



Dear students,

As we approach the mid-point of the first term, we hope you have all found the law school to be welcoming with positivity and optimism for the coming year. Despite this, you may find that the prospect of meeting all your obligations and commitments - curricular, extracurricular or personal - over the coming weeks may leave you, or your classmates, feeling anxious or overwhelmed. You are definitely not alone if you feel this way!

When stress levels are high, please keep in mind that this can manifest differently from student to student; and likewise, how people cope with or respond to stress can be similarly individualized. However, this doesn't mean you should expect to handle things on your own, nor does it mean you sacrifice your wellbeing for perceived academic gains.

Whether for yourself or for another law student, here are a few points and resources to keep in mind as you move forward through the year:

- ***Reaching out/asking for help is not a weakness*** – Whether working in a law firm, an NGO or another context, lawyers inevitably ask for help, whether in a professional or personal capacity. Once you are an articulated student, the Lawyers Assistance Program becomes available to you in your legal career. In law school, you can speak to members of the ALSS Executive, the Wellness Representative for the Equity & Diversity Committee ([Amjad Khadhair](#)), or other members of that Committee, including [Catriona Dooley](#), the Ombudsperson. Kaila Mikkelson, the Assistant Dean Students, is also another invaluable resource.
- ***Stress is not always academic*** – We are all here to gain a legal education and it goes a long way to show compassion to other law students who you notice may be struggling. Please remember that adversity can come from various non-academic factors and being kind to other law students does not have to come at the expense of our own success. Rarely will you find that law students are in direct competition with one another, there is no 'survival of the fittest' in law school. Sharing notes or CANs may even help you in the long run, too.
- ***Socialize and connect*** – There are *many* events at Allard Hall, all of which present an opportunity to become connected to your law school community. [Check out this month's events here](#).
- ***Justbalance.ca*** – This is an innovative [Canadian resource for law students](#) and an excellent starting point for addressing common sources of anxiety faced by law students.
- ***UBC Access and Diversity*** – If you believe you may need accommodation related to a disability or medical condition, this is a [resource available to all UBC students](#).
- ***UBC Counseling Services*** - If you feel you may benefit from [speaking to a counselor](#), you can book an appointment through this resource. [Click here](#) for information regarding academic concessions.
- ***Staying late on campus?*** While it is not advisable to regularly burn the midnight oil at Allard Hall, should you find yourself here late you have at least two resources available to you: (1) [Safewalk](#) (604-822-5355) – which operates 7 PM to 2 AM nightly and provides a co-ed team to walk/drive you to your destination on or near campus (2) [Commuter Student Hostel \(Walter Gage\)](#) – This is available Sunday through Thursday, and all week during exam periods. It is \$35/night and provides you with a place to sleep for the night. [Click here for more information](#).

If you are in first year, take it from an upper-year that you will be amazed at all that you can accomplish in 8 months. The time goes by very quickly! Making the most of it depends as much (if not more) on your attitude as your aptitude. In that regard, mindfulness and plenty of self-care will go a long way!

Sincerely,

Amjad Khadhair,
Wellness Representative, Equity and Diversity Committee
Allard Law Students' Society
amjad@ualberta.ca

Catriona Dooley,
Chair, Equity and Diversity Committee & Ombudsperson
Allard Law Students' Society
ombuds@allardlss.com