

*Student
Seminar*

Pi Mu Epsilon

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Thinking Like a Lawyer

by Jim Manning, Litigation Associate
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Jim Manning

It is often said that law school teaches one how to think like a lawyer. Law students and attorneys alike, however, complain that law school does not actually prepare students to practice law. Courses often utilize the Socratic method and employ case studies analyzing past legal decisions. Graduates must then separately study for and pass a state-specific bar exam designed to test their substantive knowledge in several areas of the law to become an attorney. During law school, professors taught us to apply law to facts and to defend our reasoning. While the experience was challenging, these critical thinking skills were similar to those I developed in math. I soon came to believe that thinking like a lawyer really meant thinking like a mathematician. In hindsight, I think it is more accurate that lawyers and mathematicians are trained to think like problem solvers. I will outline some problem-solving techniques that I learned from math and the law. Ultimately, I hope to show that a strong background in mathematics will serve one well in any field.

Bio: Jim is a litigation associate at the Moore & Van Allen law firm in Charlotte. Prior to joining the firm, Jim was a litigation associate in the New York office of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP and clerked for the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. Jim attended the UofSC Honors College. He double majored in Mathematics and Statistics, with a minor in Political Science. Jim attended the University of Virginia School of Law.

Tuesday 28th September 2021 at 7pm
Email sanders@math.sc.edu for Zoom link.

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