



To: Transfer Students
From: John Gordon
Re: BCLS Publications

Boston College Law School publishes four journals and a digest: (1) *Boston College Law Review*; (2) *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review*; (3) *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review*; (4) *Boston College Journal of Law & Social Justice*; and (5) *The Uniform Commercial Code Reporter-Digest*. If you choose to participate in the writing competition for transfer students (which starts on Monday, August 15th and ends on Monday, August 29th, the morning of the first day of classes), you can rank by personal preference which of the school's publications you wish to join. (Before you pick up the materials, I'll let you know which journals have staff positions available.) You will be extremely involved with your law review article—as well as your review's staff—for the following two years. It is much more likely that your experience will be a positive one if you choose a topic that is consistent with your natural interests. As the titles of the publications imply, each of the journals has a particular area of interest, and this, obviously, can supply some guidance on how you might decide to rank your choices. Students interested in writing on a topic exclusively within the arena of environmental law, for example, will be best served by joining the *Environmental Affairs Law Review*. The school, however, is committed to affording all law review students wide latitude when selecting their topics, irrespective of which review they ultimately are invited to join. Therefore, that same student whose primary area of interest is environmental law should be able to fashion an appropriate topic even if invited to join the *Journal of Law & Social Justice* or the *International & Comparative Law Review*. In the former instance, the topic might take the form of demonstrating how environmental policy disproportionately affects disenfranchised populations, either in the United States or in the developing world. In the latter case, the topic might concentrate on examining various nations' emission control policies. In other words, with some creativity, every student on every review should be able to craft a topic that will be consonant with his or her area of interest. If you have questions about the broad array of topics each journal publishes, go to the reviews' web site and spend some time browsing through the past issues that are posted there. If you still have questions, feel free to contact the individual editors in chief identified below, or contact me at gordonjo@bc.edu.

As background, the 4 reviews and the *UCC Reporter-Digest* have different structures and, therefore, different requirements (which are set forth more clearly below). First the reviews: as a second year staff member you are required to complete two written assignments and perform the production work needed to publish your review's issues. The production work generally entails pulling sources and proofreading. You may also assist 3Ls in checking articles for both cite and substance, performing the work needed to insure the accuracy of the information contained in journal articles. Not only is this work extremely important, it's also probably the most effective way of learning the *Bluebook*. As for the writing demands, by the end of 2L year, each journal requires that you complete an in-depth, comprehensive article of publishable quality on a topic appropriate to that journal's purview. In addition to the long piece of scholarly writing, however, each review requires you to write a short case comment early in the fall semester as well (as much to indoctrinate you to the process as anything else). The comment derives from an area of law appropriate to the journal's subject matter. In all cases, however, the primary purpose of the first writing requirement is the same: to teach journal students how to write in law review style before sending them off to draft their big note. In all cases, these short pieces—assuming they are of publishable quality—will get posted to the Digital Common and the individual review's web page, as well as being added to the Lexis, Westlaw, and Hein electronic retrieval databases. In that way, many law review students can expect to have a citation to add to their resumes. The *UCC Reporter-Digest* is slightly different; its assignments take the form of weekly analytical case annotations throughout each semester. All cases involve Uniform Commercial Code issues. They cover a diverse range of commercial law and bankruptcy matters. Second-year staff writers work in close collaboration with third-year editors to edit each case annotation for publication, and every writer can expect to be published fifteen to twenty times per year. Writers are also responsible for proofreading and preparing annotations for the *Digest's* quarterly releases.

Membership on the staff of a legal publication is a rewarding experience. But like most valuable affiliations, the benefits are accompanied by burdens. There will probably be very few times in your careers during which you will have the luxury of spending two years acquainting yourself with an area of the law that interests you. There will also probably be few experiences that demand as much of your time and energy as review membership. Because this is such an important decision, we encourage you to make it carefully.

I. BOSTON COLLEGE LAW REVIEW

Thanithia Billings, Editor in Chief (thanithia.billings@bc.edu)

Currently ranked 23rd nationally, the Boston College Law Review is the oldest scholarly publication at Boston College Law School and publishes articles concerning the full range of legal topics written by prominent outside authors. The Review publishes five issues each year. Articles published in some recent issues demonstrate the range of subject matter the Review encompasses. One article, “The Myth of the Double-Edged Sword: An Empirical Study of Neuroscience Evidence in Criminal Cases,” analyzes the use of neuroscience evidence as mitigating evidence in 800 criminal cases over the past twenty years. Another article, “The Psychic Cost of Tax Evasion,” proposes the use of behavioral interventions to increase tax compliance. Yet another article, “Protecting Political Participation Through the Voter Qualifications Clause of Article I,” discusses federal voting rights and the constitutionality of state election laws. Other recent articles discuss juvenile sentencing laws, the corporate benefit doctrine, systemic employment discrimination, patent trolls, and the evolving nature of the judicial role.

In addition to articles written by outside academics, the Review prints the work of its student staff writers. Second-year staff members write a case comment in the fall and a longer note in the spring. Around fifteen of these case comments are published in BCLR’s e-supplement in the winter and spring. Also, roughly one-third of the staff will publish their notes during their third year. Note writing provides an invaluable research and writing experience that allows each staff member to explore in depth a selected legal issue of particular interest. Recent student notes have examined such diverse issues as: the use of the *cy pres* doctrine to distribute uncollected class action settlement funds to charitable organizations; whether talk therapy deserves First Amendment protections; socialized cost allocation of investment in electric utilities; preventing parental alienation through family law and therapeutic methods; and the complex problems within the U.S. immigration system that legal refugees face. In 2012–13, two third-year members won national competitions for the notes they authored in their second year—one analyzed telecommunications merger review process and offered a proposal for reform, and the other argued that Americans with securities fraud claims should turn to the Netherlands for redress. In addition to comment and note writing, second-year staff members gather sources to help third-year staff members edit articles from outside authors. Then, as third-year staff members, students hone their editing skills further. Depending on their positions, they will edit notes from second-year staff writers, articles submitted to the Review from outside authors, or both.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS LAW REVIEW

Kaitlin Vigars, Editor in Chief (vigarsk@bc.edu)

The Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review is the nation’s second oldest law review dedicated to environmental law, and continues to be one of the most frequently cited. Since its inception in 1971, EALR has maintained a national reputation as a leading journal of law, science, and policy. EALR’s dedication to an interdisciplinary approach keeps the journal at the forefront of environmental law. It prides itself on addressing pressing environmental legal issues in innovative ways. Throughout the years, EALR has published articles, student notes and case comments that address a diverse set of legal areas such as constitutional law, administrative law, commercial law, real estate law, and international law. Recent articles have addressed issues such as the cost of climate change and animal welfare legislation, and recent student notes have addressed topics such as transnational illegal logging, strategies to encourage the growth of America’s commercial nuclear energy capacity, and consumer data privacy. EALR places an emphasis on rewarding student effort. It publishes eight to ten 3L student notes per year and two to three 2L case comments per year in print, and attempts to publish all deserving 2L case comments in our Electronic Supplement.

EALR accepts approximately fifteen to sixteen 2L staff writers each year, and prides itself on training them to be excellent legal thinkers and writers. To provide staff writers with a solid foundation in environmental law—which is a crucial component of a successful EALR experience—each 2L staff writer is required to take the environmental law class during his or her fall 2L term (exceptions can be made). Each 2L staff writer will work closely with the 3L editors as they complete two writing assignments during the year: a case comment in the fall and student note in the spring. The case comment is a shorter assignment where staff writers are asked to analyze a recent court decision that has furthered environmental law in some way, and to provide their own commentary on the decision. The student note is each staff writer’s opportunity to create an original piece of legal scholarship on an open question or issue that touches on environmental law in some way. The EALR editors assist 2L staff writers in choosing timely, progressive note topics, but ultimately each note is an individual decision. Further assistance is always available from our faculty advisor, Professor Zygmunt Plater, and any other professor the writer seeks out. 2L

staff writers play a pivotal role in the journal's publication production process by participating in source collections, citation and source checking, and proofing assignments. As staff writers finish their student notes, they will begin to prepare for their transition into 3L editorial board members.

III. INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE LAW REVIEW Lindsay Grossman, Editor-in-Chief (lindsay.grossman@bc.edu)

The Boston College International and Comparative Law Review is one of approximately thirty law reviews in the United States devoted solely to international legal issues. ICLR publishes two issues annually. ICLR's scope is expansive, with topics that address a variety of international, foreign, and comparative law issues such as waterboarding as a form of torture, the Mafia's exploitation of the Syrian refugee crisis, regulating equity derivatives on world financial markets, human trafficking in the European Union, and international border dispute resolution.

Over the last several years, ICLR has become increasingly prominent in the international legal community. In each of the past three years, one of ICLR's student writers was awarded the prestigious Deak Award for the best student-written law review article in a student-edited international law journal. In addition, ICLR has sponsored symposia on cutting-edge issues of international law, including, in 2012, Filling Power Vacuums in the New Global Legal Order, which examined globalization's impact on trade, war, and the legal profession. Our most recent issues include student pieces on topics such as the international response to the Ebola epidemic, the copyright on Mickey Mouse, Russia-Ukraine relations following the annexation of Crimea, and potential liability for Airbnb, among others.

ICLR staff members write two pieces: a short comment in the fall and a longer note in the spring. The fall comment is eligible for publication in the online supplement, and the spring note is eligible for publication in either of the issues published the following year. ICLR publishes approximately eight student notes each year drawn from a fifteen-member staff. Students selected for ICLR membership take International Law during the fall semester of their 2L year. This course provides staff members with a basic understanding of the tenets of international law and helps them select dynamic, timely note topics.

IV. THE JOURNAL OF LAW & SOCIAL JUSTICE Brittany Campbell, Editor in Chief (brittany.campbell@bc.edu)

Founded in 1978, the Journal of Law & Social Justice—previously the Third World Law Journal—is a unique legal periodical that provides a progressive, alternative legal perspective on issues affecting underrepresented populations, human and civil rights, immigration, LGBT issues, women's and children's issues, and issues of disproportionate economic impact. The Journal has a distinguished history of publishing scholarship that advocates for a new perspective on issues affecting underrepresented populations wherever they exist—in the United States, other developed nations, or the developing world. Recent articles have addressed topics such as wrongful convictions, sex trafficking, same-sex marriage, poverty, and women's reproductive freedom. Generally, JLSJ addresses the complex matrix of social, economic and political crises confronting minority groups, indigenous cultures and under-industrialized nations. The Journal is highly ranked in multiple fields by Washington & Lee's national journal ranking system. According to their data, the JLSJ ranks in the top ten for human rights, family law, economics and minority, race, and ethnic issues.

Published twice annually, along with an online supplement, the JLSJ features articles by outside authors, student notes, and brief student comments. Second-year staff writers complete two substantive writing projects, both of which have the opportunity to be published: a brief case comment in the fall and a full-length note in the spring. In addition, the Journal occasionally hosts symposia. Most recently, the publication included an article addressing the private discrimination against same-sex couples that remains following the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision, and a note examining how colleges and universities can better respond to sexual assault complaints on their campuses. Due to the wide range of topics covered by the JLSJ, no course requirements exist for those students selected for membership, though members are encouraged to take an advanced legal research course in their 2L year. Students are generally encouraged to pursue any individual interests that fall within the Journal's broad scope. Because JLSJ scholarship often includes international issues, and issues of basic human rights and due process, however, students likely will find courses in administrative, criminal, immigration, international, or human rights law helpful.

V. THE UNIFORM COMMERCIAL CODE REPORTER-DIGEST

Will Peifer, Editor in Chief (peiferw@bc.edu)

The Uniform Commercial Code Reporter-Digest publishes approximately two hundred case law annotations annually, each pertaining to a section or sections of the Uniform Commercial Code. Practitioners rely on the Digest as a research tool to find case law on various commercial law topics. Digest annotations are succinct, yet complete, “snapshots” of commercial law decisions. An annotation presents an opinion’s salient facts, holding, and reasoning, thereby allowing practitioners to stay informed on recent developments in commercial law. These legal issues often arise in the context of contract disputes, tort claims, or bankruptcy proceedings, and typically relate to secured transactions, transactions in goods, banking, or investment securities. Digest annotations cover cases decided by all federal, state, and bankruptcy courts.

The Digest was founded in 1962 by the late William Willier, Professor of Law at Boston College. It is now published by Matthew Bender & Company, a division of LexisNexis. It is available online and in print. Since its inception, Boston College Law School students have been the sole source of annotations published by the Digest.

Digest members enjoy a diverse and immensely collaborative writing experience. Second-year students serve as staff writers and are responsible for annotating one significant commercial law case each week. Every staff writer is published fifteen to twenty times. Third-year editors train the staff writers and review all submissions, working one-on-one with a new writer each week to develop analytical and writing skills. These skills are essential and transferable to practice in any area of the law. Writers and editors also work closely with Professor Ingrid Hillinger, an expert in commercial law who has served as the Digest faculty advisor for more than twenty years. Professor Hillinger was named one of the 26 “best law teachers” in the country in 2013.

Digest members do not cite-check articles and are not required to write single topic notes. Second-year Digest members are required to take Secured Transactions in the fall of their second year. Digest participation satisfies the Upper-Level Writing graduation requirement.