difficult to ascertain-probably the first year courses in Contracts, Real Property and Torts.

Study group activity.

Well rounded legal education; research habits.

Ability to find the issue and discipline to give prompt service to clients.

Issue analysis required in all courses; legal reserach.

-j-----
Training in analysis and research.

Taxation.

Estate planning & taxation.

To think logically and legally; and to narrow complicated fact situations to the central issues.

Thorough analysis of case law.

Understanding of corporate, securities and taxation law as well as contract law.

The technique of researching and the ability to analyze case and statutory law.

Analytic process.

Trusts & Estates I & II, Taxation (although not enough Estate & Gift Tax available when I was in school. Nor was there any Estate Planning seminar)

The pressure from instructors and competition from fellow students to dig deeper and think harder.

The Combined Procedures Program; The Moot Court & Campbell Competitions; the Intensive Program in Legal Thought Processes.

Grounding in general principles of law.

Specific courses: contracts/torts. Generally ability to think logically, concisely greatest benefit.

The challenge of class give & take which required that one always be prepared, and trained one to think quickly and clearly

Competition between my fellow students - the majority of whom possessed excellent intellectual credentials.

Contracts, Creditors Rights. General legal analysis gained from all courses.

Law Review training in analysis and writing.

Ability to analyze situation.

Ability to articulate both orally and in writing. Ability to understand and analyze complex legislative and regulatory matters.

Real property and contracts courses and legal analysis which was really taught in every course.

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Logical analysis of problems.

Ability to overcome any unexpected personal or legal problems.

The ability to appreciate the socio-economic aspects of my specialty (work. Comp.) both from the standpoint of industry & the injured worker.

Legal writing & administrative law.

Analysis and a broad general background.

Ability to "think like a lawyer;" ability to read, write, speak, and think precisely.

Procedure and evidence; careful research.

Real property, Taxation.

Necessity of working hard; analytical approach to problem solving-- these things more than specific course offerings.

Basic skills in legal reasoning such as we developed in first year courses-- Contracts, Property, etc. as distinguished from any particular substantive law training. Exception to the above - Trusts & Estates course.

The ability to analyze a complex set of facts to arrive at the core problem, then, where to go in an attempt to arrive at a reasonable answer, if any.

The general principles of careful thought and more careful reading habits and the need to deliberate abstractly has proven more important than any particular course instruction.

Taxation, Corporation Law.

Constitutional, Contracts, Admiralty law courses as well as Procedures, etc. Very difficult to answer as I feel the values of specific areas are lost due to the merger of all areas in the conceptualizing by a legally trained mind.

Broad training of legal subjects; superior teaching faculty and theoretical teaching methods.

3 years emphasis on critical reasoning.

General knowledge of overall law and learned ability to analyze facts & research.

Writing experience and the few corporate related courses - plus Bob Harris' introductory contract course which more than anything taught me to think like a lawyer.

General quality of training in research and analysis.

General discipline of legal training on thinking process, experience in ~~xxxxx~~ verbal expression and debate.

Not identifiable. I have found the breadth of training important.

Tax courses, Estate Planning Seminar, Corporations.

Work & study habits developed by rigors of law school study demands.

I believe that Law School taught me how to analyze, sift out irrelevancies, and basically, how to think out a situation.

Dedication to work (mental training) A respect for the institution of law.

Nothing specifically. Most of it generally.

Writing.

Basic analytical training and attention to factual detail. International law background.

The quality of the teaching & the demands ("Rigor") placed by the professors on the student - in short, law school exercised the mind.

The ability "to think as a lawyer."

Broad based knowledge. Ability to research & recognize problems.

Scholarship - writing.

Nuts-and-bolts type courses

The ability, which was developed through law school training to absorb, retain, and work with a vast amount of information on a continuing basis.

General knowledge all areas of law and ability to think "legally."

Learning to analyze & organize thoughts. Level of teaching poor.

Analytical training - address every problem in such a way as to view from all sides.

Very little, but possibly Legal Writing, Legal History, and some of the seminars (law & psychiatry; international organizations).

Tax.

Case Club & Natl. Moot Court, Const. law, evidence.

General legal training - thought process & analysis.

Case discussion.

Research & writing; legal analysis, w/o regard to substance of course.

Criminal law, constitutional law.

A sound and thorough grounding in basic legal concepts and principles and legal analysis.

Overall knowledge of law.

Torts - Trial Practice.

Analytical thought.

Ability to identify substantive issues.

Defining and solving problems. General legal background.

Analytical thought process.
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All seminars dealing with jurisprudence and legal ethics.

Training in analysis of difficult problems.

Overall ability to analyze factual situations & recognize issues.

Legal writing, research techniques.

The case analysis & communication training.

Reasoning & work skills.

Sound foundation in and understanding of basic principles of law.

Competition; general demand for thorough preparation and analysis;
~~competition~~ concentration on basic subject matter.

securities, contracts and torts.

Basic courses in torts, contracts, procedure.

Estate planning, taxation, first year course in drafting, etc.

Ability to analyze.

No specific course, but merely the thoroughness and ability to analyze the law that was a part of the academic atmosphere at U of M Law School.

Contracts, constitutional law, business organizations.

A discipline of tight thinking, pretty much derived from most of the courses - also a product of prior engineering pre-law school courses - also an appreciation of law as an exciting and fulfilling profession.

Ability to analyze and understand new, unfamiliar and complex problems.

Ability to analyze problems.

Ability to spot issues; ability to develop both sides of an argument; training to be thorough and precise.

Can't really specify -- I got a damned good legal education despite myself. I learned objectivity, how to question everything, how to analyze both problems & cases, how to do effective research, etc.

Analytical reasoning.

Ability to analyze problems.

The ability to have associated with brilliant students and intellectual professors. Any classwork was next to meaningless.

Extension of liberal arts training and education so that I can manage from a reasonably informed position.

Disciplined thought.

Technical training.

General comprehensive application of basic legal principles and knowledge to my work as Bank chief Executive Officer of a small \$15,000,000,000 bank. where I am the so-called legal expert on all aspects of banking from lending

(secured & unsecured) securities, investment, vills & notes, etc.

Solid basics of the law obtained at U. of M.

Analytical approach to problems; ability to organize complex fact situations; ability to work with concepts.

Contracts, real property, legal writing.

Michigan Law School! - No one but each & all of it's courses & aspects; and having graduated from there!

Honing of analytical skills - then general knowledge of legal system in society.

Problem identification; Law Review hard work - in other words in law school I learned that it requires hard work to achieve well.

Overall analytical training - excellent teaching of case study method.

The ability to think in a strongly analytical & objective way about any problem.

Exposure to the outstanding faculty and fellow students which has resulted in a deeper and more policy-oriented approach to legal analysis.

Training in analysis of facts & factual situations; questioning issues & facts; hard work.

Antitrust, Secured Transactions, Contracts

Graduation

Thoroughness & hard work.

Legal analysis & practical approach.

Disciplined approach to problem solving.

Writing on law review
