TEACHING THINKING
Piloting Advanced Legal Reasoning through Inverted Learning

Dr. Maria Cahill, University College Cork

Goals of Advanced Legal Reasoning as a Capstone Module

Legal skills: ease with argumentative nature of the discipline

Self-development: experience-based confidence in the process of
                                    reasoning

Employability: established capacity for collaborative critical thinking

Citizenship: experience-based capacity for dialogue with 'others'

Democracy: experience-based appreciation of the advantages of
                                   disagreement

Topic 1: Overview & Introduction Can Judges be Wrong?

Topic 2: Legal Certainty v. Legal Arguability *King v. AG* [1981] IR 233

Topic 4: Interpretation *Jordan v. Minister for Children* [2014] IEHC 327

Topic 6: The Universal v. the Particular *DPP v. Kenny* [1990] ILRM 569

Topic 7: Precedent *DPP v. Cash* [2007] IEHC 108; [2010] IESC 1

Participation (20%)
Contributions in-class and on online discussion boards throughout semester

Class Test (10%)
In-class assessment of the theoretical concepts

Assignment (70%)
Write a replacement judgment as if you were a judge in that case

Pre-reading (2+ hours)

20 minutes of student discussion

35 minutes of general discussion

10 minute break
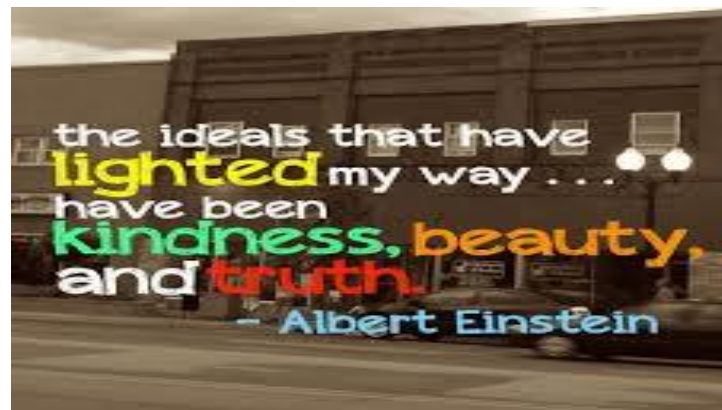
10 minute reflection on the discussion

45 minute interactive exposition of theoretical concepts

Inverted Learning Approach

(adaptation of the 'flipped classroom' principles for university setting)

1. Students have 'first exposure' Responsibility
2. Experimentation Encouraged
3. Expectation of Mastery
4. 'Humanise' the Classroom

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

School of Law
Scoil an Dlí

SHAPING A **JUST SOCIETY**
SINCE 1849

BE **PREPARED** NOT SCARED

SHOW ME HOW BIG YOUR BRAVE IS

ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE SPECTACULARLY WRONG

the ideals that have lighted my way... have been kindness, beauty, and truth.
– Albert Einstein

School of Law
Scoil an Dlí

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

SHAPING A **JUST SOCIETY**
SINCE 1849

Lectures were valuable	87.5% strongly agree	12.5% agree
Module was well organised	100% strongly agree	
Lecturer made the subject-matter interesting	100% strongly agree	
Lecturer provided clear explanations	87.5% strongly agree	12.5% disagree
Lecturer gave clear advice assessment preparation	62.5% strongly agree	37.5% agree
Module helped me to think critically	100% strongly agree	
I would recommend this module to other students	100% strongly agree	
Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this module	87.5% strongly agree	12.5% agree

School of Law
Scoil an Dlí

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

SHAPING A **JUST SOCIETY**
SINCE 1849

"The module made us challenge our presuppositions while creating a fruitful, respectful environment in which to do. I also liked the fact that it was an environment where you could make mistakes and learn from it … while our legal system is adversarial in nature, Dr Cahill ensured that the discussions in ALR never were - they were engaging, insightful and constructive."   Email from graduate, Feb 2019

"I find it difficult to think of any other that has had such an impact on my critical thinking and my application of legal theory, so I just wanted to let you know that I really appreciate the experience."   Email from student, Feb 2019

ALR was "the most engaging and interesting module I have studied, as well as the module I believe will benefit me the most in any legal career I pursue"

                                                                    Email from student, Jan 2019

UCC | School of Law
Scoil an Dlí

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

SHAPING A **JUST SOCIETY**
SINCE 1849

On Workload: I found the class interaction really engaging and this made me want to participate more and more every week - and equally to do more work by myself so that I was well prepared.

On Sense of Leadership within Learning Process: I felt that we progressed together as a class in our understanding of the different topics and I enjoyed the collegiate atmosphere that this created. I haven't experienced an atmosphere like it in any other module during my time at college. I made some new friends as well which is always nice!

On the Quality of Disagreements: What I liked the most was that disagreements never seemed to result in bad mood or personal attacks. Quite to the contrary, it usually resulted in curious observations and laughter.

Anonymous Feedback December 2018