March 6, 2010

True North: Navigating for the Transfer of Learning in Legal Education

Tonya Kowalski, Washburn University

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/tonya_kowalski/2/
TRUE NORTH: NAVIGATING FOR THE TRANSFER OF LEARNING IN LEGAL EDUCATION

Tonya Kowalski

ABSTRACT

As lifelong learners, we all know the feelings of discomfort and bewilderment that can come from being asked to apply existing skills in a completely new situation. As legal educators, we have also experienced the frustration that comes from watching our students struggle to identify and transfer skills from one learning environment to another. For example, a first-semester law student who learns to analogize case law to a fact pattern in a legal writing problem typically will not see the deeper applications for those skills in a law school essay exam several weeks later. Similarly, when law students learn how an equitable doctrine like unclean hands applies to a particular torts problem in one class, only the smallest percentage will then see the potential application for the doctrine in a contracts course with another professor. Fortunately, research in “transfer of learning” offers the legal academy tools to help students encode knowledge – whether doctrine or skills – in such a way that they know better when and how to retrieve it for later use.

This Article is the first to offer legal educators a comprehensive approach to the transfer of learning across the entire curriculum. It is also the first to propose that law schools should employ maps based on schema theory to help students encode knowledge for future transfer, as well as to conceptually integrate their courses. This approach uses meta-schema based on core lawyering skills—in both their abstract and applied forms—in order to help students attain a basic sense of orientation and to know how particular skills will manifest, depending on the contexts in which they are used. This “Core Skills Approach” then goes beyond the use of maps to encourage students to use maneuvers, including a wide array of transfer strategies, to cue previous knowledge across the conceptual bridges that span the distance between school and practice.

1 Associate Professor of Law, Washburn University School of Law, J.D., Duke University School of Law; B.A., University of Florida. I thank the many people who provided their valuable feedback on early drafts, particularly my colleagues, Michael Hunter Schwartz and Myrl Duncan, and my husband, Kent Corkum. Washburn Law Library’s Nancy Gray expertly located and managed an extraordinary number of crucial interlibrary loan materials. My students, past and present, stimulated my thinking about transfer and inspired my search for new answers. Finally, my research was guided in large part by the indispensable bibliographies in SARAH LEBERMAN, LEX MACDONALD, AND STEPHANIE DOYLE, THE TRANSFER OF LEARNING: PARTICIPANTS’ PERSPECTIVES OF ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING, infra note 14. All opinions and errors are my own.
# Table of Contents

I. **Introduction** 3

II. **The Evolution of Transfer Theory** 11
   A. Introduction: Types and Levels of Transfer 12
      1. Types of Transferrable Knowledge 15
      2. Types of Transfer 16
   B. A Brief History of Transfer Theories 18
      2. The Behavioral Approach 21
      3. The Cognitive Approaches 22
      4. Socio-Cultural Theories of Transfer 26
      5. Unified Approaches 28

III. **How Legal Education Has—and Has Not—Evolved to Teach for Transfer**
   A. The First Renaissance: Apprenticeships to Legal “Science” 30
   B. A “New Renaissance”: Clinical & Humanizing Movements 34
   C. The Current State of Legal Education 36

IV. **The Core Skills Approach: A Unifying Sequence of Transfer Tools** 38
   A. Maps and Schema: The Core Skills Compass and Applied Skills Guides 40
      1. Two Sets of Schema for Orientation by Lawyering Skills 41
      2. The Four Quadrants of the Core Skills Guide 44
   B. Maneuvers: Teaching (and Learning) for Transfer in Law School 49
      1. Hugging Strategies for Near Transfer 49
      2. Bridging Strategies for Far Transfer 51
   C. Motivation: Fostering Internal Incentives for More Effective Transfer 54
   D. Charting a Course for Transfer: Four Steps for Better Transfer of Learning in Law School 60

V. **Conclusion** 62
I. INTRODUCTION

There is no more important topic in the whole psychology of learning than transfer of learning . . . practically all educational and training programs are built upon the fundamental premise that human beings have the ability to transfer what they have learned from one situation to another.

---James Desse

As lifelong learners, we all know the feelings of discomfort and bewilderment that can come from being asked to apply existing skills in a completely new situation. As legal educators, we have also experienced the frustration that comes from our students’ struggle to identify and transfer skills from one learning environment to another. For example, a law student who learns to analogize case law to a fact pattern in a legal writing problem typically will not see the applications for those skills in a law school essay exam several weeks later. She may only learn that the same skills apply through an experience of trial, error, grade anxiety, and triage. Similarly, when law students learn how an equitable doctrine like unclean hands applies to a particular torts problem in one class, only the smallest percentage will then see the connection and potential application for the doctrine in a contracts course with another professor.

“Transfer of learning” is at the very essence of what lawyers do every day. The most classic example comes from formal legal analysis, where attorneys take both concrete rules and analogies from precedent and apply them to new legal problems. Of course, lawyers do learn to “transfer” these skills over time, but that period of time is a long one, and economic pressures demand of us that students leave law school better able to segue to the profession with a much shorter learning curve in core skills. Law students would benefit greatly if, when arriving from their undergraduate coursework, they were able to access and re-contextualize the reasoning, writing, and communication skills they learned there. While in law school, they would further benefit from a greater understanding about how to translate knowledge and skills to other courses, and eventually to practice.

3 See generally e.g. Laurel Currie Oates, I Know That I Taught Them How to Do That, 7 Legal Writing: J. Legal Writing Inst. 1 (2001).
Fortunately, we are in an era of legal education renaissance. In the decades since the Civil Rights Era, law schools and educators have slowly continued to answer the call to produce new lawyers who are proficient in core lawyering skills. Law schools are no longer purely pragmatic apprenticeship-model trade schools, as they were in previous centuries. Nor do they inhabit the other, more recent end of the spectrum, as purely theoretical academies seeking validation as legitimate courses of study. In these early years of the twenty-first century, the ongoing dialectic between theory and skills is settling into a still-uneasy hybrid of doctrinal and applied education. In order to nurture new lawyers who are “smart with a purpose,” the time has come for doctrinal and skills curriculums to be coordinated to a greater degree than in the past. The need for greater integration of skills and doctrine within legal education has resulted in many calls to teach core lawyering skills across the curriculum. As this call is heeded, students will be asked to apply lawyering skills within doctrinal classes that have not traditionally been a forum for learning and practicing them. This integration will create a tremendous need for educational tools designed to help students “transfer” their learning from doctrine to practice and back again. And fortunately, an entire subfield of education and cognitive psychology called “transfer of learning” has insights and tools to offer to legal education. This Article is the first to comprehensively examine transfer theory as a method to integrate the larger law curriculum.

6 See generally Best Practices, supra note 4.
7 See Educating Lawyers, supra note 5 at 25.
8 See id., supra note 5 at 25 (inferring the generally-accepted notion that the move to purely doctrinal law study was a largely reactionary movement away from the stigma of trade school status).
9 Id., supra note 5 at 142.
The problem of skills transfer is not unique to professional schools; it has stymied educators and students all the way from pre-school to the workplace. Somewhat maddeningly, the “double paradox” is that transfer is the ultimate goal of education, yet the hardest one to achieve. That paradox has not been lost on psychologists and learning theorists:

[M]ost researchers and educational practitioners, whether ‘liberal’ or ‘conservative,’ agree—a rare event, indeed—that meaningful transfer of learning is among the most—if not the most fundamental issue in all of education. They also agree that transfer of learning seldom occurs.

Transfer theory, which comes to us under many names and from numerous disciplines, shows that students tend to acquire knowledge by storing and encoding it in schematics—which are also called cognitive “maps” or mental models—that are tied to the subject and the learning environment. These, in turn, act as original examples with which to evaluate future learning environments and to reason by similarity. Colleagues from the university can pass each other completely unnoticed in the supermarket because their schemas do not have a place for each other in the mundane, supermarket environment. In a cross-cultural example, Indigenous

12, 13 See id. at 3. See also id. at 13, quoting Anthony Marini & Randy Genereaux, The Challenge of Teaching for Transfer, in ANNE MCKEOUGH, JUDY LUPART, AND ANTHONY MARINI, TEACHING FOR TRANSFER: FOSTERING GENERALIZATION IN LEARNING 7 (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 1995) (“Unfortunately, achieving significant transfer of learning has proven to be a difficult chore. Dating back to the beginning of this century, the research literature on transfer is replete with reports of failure.”).
16 LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 15.
17 Id. at 15.
18 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 58.
speakers and writers have explained that many First Peoples tie their stories and knowledge to physical locations in the sacred cosmology of the land.\textsuperscript{19} Although normally, knowledge is highly bound to specific patterns, people can learn to create more freedom of access between stored areas of knowledge by using broader, intersecting schematics.\textsuperscript{20} Research shows that humans store information in schema according to the similarities between patterns in situations they experience.\textsuperscript{21} Yet they retrieve information according to the differences between situation patterns.\textsuperscript{22} The more schemas a person has available for comparison, the better a pervasive schematic can illuminate the differences between patterns in situations, training the brain to search for knowledge that can be generalized and applied to solve a new problem.\textsuperscript{23} Therefore, because human beings tie their learning to very specific patterns, any solution to the transfer problem in law school must involve the search for highly inclusive meta-schematics that can span multiple contexts, as well as by stimulating students to access those cognitive maps through learner motivation\textsuperscript{24} and metacognitive strategies.\textsuperscript{25} For example, imagine how helpful it would be to discover cognitive templates that could help students bridge analytical skills from first year legal writing to writing for clinic; doctrinal knowledge from classroom discussion in Constitutional Law to the final examination; and doctrinal knowledge from first-year Torts and Contracts to a tortious interference suit encountered five years later, in law practice.

When law students are asked to bridge discrete, locally-bound knowledge and skills into uncharted waters, they can feel lost at sea. When oceangoing explorers are lost at sea, they navigate according to maps based on a set of thematic constants, like the Big Dipper or the North Star, to provide them with a basic sense of orientation. Law students and their instructors can do the same. This Article offers a method called the Core Skills Approach, which is expressed within three broad categories: Maps, Maneuvers, and Motivation. In law school, the stars that shine throughout

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{20}Leberman et al., \textit{supra} note 14 at 14-15.
  \item \textsuperscript{21}David A. Sousa, \textit{How the Brain Learns} 142 (3d ed., Corwin Press 2006).
  \item \textsuperscript{22}Id. at 142-43.
  \item \textsuperscript{23}Leberman et al., \textit{supra} note 14 at 14-15.
  \item \textsuperscript{24}Haskell, \textit{supra} note 2 at 117.
  \item \textsuperscript{25}Robin A. Boyle, \textit{Employing Active-Learning Techniques and Metacognition in Law School: Shifting Energy from Professor to Student}, 81 U. Detroit Mercy L. Rev. 1, 7 (2003); Leberman et al., \textit{supra} note 14 at 15.
\end{itemize}
every aspect of law study and practice are the various categories of core lawyering skills, for example, formal analysis, critical reasoning, advocacy, and professionalism. These broad categories of skills are needed for even the most basic level of functioning throughout almost every practice area. Thus, core lawyering skills provide ideal thematic constants, or “constellations,” upon which to base pervasive cognitive maps. Although the process of identifying them is relatively simple, it is crucial in that it provides the basic sense of orientation necessary to engage in the more detailed transfer navigation found later in the sequence. For example, if students can train themselves to see that all of their courses, as well as law practice, call for them to be good advocates, to apply formal legal analysis to problems they face, and so on, they are more likely to anticipate applications for their learning and to draw from past experience in new situations.

These many skills constellations form a familiar, comprehensive, and highly relevant horizon against which to effect transfer. This Article provides a map called the “Core Skills Compass,” which is based on core lawyering skills in their fixed, abstract forms. The core skills compass can act as one component of an overall approach to transfer, with the capacity to transform the perception of law school from a collection of disparate courses to a continuum of thematically-related elements. Students can then obtain the power to view the legal curriculum holistically. This simple insight, however humble it initially appears to be, provides the basic sense of orientation necessary to pursue sequential, increasingly specific methods for achieving transfer, as well as for making it progressively more instinctive.

From this core foundation, more detailed transfer is enabled through more specific maps, called “Navigational Guides,” which are oriented toward core lawyering skills as they manifest within applied and highly contextualized settings such as the classroom, exams, and practice. For example, extremely different areas of formal analysis and critical reasoning are emphasized depending on whether the applied environment has to do with a formal exam, a take home exam, an informal memo, or classroom discussion. Very different aspects of advocacy are emphasized depending on whether they are being expressed in an objective, holistic, or persuasive setting. Professionalism takes many different forms depending on whether it is expressed in student life, client representation, courtroom advocacy, or

26 In terms of maps, the skill sets can also be thought of as lines of orientation similar to latitude and longitude, by which we orient according to a basic sense of relatedness and similarity across different learning contexts. In a yet another analogy, these general categories could be thought of as elemental threads whose interaction and clustering form the warp and weft underlying the fabric of the entire law school curriculum, and out of which more specific applications are embroidered.
community leadership settings. Using the navigational guides enables students to move beyond abstractions by providing comforting familiarity and detailed knowledge about where they are going; in this way, their learning can be stored and encoded for easier and more effective retrieval within those future settings. To illustrate, a student might recognize that she is being asked to undertake formal analysis in both her legal writing class and her doctrinal exams, but needs the help of navigational guides for each core skills cluster, like those in the Appendix, to see how that analysis should be expressed in somewhat different forms.

Like oceangoing explorers, law student-navigators and their teacher-guides can also find their way by becoming expert sailors, and learning the maneuvers necessary to consciously identify and take advantage of the conditions most favorable for quick and successful travel. In addition to the cognitive maps involving core lawyering skills, law schools can encourage transfer through the skillful maneuvers found in the form of several transfer techniques, such as metacognitive exercises that are specially designed to bridge between contexts. Based on the research of top transfer theorist David Perkins and others, ten strategies can help students tackle new contexts, depending on how similar or different they are to the original learning environment. For example, in a similar, or near context, a Contracts course might teach the parol evidence rule along with an exercise to draft an integration clause. In a far, disparate context, a clinician might design a metacognitive reflection exercise to help a student write her first motion based on the essential structures and techniques she learned for persuasive appellate briefing in her first-year analysis course. In addition, students and professors can create fair weather for transfer by emphasizing student motivations based on mastery, growth, service, and professional identity over motivations based on punishment and reward.

Again, the core skills approach expresses itself through the three main categories of maps, maneuvers, and motivation, all centered on the concept of lawyering skills. As explored in the later section on applications, newer law students can use this approach to help them identify what skills or knowledge are called for in a given situation, to judge what form they should take based on changing contexts, to mindfully approach transfer using a matrix for accessing one’s existing skills and information, and to link generalized skills and knowledge to a particular new assignment by using a metacognitive reflection exercise tailored to that assignment. Ideally, this approach will help students to create bridges between their prior learning

---

28 E.g. Haskell, supra note 2 at 116-18, 125-32.
and the endless variety of applications in which they find themselves involved. For example, such bridges could traverse the distance between learning how to cross examine a witness and then taking a deposition, learning how to apply the canons of construction to statutory interpretation and then evaluating the similarities and differences when applying a different set of canons to the interpretation of contracts, or learning how to read a Supreme Court case for racial context and then articulating a culturally based narrative for an asylum applicant.

A baseline metacognitive exercise provided later in this Article prompts the student to use more transfer tools like anticipation, generalization, and analogy, as well as to identify holistic motivators to activate brain centers that promote both learning and performance. For example, when a student undertakes any new task, whether it is outlining, case briefing, or writing a paper, the exercise will ask her to determine what skills are called for and in what form, to consider what resources are available, to think about what generalized information from this or other courses might aid her inquiry, and so on. It will also remind her that it will be easier to perform the task well if she can activate the parts of her brain that respond to altruistic, humanistic motives, such as helping a client to overcome crisis, serving justice, or becoming a better professional. Up to this point, students can use the tools with little professor intervention—perhaps with an orientation model at the beginning and mid-point of the first year, along with occasional class discussion.

Finally, professors can help their students by designing tailored reflective exercises that are matched to the goals and requirements of a specific assignment. Questions will cue students to look for useful knowledge from the current module, previous modules, and even prior coursework. They can prompt reflection on certain topics that the professor finds are often overlooked, as well as to look for creative analogies and distinctions. The questions can also connect the material to real-life stories in order to increase internal motivation. Although the previous steps can stand alone, the customized reflective exercises promise to unify the entire

29 See Appendix, infra.
approach, bringing the student’s broader insights about the curriculum and learning goals down into the narrow application at hand, to encode with the very particular material being learned. To take advantage of the various transfer strategies promoted in the literature, professors can adapt their tailored transfer exercises from the all-purpose transfer exercise provided in the Appendix. Examples for a clinic motion assignment and casebook essay examination are provided. Although educators will make an investment of time up front, roughly the same tailored reflection exercise can be used for similar assignments, year after year. Maps, maneuvers, and motivations work synergistically within the carefully thought-out sequence of the Core Skills Approach, taking on strength in combination that they might not have had before.

In the sections that follow, this Article will explore the scientific and pedagogical underpinnings for the core skills approach, followed by a section exploring a suggested set of maps, maneuvers, and motivational concerns based on the scientific literature. The applications and appendix contain sample schemas, guides, and modules that professors and students alike can adapt to suit their own needs and tastes, all in the process of designing their own cartographies of legal education. It is crucial to note that I am presenting these methods within my own highly sequenced application as just one specific example, in order to inspire educators to draw upon the principles involved to craft approaches suitable to their own unique circumstances and responsibilities. For example, this format is based on an ideal where the model is used across the entire curriculum, but can easily be scaled down to facilitate transfer between a few targeted courses such as Federal Indian Law and Tribal Court Clinic, Civil Procedure and Civil Clinic, or first year Property and upper-level Real Estate Transactions.
II. THE EVOLUTION OF TRANSFER THEORY

Transfer theory has been with us for decades, and it reached a peak of popularity and fashion in the 1980s and early 1990s. Still, it remains a relatively small field in education and learning psychology, often viewed as anything from a utopian ideal to an abject failure. As with most things, the truth probably lies somewhere in between: we cannot perfect transfer, but we can make it faster and more effective. To date, no legal scholarship presents a comprehensive overview of transfer theory. Because this Article is intended to contribute some of the theoretical underpinnings for this and future discussions about how transfer can benefit legal education, it will begin with a survey of transfer models. Then, it will not just parrot material from existing models, but will actually simplify and adapt them for use by the legal academy, including very specific tools that can be used in orientation programs, academic support programs, casebook courses, and skills courses. Wherever possible, I have also condensed and simplified terms and concepts to suit an audience of end-users who, like me, are not themselves learning theorists. Although the scientific terminology can be dense, sometimes it is necessary in order to distinguish between similar concepts.

Because transfer studies teach us that it is also important to understand the history of our primary field of study, this section will also look at the evolution of transfer theory from earlier schools, like the formal disciplines approach, to behavioralism, to more recent schools, which emphasize cognition. As we progress, we will see that although some view the evolution of cognitive and allied theories as a linear improvement from earlier models, it seems to work better as a continuum that allows the learning community to draw from each school of thought. For example, some stimulus/response methods associated with a behavioral approach could work well for simple transfer tasks, whereas more complex transfers require emphasis on the cognitive process.

To begin, it is essential to begin with some elemental, working definitions of transfer. Anthony Marini and Randy Generaux broadly define transfer as involving “prior learning affecting new learning or performance.” Others describe it as a situation in which “. . . information learned at one time comes to influence learning

32 See HASKELL, supra note 2 at 78.
33 See id. at xiii-xiv.
34 Id. at 101-109.
35 LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 13.
36 MCKEOUGH ET AL., supra note 36 at 2.
and performance at a later time.” Transfer is also referred to as the “carrying over” of learning from one domain to another. Similarly, Gagne, Vekovich, and Vekovich define it as “the application of knowledge learned in one setting or for one purpose to another setting and/or purpose.” Finally, Robert E. Haskell, who developed one of the most comprehensive theories of learning transfer, defines the phenomenon as:

> [T]he basis of mental abstraction, analogical relations, classification, generalization, generic thinking, induction, invariance, isomorphic relations, logical inference, metaphor, and constructing mental models . . . . Indeed, transfer is so fundamental that to explain it is to repeat the same thing over and over, using different terms from different fields, in different context, on different levels of abstraction, and in different orders of magnitude.

As Haskell suggests, transfer theory potentially intersects almost countless fields of study, including education, behavioral psychology, cognitive psychology, vocational training, and corporate training. This section will present transfer theories along a loosely chronological trajectory, from the “classical” through the behavioral, cognitive, and socio-cultural perspectives.

A. Introduction: Types and Levels of Transfer

To begin, transfer gets harder as it moves up the hierarchy from general to applied and contextual transfers. First, general transfer is occurring all the time in our everyday lives. It happens almost instinctively whenever we build upon our previous, general knowledge and learn new information or skills. For example, our ability to learn a new language builds upon many of the same skills used to learn our

---

37 JAMES M. ROYER, JOSE P. MESTRE, AND ROBERT J. DUFRESNE, INTRODUCTION: FRAMING THE TRANSFER PROBLEM, IN TRANSFER OF LEARNING FROM A MODERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE viii (Jose P. Mestre, ed., Information Age Publishing 2005).
38 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 26.
40 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 26.
41 See LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 9-35 & Table 2.1.
42 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 29-30.
43 Id. at 29. Haskell also refers to general transfer as “non-specific” transfer. Id.
44 Id.
native tongue. For those of us that grew up before personal computers became commonplace, our ability to perform searches in Westlaw or Google builds upon the skills we learned when we became proficient with indexes and card catalogues. Next, applied transfer happens when a student uses general knowledge in a practical setting. For example, a student might learn about the West key number system and West’s “outline of the law” in his legal writing class, and then use those tools to complete a research exercise. Finally, contextual transfer occurs when the student crosses into a new problem or discipline, such as when learning to break down a burglary statute into elements in Criminal Law, and then drafting the elements of a constructive eviction complaint for a live-client case in poverty law clinic.

While we are concerned with all three types of transfer in legal education, contextual transfer is predictably the most vexing for students and teachers alike. For this reason, transfer theorists break contextual transfer into a few different levels: Haskell identifies three: near, far, and creative. The first two, near and far transfer, come from the work of David Perkins and Gavriel Salomon. According to their “Good Shepherd” theory, the instructor guides and nurtures the student’s learning by using specific teaching strategies designed along a continuum, depending on how close or attenuated the new context feels from the student’s experience. A classic example of near transfer is learning first to drive a car and then a truck. The required skills are not exactly the same, but most apply very clearly, such as steering, shifting gears, and so on. An example from law studies might be learning to brief cases for a doctrinal class. Learning to brief just a few case decisions leads to general case-briefing skills that can be used to dissect any opinion. With a little bit of practice, the student quickly learns that for each case, she must identify the facts, holding, rationale, and so on.

Transfer is a critical event for law instruction. Near transfer, which, in the law context, involves simple application of rules and

45 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at ix.
46 For non-legal readers, West Publishing’s Key Number System is a topical indexing system for rules and holdings announced in judicial opinions.
47 The “outline of the law” is the primary West categorization system for legal topics, which appears inside the front cover of any digest volume.
48 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 29.
49 Id. at 13. Here, the word “contextual” is used differently than in Haskell’s typology, and carries with it the connotation of using similar tasks across far-reaching learning domains.
50 Id. at 30. See also Perkins & Salomon, supra note 27 at 25-26.
51 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at ix.
52 See id. at ix.
case holdings to facts, is considered a basic level skill. ***

Because law professors frequently require students to apply rules and case holdings to new fact patterns, near transfer regularly occurs in legal education. To facilitate greater near transfer, instructors teaching contracts principles could encourage students to connect those principles to the common contexts in which they arise.53

When moving across the curriculum, it is probably easier to identify examples of far transfer, as these tend to be the most troubling. The very essence of law practice is the ability to draw upon a set of core lawyering skills when faced with diverse facts and legal disciplines. A novice attorney faces a far transfer problem when she has experience writing a motion and brief on summary judgment in a tortious-interference-with-contract case, but then must write an appellate brief in a consumer protection matter. As former novices ourselves, we can all remember a time when we struggled when confronted with a new type of work product or a new area of law, desperately searching for what we hoped would be the perfect treatise, form, or sample brief to save the day. We all learned through trial and error that what worked best was to reflect upon our core knowledge base and our core skills like critical reading and identifying creative analogies, and to acquire new knowledge in the unfamiliar field of law.

Far transfer is a mark of excellence for practicing lawyers. Trial and appellate lawyers who are able to persuade courts to shift the application of principles beyond their initially apparent application to a previously unencountered problem are considered experts. Transactional lawyers demonstrate their expertise by transferring principles of law from cases and statutes into their drafting implications. *** Far transfer occurs much less frequently in legal education. To facilitate far transfer, instructors can encourage students to brainstorm broader applications of new contracts learning or to consider the contract drafting implications of that learning.54

The third type, creative transfer, happens when the learner envisions applications in uncharted areas, or identifies a new concept.55 Many such examples come from

53 Schwartz, Teaching Law by Design, supra note 11 at 419.
54 Schwartz, Teaching Law by Design, supra note 11 at 419.
55 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 30 (also referring to this concept as “displacement” transfer).
interdisciplinary studies, such as applying psychology to jury selection, or critical cultural and racial studies to litigation involving school desegregation. As shown below, these creative leaps become increasingly likely when the learner is well-versed in both disciplines.

When pioneering transfer theorists David N. Perkins and Gavriel Salomon identified near and far transfer in 1988, they called for a set of teaching strategies or maneuvers for each. Combined, they are often referred to as “teaching for transfer.” “Hugging” strategies help call the student’s attention to the close relationships between contexts and identify opportunities for transfer. Simply put, when people hug, there is very little distance between them. Hugging strategies include setting expectations for the students, matching the lesson design to the desired outcome, simulating the applied setting, modeling the desired outcome, and providing problem-based learning opportunities. They will be explored further in the section on applications. For farther-removed contexts, Perkins and Salomon identified the need for “bridging” methods to help the student leap across the gap between contexts. Bridges provide safe passage between two places, even though those places may remain far apart. Bridging asks us to anticipate applications for the methods and knowledge being learned, to train in abstracting and generalizing concepts from one context that may have broad application in others, to learn to skillfully and creatively find and use analogies, to practice parallel problem solving so that students can see how what they are learning can be used in myriad new situations, and to guide students in metacognitive reflection about their own learning, thinking, planning, and analytical processes. As with hugging, these maneuvers will be explored later in this Article.

---

56 See generally Perkins & Salomon, supra note 27.
57 See generally FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27.
59 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at 33.
60 Id. at 39.
61 Id. at 45.
62 Id. at 51.
63 Id. at 57.
65 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at 67.
66 Id. at 73.
67 Id. at 79.
68 Id. at 85.
69 Id. at 91.
1. Types of Transferrable Knowledge

Haskell’s model identifies several varieties of transferrable knowledge, including content (what lawyers might call the substantive law), skills, strategy, conditions, and theory.\(^{70}\) Law schools are good at teaching substance and theory in the abstract, and are improving at teaching skills. They have been criticized for their ability to teach real-world problem solving,\(^{71}\) which would tend to require greater abstractions, such as knowing which strategies to apply and when to use them. While legal education is primarily concerned with encouraging students to transfer blackletter rules and basic analytical techniques, everyone can benefit from seeing the kinds of transferrable knowledge that are often overlooked but make us more well-rounded lawyers. In fact, studies like Best Practices argue that much more than analysis and subject-matter competence go into the toolbox we call core lawyering skills.\(^{72}\) We should also include value-driven skills like professionalism and cultural literacy.\(^{73}\) Strategic and conditional knowledge also apply to knowledge about one’s own learning, and about how to improve one’s own transfer. As with other studies supporting the use of metacognition, research shows that transfer improves when students become aware of what learning strategies worked for them in the past, as well as what kinds of knowledge are appropriate to use in a new context.\(^{74}\)

Similarly, in the Mindful School model, Fogarty, Perkins, and Barell cast the different kinds of transferrable knowledge into six categories: knowledge (again, the substantive law), skills, concepts, attitudes, principles, and dispositions.\(^{75}\) They define concepts as “umbrella themes” that span a discipline or even a larger universe.\(^{76}\) Attitudes involve a student’s emotions and affect toward learning, while dispositions tend to involve more habitual behaviors and tendencies.\(^{77}\) Under this model, attitudes and dispositions probably dovetail well with professionalism, legal ethics, and student motivation.\(^{78}\)

\(^{70}\) Haskell, supra note 2 at 31-32.
\(^{71}\) See Best Practices, supra note 4 at 18-29.
\(^{72}\) Id. at 52-54.
\(^{74}\) Haskell, supra note 2 at 31.
\(^{75}\) Fogarty et al., supra note 27 at 5.
\(^{76}\) Id.
\(^{77}\) Id.
\(^{78}\) Id.
For legal educators, I propose grouping these concepts into a hybrid model in order to include the all-important skill set we call professionalism. In this hybrid model, *substance* becomes the student’s grounding in the content of a legal discipline, such as knowing the elements of the various crimes for Criminal Law, different types of jurisdiction in Civil Procedure, and different levels of scrutiny in Constitutional Law. *Process-driven skills* include both learning and lawyering skills that have a discernible methodology, such as outlining a brief, using IRAC to answer an exam problem, or engaging in metacognitive reflection when approaching a new assignment. *Problem-solving strategy* is harder to pin down. As Haskell described strategic transfer, it might involve learning strategies themselves, such as remembering that completing extra practice exams enhanced performance in one class, and remembering to use the same approach the following year. For legal education, it should also involve lawyering strategy, such as when to introduce an alternative argument in a brief, how to address a difficult counterargument, and so on. I prefer to group all kinds of self-awareness of one’s learning process together into one category, as seen in the graphic below. Thus *Attitudes and orientations* could (and should) include professionalism concepts such as commitment to public service, an orientation toward ethical practice, and so on. *Theoretical and critical understanding* are the deeper kinds of reflective, thoughtful insight into the material that come with good learning skills and a high degree of student motivation and self-direction. They might also include analogical reasoning, which Fogarty, Perkins, and Barell define as a core bridging tool for far-flung contexts.

2. Types of Transfer

Haskell breaks down different kinds of transfer into approximately eight varieties, depending upon factors like whether they use prerequisite knowledge in a higher-order discipline or simply move laterally, and whether the knowledge or skills transfer literally to the new context or first require some degree of abstraction and generalization in order to apply. These fine distinctions between transfer species are helpful to social scientists, who engage in empirical research and measure causal factors and outcomes. But for our purposes in teaching and curricular design, a much more general scheme proposed by Fogarty, Perkins, and Barell is probably more suitable. They call these the “somewheres of transfer,” and the three

---

79 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 31.
80 See id. at 115-32.
81 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at 63-79.
82 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 31-32.
categories are (1) within content, (2) across disciplines, and (3) into life. In law school, which for most students will represent their final field of study, we are most concerned with the ability to transfer skills within the law school experience and into ecological learning environments like clinic, externship, and, ultimately, law practice. Thus Perkins’s three “somewheres” likely would translate for us into transfer (1) within the same course, (2) across the law curriculum, and (3) into law practice.

B. A Brief History of Transfer Theories: From Formal Disciplines to Metacognition

Depending on one’s needs, there are a few different ways to categorize the various transfer schools. First, chronological exploration shows how the more comprehensive, contemporary models evolved from early schools of thought, and will appear in greater detail in the next section. Second, transfer theories also tend to divide into two camps, depending on whether they place the locus of responsibility for transfer on the learning environment or on the student himself. Those that favor the environment tend to focus their energies on improving things like curriculum and teaching methods. Those that put the onus on the student tend to emphasize the learner’s motivation or cognitive process. A third way to categorize transfer theories is by their emphasis on one of three major causal factors for successful transfer: (1) conceptual/content knowledge; (2) procedural/strategic knowledge, or (3) the student’s disposition toward learning. According to Marini and Genereaux, those that emphasize content knowledge, including basic facts, core concepts, and schematic relationships, posit that mastering a subject will spontaneously stimulate the student to use effective transfer strategies. In contrast, scientists who stress procedural knowledge as the most important cause for transfer tend to focus on the learner’s awareness of the specific steps within a task, as well as meta-cognitive strategies for monitoring and evaluating one’s own thinking. Finally, the third group stresses the centrality of learner dispositions, such as

83 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at 97-99.
84 Royer et al., supra note 37 at xii-xvi.
85 Id.
86 Id.
87 Marini & Genereaux, supra note 13 at 7.
88 Id. at 7.
89 Id. at 7, 9.
90 Id. at 7.
“perseverance, openness to new experiences, willingness to take risks, self-confidence, and desire to perform optimally.”

For now, these classification systems serve as a wide-angle lens for understanding how the various transfer theories developed. They can help the reader to see how law schools have followed—or overlooked—important developments in education over the years, as well as to envision how these approaches might work in law school classrooms today. In the evolutionary history that follows, it may strike most law-trained readers how traditional legal education relies almost exclusively on developing content knowledge. The Langdellian model has relied on the tacit assumption that as long as students immerse themselves in Contracts, Torts, and Criminal Procedure, they will later intuit how to apply that knowledge to solve complex problems in practice. One can also see how the more recent, cognitive and socio-cultural approaches have influenced the current push for skills training. It has even resulted in occasional calls to move to the other extreme in the form of a more purely clinical law school, although it is not clear from the literature that the model’s proponents want to abandon formal training in the doctrinal subject areas. Recent models also have influenced the humanizing legal education movement, which, among other things, invites us to pay better attention to learner motivation.

Later, as we explore specific applications for transfer theory within law school, the three divisions will become less important. This Article proposes that each approach has something to offer, and that content, skills, and learner motivation are equally central to the transfer process.

1. The Formal Disciplines Model: A “Classical” Approach

The formal discipline theory is the point of departure in our chronology of transfer theories. The formal disciplines approach emerged from classical education

---

91 Id.
93 See Philip C. Kissam, Lurching Towards the Millennium: The Law School, the Research University, and the Professional Reforms of Legal Education, 60 Ohio St. L.J. 1965, 2014 (1999) (“[i]n a ‘quasi-clinical’ law school, fewer class hours would be devoted to case method analysis in doctrinal courses and class hours might be reduced to permit more professorial attention to providing feedback on writing projects—through in-class comments, individual conferences, and brief written comments on a student’s writing or outlines for a writing project.”)
in general, and from Aristotle’s faculty psychology in particular.\textsuperscript{94} The approach presumed that transfer would happen automatically when learning a well-chosen curriculum of formal arts and sciences\textsuperscript{95}, and as a result of the learner’s intellectual faculties such as “memory, attention, and judgment” being enhanced in the process.\textsuperscript{96} It was not the inherent content of the topics being taught that made them useful, but rather their value in training the faculties of the mind necessary for transfer.\textsuperscript{97} However, content was still considered very important to formal disciplines proponents, albeit indirectly: only a carefully-chosen core curriculum, such as “astronomy, grammar, logic, and mathematics” could train the mental faculties.\textsuperscript{98} In the classical curriculum, the primary methods for developing the student’s faculties were rote memorization and imitation.\textsuperscript{99} Later, the formal disciplines approach came under critique by pragmatists like John Dewey\textsuperscript{100} and legal realists like Jerome Frank\textsuperscript{101} and Karl Llewellyn.\textsuperscript{102} More recent research has shown that, despite the careful selection of a classical core curriculum, those particular subjects are no more likely to enhance mental faculties in general, and transfer in particular, than are most others.\textsuperscript{103} As a result of this kind of critique, the formal disciplines approach has been largely set aside in many educational settings.\textsuperscript{104} Nevertheless, the formal disciplines approach seems to form the genesis for the Langdellian model, which has represented the default design for legal education since the late 1800s.\textsuperscript{105} Although the doctrinal subject approach in law school certainly has its critics, it turns out that adherence to the formal legal disciplines may not necessarily be a bad thing for transfer. While modern research shows that the disciplines cannot hope to achieve transfer in a vacuum—students

\textsuperscript{94} Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 9.

\textsuperscript{95} Haskell, supra note 2 at 79.

\textsuperscript{96} Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 9.

\textsuperscript{97} Id. at 9.

\textsuperscript{98} Id.

\textsuperscript{99} Id.


\textsuperscript{101} See generally Frank, supra note 92.

\textsuperscript{102} See generally Karl Llewellyn, supra note 92.

\textsuperscript{103} Cathlin MacCaulay, Transfer of Learning, in TRANSFER OF LEARNING IN PROFESSIONAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION 2 (Vivienne E. Cree & Cathlin MacCaulay, eds., Routledge 2000), citing E.L. Thorndyke & R.S. Woodworth, The Influence of Improvement in One Mental Function upon the Efficiency of Other Functions, 8 Psychology Rev. 247-61 (1901).

\textsuperscript{104} E.g. Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 9; Haskell, supra note 2 at 79.

\textsuperscript{105} See Educating Lawyers, supra note 5 at 4-7.
still need to adopt some conscious transfer strategies—we will see that they do provide the core knowledge base necessary to foster general knowledge that can be transferred to new situations.\footnote{HASKELL, supra note 2 at 101-10.}

2. The Behavioral Approach

Many readers will recall studying the behavioral schools, often famously epitomized by stimulus generalization theory and Pavlov’s dogs. In one example, a dog was classically conditioned to salivate at a 500 Hz tone, and then further conditioned to salivate proportionally and symmetrically when it heard tones above and below 500 Hz.\footnote{Royer et al., supra note 37 at xiii.} The rate of salivation was strongest at 500 Hz, the original learning tone, and decreased proportionately when the dog heard tones above and below the original tone by increments of 25 Hz.\footnote{Id.} This research led to the associationism\footnote{LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 11.} explanation\footnote{Royer et al., supra note 37 at xii-xiii.} for transfer of learning, such as the identical elements\footnote{Royer et al., supra note 37 at xiii.} model. In that model, Thorndike and Woodworth posited that transfer happens only when the primary and secondary learning domains share concrete, similar elements.\footnote{LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 12.} According to this view, if the number of shared elements between learning contexts increase, so does the amount and likelihood of transfer.\footnote{HASKELL, supra note 2 at 81, citing C.H. Judd, The Relation of Special Training and General Intelligence, 36 EDUC. REV. 42-48 (1908).} Critics point out that because scientists only produced this stimulus gradient in an isolated, laboratory setting, the theory fails to address many other dimensions vital to transfer, and has little value in an applied classroom setting.

One major flaw in the behavioral model is that it fails to take into account the importance of the need to generalize learning in order to apply it in new contexts. Charles Judd pointed out that transfer occurs “by way of understanding the abstract general principle underlying a phenomenon which can then be applied to situations that do not possess obvious identical elements.”\footnote{LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 12.} Bower and Hilgard said of the generalization approach, which falls under the cognitive approaches’ umbrella, is that “one of the advantages of learning by understanding rather than by rote is that understanding is transposable to a wider range of situations, and less often leads to
erroneous applications of old learning.\footnote{Lебerman et al., supra note 14 at 13.} The generalization approach also identifies meaning as an important cohesive force, whose presence is necessary to the comprehension and adaptability of general principles.\footnote{Id.} For this reason, stimulus generalization theory has some limited utility mostly for explaining near transfer, where the new context is so close to the original learning domain that little generalization is required.\footnote{Haskell, supra note 2 at 80.}

I agree with these critics that the behavioralist theory is of limited use in law school, not only because adult human learners are not sufficiently analogous to other animal learners, but also because the most important transfer problems in legal education involve bridging knowledge and skills to far contexts, rather than near. Stimulus generalization theory requires both the former and new context to have a high degree of similar, concrete features.\footnote{Lебerman et al., supra note 14 at 11-12.} For example, there is very little about an exam question involving a Fourth Amendment traffic stop that cues the student to use analytical strategies learned in the negligent infliction of emotional distress memo problem from her legal writing course. Solving even the most routine legal problems requires learners to generalize from the lessons and principles learned in one field, or in one clinical experience, and then to apply them to an entirely new legal problem.

3. The Cognitive Approaches

Cognitive research forms an umbrella category for several diverse transfer sub-theories. They all orbit around the central idea that transfer results from finding conceptual similarity between learning contexts, rather than the structural similarity emphasized by earlier approaches.\footnote{Royer et al., supra note 37 at xvi.} They also emphasize the importance of the professor’s role in facilitating, or “shepherding,”\footnote{Lебerman et al., supra note 14 at 17.} the student in finding the conceptual similarities needed to connect their learning. This is true, whether talking about “hugging” or low-road transfer, or “bridging,” which refers to high-road transfer.\footnote{Id.} Out of the dozens of cognitive theories that touch upon transfer, this Article will focus on (1) schema theory, which studies how the brain organizes and stores knowledge,\footnote{MacCaulay, supra note 103 at 6.} (2) the information processing model, which explores how the
brain finds and retrieves knowledge, and (3) metacognition, which examines how self-aware learning is used “to adapt existing schemas to new situations.”

Because there is considerable overlap between schema theory and the information processing model, they appear here together, but with a varying emphasis. Both theories were born from the idea that the brain contains a cognitive system for encoding information for storage and retrieval. Initially, scientists described that system in terms of long-term semantic memory networks dotted by nodes. Semantic memory refers to stored general knowledge that is not tied to a specific experience, including but not limited to words and language. Those nodes contained conceptual representations of semantic information. The nodes were connected by pathways along which activation could spread in chunks of semantically-related memories. According to this framework, transfer happens when the presence of newly-learned information triggers the long-term memory networks, activating similar material that has relevance to the new topic.

The earliest of the cognitive theories was the information-processing theory. Information processing posits that the brain encodes new information within the context of the original learning domain, but then also allows that information to be accessed for use in a new context when the brain recognizes similarities between the two. The brain’s system for building, altering, and accessing information begins with a preconscious stage. In that stage, the brain selectively perceives environmental stimuli that cause it to consciously recognize similarities between old and new situations. Once the similarities come into the conscious mind, the mind actively evaluates them in terms of prior learning. The cycle completes when the brain then encodes the new experience for retrieval and adaptation in future learning environments.

Schema theory grew out of the information processing model, filling the need to describe the qualitative differences in how memory is encoded. Schema theorists

122 Id.
123 LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 15.
125 Royer et al., supra note 37 at xiv-xv.
126 Id.
127 Id. at xv.
128 LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 14.
129 MacCaulay, supra note 103 at 7, quoting M.J. ATKINS, J. BEATTIE, AND W.B. DOCKRELL, ASSESSMENT ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION 50 (University of Newcastle upon Tyne 1993).
130 Id.
131 See HASKELL, supra note 2 at 83.
132 MacCaulay, supra note 103 at 7, quoting M.J. ATKINS ET AL., supra note 129 at 50.
posited that knowledge is encoded not just according to the frequency of contact, but also by narratives and associations.\(^{133}\)

Schemata are coherent knowledge structures that are stored in memory. They arise from and mentally represent frequently experienced situations such as those pertaining to recognizing people, executing a tennis stroke, visiting the doctor, remembering the route to work, understanding the nature of a theory and reading a textbook. These contextually based mental entities profoundly influence all aspects of learning including perception, comprehension, memory, reasoning, and problem solving.\(^{134}\)

Schemas were thought of as “data structures” that enabled new information to be encoded according to its similarity with other frequently occurring events already embedded within existing memory, as well as filling in the narrative and “adding to” the information that was presented.\(^{135}\) Anticipatory schemas help students to understand new learning in terms of what they already know.\(^{136}\) These “mental models”\(^{137}\) foster transfer by catalyzing the student to perceive similarities between existing knowledge and the newly-encountered context where that knowledge can be applied.\(^{138}\)

Metacognitive theories focus on strategies that encourage students to consciously reflect upon their own learning in order to promote transfer.\(^{139}\) John Flavel, who is thought to be the originator of the term, defines metacognition as referring to “one’s knowledge concerning one’s own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them, e.g., the learning-relevant properties of information or data.”\(^{140}\) Metacognitive theories hold that students will adapt their learning more effectively when they understand the inner workings of their own cognitive learning processes.\(^{141}\) It makes sense, then, that metacognition is often presented as

\(^{133}\) Royer et al., supra note 37 at xvi.
\(^{135}\) Royer et al., supra note 37 at xvi.
\(^{136}\) Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 15.
\(^{137}\) Haskell, supra note 2 at 82.
\(^{138}\) Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 15.
\(^{139}\) Haskell, supra note 2 at 83.
\(^{141}\) Boyle, supra note 25 at 7-8.
synonymous with, or as a subset of active learning. When teachers include students in the rationale behind their teaching methods, they empower students to become active, rather than passive participants in the learning process, shifting the energetic locus of learning and transfer from professor to student.

In the metacognitive approach, a strong emphasis is also placed on further empowering students to discover their own learning styles. Learning styles are a subclass of active learning theory. Because the legal education literature has given much more attention to learning styles than to the larger transfer picture, readers may already be well-versed in the various types. The current model states that students tend to favor one or more modes for receiving information: visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, and that they tend to conceptualize information either globally or sequentially. When students can compensate for their learning styles, and when professors teach to multiple styles, transfer tends to improve. By taking learning styles, cognitive structures, and self-reflective learning strategies into account, professors can avoid creating a “one-size-fits-all” approach to the classroom, and help to create contexts in which students are able to “construct their own meaning.” In law school, active learning directly aids the transfer of learning because it goes beyond the rote memorization of rules and promotes analogical reasoning with case decisions.

Metacognition requires a “deliberate effort” on the part of students to connect new knowledge to already-familiar concepts. The primary “self-monitoring” strategy used in this approach is to answer self-reflective questions. Professors design the questions to direct students’ attention to procedures, conceptual connections within the material, and even to the psychological states that the students experience during an initial learning task. The idea is that this heightened awareness will help the brain to encode new knowledge within the full spectrum of classroom, conceptual, and emotional experiences, making it easier to recall and adapt the information later. Theorists also believe that this mindfulness

142 Id.
144 Boyle, supra note 25 at 3.
145 Id. at 2.
146 Cf. id. at 4-5; cf. Schwartz, Teaching Law by Design, supra note 11 at 386-92.
147 Boyle, supra note 25 at 1, 3.
148 Id. at 5 (noting that metacognition “helps students to learn the holding and the reasoning of cases and to apply the cases to different factual situations.”)
149 MacCaulay, supra note 103 at 8.
150 HASSELL, supra note 2 at 81.
during the learning process will help the learner to see similarities between contexts, allowing her existing schema to evolve and encompass new information. When a person’s schema adapt to include new information and patterns, it becomes much easier to “connect the dots,” cueing latent learning that might be useful to solve a new problem. When educators present material with these strategies, they encourage their students to mindfully encode material in useful patterns or schema, making it easier to recall and use the information later.

4. Socio-Cultural Theories of Transfer

In the late 1990s, an amalgam of approaches matured under the broad heading of socio-cultural transfer theories. One of their key, underlying assumptions is that social context is a key element of learning and transfer, an idea championed by psychologist Lev Vygotsky. When observing children, socio-cultural theorists saw that the majority of what they know comes not from formal education, but from “informal apprenticeships in everyday settings.” These observations led to the insight that some benefits of informal childhood apprenticeships could be re-created in a formal, adult educational setting. This model came to be called the cognitive apprenticeship model. As this model developed, it borrowed some aspects from the traditional craft apprenticeship model, which also served as the birthplace of legal education. This common heritage may be why we already see many aspects of the cognitive apprenticeship model in legal education, particularly in courses that contain a strong skills component. One method from this school is scaffolding, the process by which an expert trains a student by starting with a high degree of input, only to fade away over time in order to allow the student to function independently. To use a military analogy, students are taught to “stand up” as their instructors “stand down.” The ultimate goal is to facilitate exploration and independence when confronted with new and challenging contexts.

151 Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 15, citing Vivienne E. Cree & Ralph Davidson, A Model for Transferring Learning, in Transfer of Learning in Professional and Vocational Training 98.
152 Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 26.
153 Marini & Genereaux, supra note 13 at 4.
154 Id.
155 Id. at 4-5.
156 Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 15.
157 Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 15.
158 Id. at 16.
159 Id. at 26.
The belief that carefully thought-out socio-cultural contexts are key to effecting transfer within formal education is not limited to the cognitive apprenticeship model. Culture, taken in its wider sense to include race, ethnicity, gender, economic status, sexual identity, and so on, can greatly affect the success or failure of transfer. To do this topic justice would exceed the scope of this Article; a few basic points are presented here. Hofstede identified four key elements that characterize learning relationships. The first element is the power differential between teacher and student. The second is one’s ability to deal with uncertainty, such as being either spontaneous or procedure-oriented. The third element involves an orientation toward either individualism or collectivism, a dimension that is being increasingly considered, for example, in trade relationships with countries like China. The fourth element concerns a posture of either assertiveness or passivity, which, for example, can be intertwined with cultural constructs surrounding gender.

In addition to the dichotomies identified by Hofstede, many other cultural elements can contribute to the educational mix. First, in terms of active learning strategies, culture can play a role in whether students process information globally or analytically, as well as whether they tend to process information better verbally or in writing. Even anthropological research may contain much unexplored material relevant to transfer. For example, Indigenous scholars like Gregory Cajete show that the classificatory language and schemas arising out of the socio-cultural matrix of many Indigenous peoples were (and are) part of an intricate, incredibly sophisticated, and practical system of logic that is the equal of (and arguably an improvement upon) the classificatory logic of the West in every way. They are also surprisingly adaptable, and continue to operate and serve those peoples even after being subjected to colonization, globalization and urbanization.

160 Id.
161 Id.
162 Id.
163 Id.
164 Id.
165 Id.
167 Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 25.
168 See generally Gregory Cajete, Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence (Clear Light Books 1999).
169 Leberman et al., supra note 14 at 26. For one example of a Native American classification schema in the natural sciences, written by an Indigenous author, see generally Cajete, supra note 168.
and transfer within legal education is a delicate balancing act. To embrace it risks the pitfalls of stereotype and determinism; to ignore it fails the student.\textsuperscript{170} To the extent that educators and students can achieve congruence by respectfully handling these issues, they are more likely to develop effective learning relationships, and thus to enhance transfer.\textsuperscript{171}

5. \textit{Unified Approaches}

In recent years, a few theorists have attempted to draw from the best of each school of thought in order to arrive at a more balanced and comprehensive model for transfer. In a legal academy dominated for so many decades by a vexing tug-of-war between skills and doctrine, a model that recognizes the contribution of each is most likely to be successful, and perhaps even to bridge the skills-doctrine divide. Unified theories hold great potential for legal education because they draw upon the best of disciplinary immersion, metacognition, skills apprenticeships, and cultural diversity. For example, Haskell’s general theory of transfer is remarkable because it harmonizes fragmented schools of thought and varied psychological theories into a pragmatic whole.\textsuperscript{172} Haskell developed an eleven-point model\textsuperscript{173} that places equal emphasis roughly on the three conditions for transfer favored by earlier schools: knowledge, skill, and disposition. Rather than adopting a polar position between the formal disciplines and contextual learning, for example, he recognizes that each offers a piece of the transfer puzzle.\textsuperscript{174} Haskell used current research in cognitive

\textsuperscript{170} See LEBERMAN ET AL., supra note 14 at 26.
\textsuperscript{171} Id.
\textsuperscript{172} See generally HASKELL, supra note 2 at xix.
\textsuperscript{173} HASKELL, supra note 2 at 45-46. Haskell’s eleven requirements for transfer are:

1. Acquire a large primary knowledge base in the area in which transfer is required.
2. Acquire some level of knowledge base in subjects outside the primary area.
3. Understand what transfer of learning is and how it works.
4. Understand the history in the area(s) that transfer is wanted.
5. Acquire motivation, or more specifically, a “spirit of transfer.”
6. Develop an orientation to think and encode learning in transfer terms.
7. Create cultures of transfer or support systems
8. Understand the theory underlying the area(s) in which we want to transfer.
9. Engage in hours of practice and drill
10. Allow time for the learning to incubate
11. Observe and read the works of people who are exemplars and masters of transfer thinking.

\textit{Id.} at xv (identical numbered list in the original). The first theme, related to knowledge, is intended to incorporate items 1, 2, 4, and 8. The transfer-oriented cluster includes items 3, 5, 6, 7, and 11. Finally, the third cluster, related to repetition and time, incorporates items 9 and 10.

\textsuperscript{174} Id. at 45-46.
psychology, neurochemistry, and educational theory to show that (1) transfer requires a large knowledge base in several areas of study, including both rote and deep understanding; (2) students need practice, drill, and time to incubate in order to build their ability to transfer; and (3) successful transfer is largely dependent on the student’s own motivations and attitudes toward learning, as well as metacognition about his own learning process and how it works. 175

Although his approach is often considered among the most comprehensive of the unified theories, Haskell downplays the importance of the more concrete metacognitive tools and strategies, such as the Perkins and Salomon’s work on hugging and bridging tools for near and far transfer. 176 Haskell’s position seems to be that although learners should be empowered with understanding about how learning takes place, the rest depends on whether she is a surface learner, motivated by mostly external pressures, or a deep learner, invested in self-actualization. 177 I do not think it is necessary to downplay metacognitive strategies in this manner. I see them as another useful set of pieces in the transfer puzzle. In the application section to come, I will propose a four-step model that builds upon Haskell’s three clusters of conditions, but reintroduces the idea of “teaching for transfer” using techniques like hugging and bridging. Rather than further the doctrine-skills divide, this method recognizes their equal importance and their underlying, mutually-reinforcing relationship.

III. HOW LEGAL EDUCATION HAS—AND HAS NOT—EVOLVED TO TEACH FOR TRANSFER

Most readers will already be familiar with legal education’s basic evolution from trade apprenticeships to formal disciplines, to recent attempts to bridge the skills/doctrine divide. Rather than merely repeating that history, this section connects it to the prevailing transfer theory of the time. Furthermore, because our present models are a result of the dialectic between historical apprenticeship and classicism, each of those extremes is still with us, and this section will explore how each aspect can continue to contribute crucial components of the transfer puzzle.

175 Id. at 45-47.
176 See generally Perkins & Salomon, supra note 27; FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27.
177 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 125-26.
A. The First Renaissance: From Apprenticeships to Legal “Science”

Contemporary law schools are the product of a centuries-long dialectic between practical apprenticeships and legal doctrine. Until the end of the seventeenth century, many generations of lawyers learned their craft in the apprenticeship model, partnering with a mature practitioner and learning ecologically, in the ultimate practice environment. The apprenticeship model had its problems, including a lack of regular curriculum and methods for ensuring quality. At the end of the seventeenth century, the study of law was also experiencing an identity crisis. The first formal law schools, most notably Harvard, were eager to distance themselves from the stigma of the trade school, so epitomized by industrial-age economist Thorstein Veblen’s memorable barb, “the law school belongs in the modern university no more than a school of fencing or dancing.”

In addition to seeking greater status for legal studies, those leading the movement toward formalized instruction were eager to cast law among the emerging social “science” disciplines. Accordingly, in the 1870s, Dean Langdell envisioned Harvard Law School as a temple of knowledge. The development of the modern university was at its peak, and the movement to base knowledge on pure, decontextualized empirical science led to the advent of the Langdellian model still used in large part today. Empiricism, formalism, and positivism were the philosophical fashion, and the curriculum thus developed to focus on the blackletter law, the formal components and application of legal rules, and the study of doctrines within the sub-disciplines. Langdell and his contemporaries developed the case method of instruction based on the premise that the development of the common law through judicial precedent could be analyzed, understood, and predicted as a scientific process. Social context, morality, and relationships were greatly

178 EDUCATING LAWYERS, supra note 5 at 25.
179 Id. at 25.
180 See EDUCATING LAWYERS, supra note 5 at 91-93 (discussing law schools’ efforts to distance themselves from the stigma of trade school status).
181 See generally JOSEPH DORFMAN, THORSTEIN VEBLEN AND HIS AMERICA (Harvard University Press 1934).
182 Id. at 97, citing Byron D. Cooper, The Integration of Theory, Doctrine, and Practice in Legal Education, 1 J. ALWD 51, 62-63 (2002).
183 Id. at 25.
184 See id. at 4-7.
185 Id.
186 Id.
187 See id.
deemphasized because knowledge was seen as an end in itself.\textsuperscript{188} This idea still holds some currency in our discipline, for example, Professor Stanley Fish's recent refutation of the academy's duty to promote core values,\textsuperscript{189} such as social justice.

In terms of curriculum, what resulted from this movement was a fragmented, non-holistic presentation of legal disciplines. In terms of teaching style, the resulting pedagogy\textsuperscript{190} has been the vicarious learning/self-teaching model, in which the doctrinal professor typically engages only one student at a time, with the rest of the lecture hall expected to learn passively through observation.\textsuperscript{191} The primarily Socratic, case dialogue method represents the classic model. Modern instructors vary greatly along the unilateral lecture↔Socratic dialogue continuum.\textsuperscript{192} With few exceptions, instructors give the students little or no instruction in how to learn from the vicarious model, perform no classroom learning assessments, and do not test or provide feedback until the final exam.\textsuperscript{193}

As mentioned in the earlier discussion of the formal disciplines approach to transfer, the news for doctrinal learning is not all bad. First and foremost, Haskell recognizes that because analogical reasoning is the key to successful transfer across disciplines and contexts, students have to be well-versed in the relevant doctrinal fields of learning,\textsuperscript{194} such as Contracts, Torts, or Civil Procedure. The more variegated bodies of knowledge and experience the student can acquire, the higher the chances are that she will be able to recognize differential problem patterns and recall the proper tools for a given problem’s solution.\textsuperscript{195} As discussed earlier, the cognitive overload that happens when a learner confronts a new context stems from locus-based learning: we tie our experiences to the contexts in which we learned them, and have trouble seeing how to apply knowledge when the pattern changes:

Much of what we classify as learning, recognition and problem solving consists of becoming able to identify recurrent regularities in the environment. What makes such as task a problem is that the recurrent

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{188} Id. at 5.
\item \textsuperscript{189} See generally STANLEY FISH, SAVE THE WORLD ON YOUR OWN TIME (Oxford University Press 2008).
\item \textsuperscript{190} Even though it is a misnomer, this Article uses the more popular term, pedagogy, instead of andragogy. When used correctly, pedagogy refers to child education rather than adult education. Schwartz, \textit{Teaching Law by Design}, supra note 11 at 350 n. 6.
\item \textsuperscript{191} Id. at 350-51.
\item \textsuperscript{192} EDUCATING LAWYERS, supra note 5 at 52.
\item \textsuperscript{193} Schwartz, \textit{Teaching Law by Design}, supra note 11 at 351-52.
\item \textsuperscript{194} HASKELL, supra note 2 at 45.
\item \textsuperscript{195} See id. at 101-10.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
regularities—be they turns in a maze, elements in a temporal pattern, or a pattern in successive events—may either be masked by factors that are irrelevant to the regularity, or the regularity itself may be of such complexity that it exceeds the memory span that an observer brings to the task.\textsuperscript{196}

Law schools should inculcate not just rote knowledge, but also critically reflective understanding. In other words, to transfer knowledge and skills, the student needs some facility with the subject areas involved, and ideally, this should include the theory and history of that discipline.\textsuperscript{197} Given that true proficiency in a topic can take years, pragmatically speaking, law students have to practice transfer while gaining proficiency in their given topics. As law teachers, we implicitly recognize that some familiarity with the new topic is needed in order to meaningfully apply general legal skills. A good example might be the law student who retains novice-level proficiency in her first-year subjects, and who must counsel a clinic client who has a matter involving mixed tort and criminal law. The clinic student draws upon, but also must increase, her subject-matter knowledge in those areas, while simultaneously increasing her process-based skills\textsuperscript{198} as well. Of course, lawyers often are asked to transfer skills to doctrinal areas in which they have no previous training. When that happens, we teach our students to educate themselves about the field by reading secondary sources like treatises, in addition to key, binding, primary sources. Even then, they draw upon generalized knowledge gleaned from multiple areas of study in order to orient themselves to the new field. For example, a lawyer who knows that in criminal law, motive can be established by circumstantial evidence can use that information to reason through a motivation requirement for persecution\textsuperscript{199} in an asylum matter.

Transfer research shows that rote memorization of rules and their applications to precedent will not suffice. The adult learner must also have some understanding


\textsuperscript{197} Haskell, \textit{supra} note 2 at 45-46 (steps 1, 2, 3, and 8).

\textsuperscript{198} I used “process-based” here rather than the simpler word, procedural, in order to distinguish a type of knowledge from the rules of procedure for law practice.

\textsuperscript{199} To establish a claim for asylum, the applicant must prove, \textit{inter alia}, that her persecutor was motivated by her “race, religion, national origin, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” 8 U.S.C. § 1158 (a)(42)(A) (2006) (providing that persecution must be “on account of” one of these five stated grounds).
of the subject’s deeper history and theoretical underpinnings. Constitutional law cannot be divorced from the social movements that created it, such as the effect of racial desegregation on equal protection jurisprudence, or how the colonial doctrine of discovery shaped (and continues to shape) contemporary federal Indian law and policy. For these reasons, and because many cases call for holistic, client-centered practice, scholars like Professor Aliza Organick have called for an emphasis on cultural literacy not just in discrete courses, but across the curriculum. This cultural literacy is not merely of the Western and Northern type advocated by E.D. Hirsch, Jr. It must also include perspectives from the Eastern and Southern hemispheres, as well as from Indigenous peoples around the globe.

The required knowledge base includes not only both rote and critically reflective understanding. It also contains other forms of knowledge, which Haskell identifies as procedural, strategic, and conditional. Procedural knowledge is simply “how-to” knowledge. Students learn how to formulate an IRAC analysis, how to file and serve a complaint, how to brief a case, and even how to outline and study for exams. As for strategic knowledge, Haskell focuses on understanding our own mental processes, such as how to acquire new information and skills. For legal education, this can be expanded to include strategic thinking about research, reasoning, advocacy, negotiation, client relations, and so on. Finally, conditional knowledge is the experience and understanding to know what types of knowledge are called for in varied contexts. As we will see in the applications below, a lawyer may need intense focus on narrative and human psychology when making an impassioned closing argument to a jury in a personal injury trial. On appeal to the state supreme court, the same lawyer could harm his case and his reputation by applying the same skills. In that context, while some emotion may be appropriate, the audience and task require greater focus on precedent, rules of law, and how they can be used to support the underlying narrative and policy.

200 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 45-46.
203 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 31-32.
204 Id. at 101.
205 Id.
206 Id.
With much of the renaissance in legal education discussing the integration of skills-based learning across the curriculum, many educators who teach in the traditional legal disciplines may understandably fear erosion of their time and resources to teach a topic comprehensively. In fact, the skills/doctrine debates have already caused a rift in legal education, and there is understandable fear about how far down the rabbit-hole we wish to travel away from the traditional subject-specific fields of study exemplified by the Langdellian model, toward a model that might even be seen by some as a pendular reaction backward to a largely apprenticeship-based model. Haskell’s model seems to use the mixed approach, which avoids the polar extremes and draws from the best of each.

B. A “New Renaissance”: The Clinical and Humanizing Movements

The legal education renaissance arguably began in the Civil Rights Era, with the dawn of the clinical legal education movement. Law schools began to develop live-client practice clinics, often imbued with a mission to inculcate social justice ideals in their students. Looking back now, that tectonic shift had great implications for transfer of learning, beginning the shift from the pure, formal disciplines model of Langdell to a more balanced curriculum with room for applied education. Moreover, the social justice mission offered students the chance to develop professional identities focused on altruistic (public interest) and mastery-based motivations, now proved to be essential for good transfer.

The “new renaissance” arrived in earnest in the early 1990s, when the American Bar Association, which accredits United States law schools, published its earth-

shaking study, often referred to as the MacCrate Report or *Narrowing the Gap*. The MacCrate Report stimulated a great deal of controversy and a great deal of discourse and scholarship on teaching, lawyering, professionalism, core skills, and so on. In 2007, two more long-awaited and pivotal reports proposed visions for educating law students holistically. They are the Clinical Legal Education Association’s (CLEA) *Best Practices for Legal Education* and the Carnegie Foundation’s *Educating Lawyers*. The MacCrate Report named the many shortcomings in law teaching and called for widespread change. The Carnegie Report signaled a fresh look at the value of apprenticeships in legal education. Many scholars have contributed to an explosion of fresh thinking about how to teach law for an effective and humane learning experience. Familiar examples include active learning, making our expectations more transparent, addressing different learning styles, teaching students how to learn, collaborative instruction, and contextual learning, just to name a few. Because these methods are concerned with empowering students to guide their own learning and to build skills sets that are translatable into practice, they tacitly incorporate some aspects of transfer theory. But to date, very few legal scholars have expressly considered transfer theory and how it can be used to support both traditional and innovative law teaching.

Most recently, the Humanizing Legal Education movement has begun to build upon achievements in legal skills training and in student-centered teaching approaches that address active learning, learning styles, and other progressive techniques. While these achievements are important parts of the humanizing

---


210 BEST PRACTICES, supra note 4.

211 supra note 5.

212 EDUCATING LAWYERS, supra note 5 at 25-29.

213 For several of the seminal works on contemporary law teaching and curricular design, see generally The MacCrate Report, BEST PRACTICES, and EDUCATING LAWYERS (Carnegie), supra notes 207, 4, and 5, respectively, as well as Schwartz, *Teaching Law by Design*, supra note 11, and MICHAEL HUNTER SCHWARTZ, EXPERT LEARNING FOR LAW STUDENTS (Carolina Academic Press 2005).

214 See note 11, supra.

process, the movement has also begun to address important bases for student motivation, such as Krieger and Sheldon’s study on law student motivation and learner autonomy.\textsuperscript{216}

C. The State of Legal Education Today

Despite the many successes of the last few decades, most law schools today still are dominated by two competing curriculums. One is the thematically separate doctrinal disciplines, and the other is the lawyering skills curriculum, which consists of courses like legal writing, clinic, trial advocacy, client counseling, and negotiation.\textsuperscript{217} In their most traditional forms, doctrinal courses focus on vicarious learning through intense Socratic dialogue with one student or lighter Socratic dialogue with several students.\textsuperscript{218} They also offer few in-class exercises or active learning techniques, and command one final exam at the end of the course, with little or no feedback beforehand.\textsuperscript{219} In many doctrinal classes today, the courses and casebooks have evolved to provide for problems and activities, which is a welcome achievement. Nevertheless, they still tend to focus on the pure subject matter, enhancing the idea that each subject and skill is unique to that course. The courses involve large amounts of content-based reading, and typically do not provide the hypotheticals for classroom discussion in advance, which prevents time for reflection.\textsuperscript{220} Oddly, classroom discussion tends to emphasize deep critical thinking, delving into complex hypotheticals that test the boundaries of legal rules, policy, and even morals, but the same instructors and courses seem to unwittingly send a totally contradictory message about priorities to their students on law school exams, which almost always focus nearly entirely on rote knowledge rather than deep knowledge.\textsuperscript{221}

\begin{footnotesize}
\item[218] Schwartz, Teaching Law by Design, supra note 11 at 351-60.
\item[219] Id. at 351-53.
\item[220] See id.
\item[221] Cf. id. at 365 n. 56 (“It seems unlikely that the narrow skill set preferred by law school exams defines what makes for effective lawyers. Thus, although law school exams do not test cooperative skills, listening skills, speaking skills, and sensitivity to others’ needs, such skills are crucial to many lawyers’ practices.”)
\end{footnotesize}
From a curricular design perspective, most law schools offer little to no
discussion of common themes across the law school experience, or even disclose to
their students that law schools want them to learn to generalize knowledge for
application in their other courses, regardless of whether they involve skills or
doctrine. As far as learner motivation is concerned, law school problems usually do
not offer a community-oriented context, and often involve wild fact scenarios that
are far removed from life experience. Similarly, exam problems are often byzantine
in focus and construction, using the “kitchen-sink” approach to test for issue-
spotting ability based on rote. Accordingly, students usually gain little understanding
of what law practice involves until they seek out an upper-level, environmental
learning experience like clinic, externship, or a summer clerkship. Finally, although
many law professors are increasingly careful to avoid cultural stereotyping, problems
and readings are nevertheless based on experiences important to the dominant
culture.

The good news is that many schools are growing and changing, and this is
actually a very exciting and positive time for legal education. Academic support
programs have now appeared in many schools. We now also have access to
programs like Ex-L, which are designed to train and empower the entire student
body, and not just to remediate those who are already in academic crisis. Some
schools now require skills-based courses for three or more semesters, and may even
require an immersion experience like clinic or externship. Legal educators are
increasingly exploring ways to collaborate, especially within the skills curriculum.
A few legal methods courses even partner with legal aid organizations to obtain real

222 Cf. Charles Calleros, In the Spirit of Regina Austin’s Contextual Analysis: Exploring Racial
Context in Legal Method, Writing Assignments and Scholarship, 34 J. MARSHALL L. REV. 281,
284 (Fall 2000).
223 See generally BEST PRACTICES, supra note 4; Association of Legal Writing Directors, LRW
224 Darby Dickerson, Building Bridges: A Call for Greater Collaboration Between Legal Writing
and Clinical Professors, 4 J. ALWD 45 (2007); Phyllis Goldfarb, So Near and Yet So Far:
Dreams of Collaboration Between Clinical and Legal Writing Programs, 4 J. ALWD 35 (2007);
Philip N. Meyer, When Worlds Collide: Exploring Intersections Between Legal Writing and
Clinical Pedagogy, Scholarship, and Practice, 4 J. ALWD 1 (2007); Margaret M. Russell,
Beginner’s Resolve: An Essay on Collaboration, Clinical Innovation, and the First-Year Core
Curriculum, 1 CLINICAL L. REV. 135 (1994); Sarah O’Rourke Schrup, The Clinical Divide:
Overcoming Barriers to Collaboration Between Clinics and Legal Writing Programs, 14
CLINICAL L. REV. 301 (2007).
problems, or use real problems from cases already filed in state or federal court.\footnote{225 See generally Elizabeth L. Inglehart & Martha Kanter. “The Real World”: Creating a Compelling Appellate Brief Assignment Based on a Real-World Case, 17 PERSPECTIVES: TEACHING LEGAL RESEARCH & WRITING 128 (2009).} With this groundwork in place, many law schools are finally ready to start thinking about designing curriculums, courses, and teaching methods for transfer into the profession.

IV. THE CORE SKILLS APPROACH: A UNIFYING SEQUENCE OF TRANSFER TOOLS

*I would argue that the best lawyers are those who are good at transfer thinking.*

--Dr. Robert E. Haskell\footnote{226 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 63.}

Law students can more effectively transfer their knowledge and skills to new contexts when they can (1) integrate the curriculum using a meta-schema; (2) adopt narrower, more specialized sets of schematics that anticipate how to apply skills across different contexts; (3) understand and use the hugging and bridging strategies advocated by the *Mindful School*\footnote{227 See generally FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27.} method; and (4) consciously cultivate holistic motivations for learning and for lawyering. These transfer factors can be thought of as the three Ms: mapping, maneuvers, and motivation. Each is addressed in greater detail below.

Based on these insights, this Article proposes a carefully-coordinated, unified four-step method for transfer called the core skills approach. First, to integrate the curriculum, students can use an original meta-schema called the core skills compass. The core skills compass has the power to connect the curriculum by helping students to recognize the pervasive presence of core lawyering skills as navigational constants. Virtually every course and practice environment calls for some form of skills in analysis, critical reasoning, advocacy, and professionalism, and the skills learned in one context can be adapted and transferred to others.\footnote{228 This is not to suggest that lawyering skills are the only connective tissue within the curriculum, or that they are more important than other values or skills the academy may wish to impart. For that reason, the skills are very broadly defined to include moral and cultural considerations. Cf. generally Sameer M. Ashar, Law Clinics and Collective Mobilization, 14 CLINICAL L. REV. 355 (2008) (critiquing a skills-based approach to clinical pedagogy as missing opportunities for community-based cause lawyering).} Second, once students learn
to orient according to fixed constants in the form of core lawyering skills “constellations,” they can rely on another original set of anticipatory schematics called the applied skills guides. The applied skills guides act as navigational charts that cope with what we might call variable constants. While abstract lawyering skills can provide good “connective tissue,” in real life, they often express themselves in variable ways depending on the changing context. For example, advocacy skills in a personal injury jury trial can look very different from advocacy in a complex business negotiation. If students can anticipate those differences, they can more successfully transfer generalized skills into new situations.

Third, students can learn to recognize and use hugging, bridging, and motivational strategies by relying upon a general metacognitive exercise, provided later in this section. The core skills exercise is designed to walk them through helpful strategies and to cultivate “transfer thinking” and internal motivation. The exercise works in tandem with the core skills compass and applied skills guides. Although these strategies work well on their own, they get a potent boost from the connectivity provided by the meta-schema and anticipatory schema. Fourth and finally, professors and students can use more narrowly-tailored metacognitive reflection exercises to transfer previous knowledge and skills to specific assignments. Although the first three steps can stand on their own, with only a small level of intervention and maintenance on the part of the professor, the fourth step encourages educators to prepare a simple exercise to accompany major assignments, designed to cue previous learning and resources that might help the student to successfully complete the task. Examples are provided.

As the following sections work through each of the three foundations for the core skills approach—mapping, maneuvers, and motivation—it is important to recognize that none of these tools is a panacea. Transfer always will be a difficult and imperfect process, and some ordinary failure is an important part of the growth curve for both teacher and student. What these tools can achieve is to ease transfer, avoiding the lost time and gross-level failures that happen when students must struggle inordinately to understand the very basics of how to learn and how to integrate the material for later application.

Although students can use this transfer approach largely on their own, it will work best if introduced in an orientation or other academic support program directed at incoming first-year students. And it can work even better in those classrooms where the learning community occasionally engages in dialogue about the transfer process. Educational researchers debate whether it is better to teach generalized critical reasoning and transfer thinking separately or across the
In the immersion approach, the philosophy closely follows the formal disciplines model, positing that when skills are honed in a specific subject, the student builds intellectual muscle-power that will automatically transfer to other courses and tasks. But as we know now, the research shows that complex and abstract transfers rarely happen automatically. On the other end of the spectrum, the general approach advocates for devoting some time to teaching transferrable skills like critical reasoning in a separate environment. Separate instruction in transfer and learning is necessary and helpful. But because research shows that learners tend not to see how to apply skills even when told how to do so, completely isolated training is not well-advised. Instead, the mixed approach argues that critical thinking skills and transfer are best achieved when they are both taught in isolation and expressly discussed within the immersion environment.

A. Maps and Schema: Using the Core Skills Compass and Applied Skills Guides

As discussed earlier, both learning theory and neuroscience show that students tend to acquire knowledge by storing and encoding it in schema, or cognitive “maps.” When students use various meta-schemas within a patterned sequence, they can enhance the speed and depth of their own transfer. Introducing a meta-schematic in the proposed pattern through a 1L orientation or academic support program has the capacity—over time—to help students to identify what generalized, transferrable skills their courses are trying to teach. Because most students lack any familiarity with what real-world lawyering entails, this concept often fails to fully take root in law students until well after graduation. Furthermore, these meta-schema eventually become innately embedded, which means that the student no longer needs to engage in so many conscious strategies to achieve that level of transfer. In the language of Perkins and Salomon, the student perceives the relationships between contexts, transmuting them to environments for near transfer instead of far transfer. With some practice, transfer eventually becomes easier or even instinctive, rather than a struggle requiring many conscious maneuvers. Thus, one of the beauties of this approach is that the tools are designed to fall away once they are no longer needed.

230 Id.
231 Id.
232 Id.
This section will introduce the two types of schema used in the four-step sequence, and then explain the basis for the four skills classifications.

1. **Two Sets of Schema for Orienting by Lawyering Skills**

Students need some kind of navigational constants that pervade the curriculum and help them to “connect the dots” between their various courses and between education and practice. I propose that those constants are the core lawyering skills identified by *Best Practices*, among other sources, in both their abstract and applied forms. Arguably, the broad array of core lawyering skills represents the ultimate learning goal for legal education, where we aim to nurture lawyers who can do everything from writing a technical and persuasive brief to reflecting on law reform:

The first of the educational values, therefore, in clinical education which needs to be exploited is the teaching of standards for the performance of the basic skills involved in service to a client and a cause by a lawyer. By this we mean such skills as interviewing, collecting facts, counseling, writing certain basic documents including pleadings, preparing for trial, and conducting trial matters. . . . Clinical legal education should help to make the future lawyer sensitive to the broad issues going beyond the immediate case. It should give him practice in how to act as a lawyer in making constructive change in justice in the course of his professional work.”

Although this quote concerns clinical pedagogy, the rest of the curriculum hopefully is meant to prepare lawyers for practice as well, at least indirectly. Yet most law schools fail to expressly disclose this goal to students, tending instead to speak in the abstract about good lawyering and professionalism. In the core skills approach, students will first use the four abstract skills clusters to identify common themes across the curriculum, thus schematically integrating it. In keeping with the navigation metaphor, the four mutually-reinforcing sets of abstract lawyering skills are presented in a wheel-shaped graphic called the “core skills compass” (see Figure

---

The skills clusters or constellations are loosely grouped into the four overlapping categories of advocacy, professionalism, critical reasoning, and formal analysis. Although many of the skills defy such clear categorization, clustering helps students to recognize them through common themes.

In this simple graphic representation, core lawyering skills permeate law studies at a very high level of conceptualization and abstraction. It would be unrealistic to expect students to transfer abstract skills to new situations automatically, nor would it be desirable for them to do so. Reflexive practice does not make for good lawyering, but thoughtful, deeply reflective practice does. The good news is that thoughtfulness, awareness, and reflection are the very tools that allow meaningful transfer to occur. Thus the core skills compass works as only the first step within the four, mutually-reinforcing stages of the core skills approach.

---

234 The core skills compass is presented again in its same circular form as a handout for students in the Appendix. The handout contains not only the compass, but a concentric Venn diagram showing how the range of contexts in which students will use these skills will grow from—and successively build upon—the classroom experience, supervised clinical and externship experiences, and ultimately, post-matriculation law practice itself.

235 See David N. Perkins and Gavriel Salomon, *Teaching for Transfer*, 46 Educational Leadership 22, 25-26 (1988) (differentiating between skills that transfer easily because they operate at a more automatic or instinctive level, versus those that take much more cognitive reflection because they work at greater degrees of abstraction and in much different contexts).
In addition to the skills compass, the core skills approach contains four navigational schematics called the applied skills guides—one for each quadrant of the skills compass. These charts are designed to help students use applied, rather than abstract, lawyering skills to orient themselves among various contexts. In other words, students can start to sense that skills may apply differently among the continuum of environments like doctrinal courses, simulated skills courses, adversary litigation in clinic or practice, transactional practice, and holistic endeavors like mediation. For example, one can better see the broad relevance of an abstract skill like “the ability to question the legal system” when it is contextualized within the category of community and cause lawyering in the applied skills guide for critical reasoning. At the same time, one can see that although such questions may be highly relevant in practice and even in classroom debate, they are not highly prized on traditional law school examinations, and can actually harm one’s grade if they overshadow formal analysis.

The four applied skills guides recognize that abstractions are not enough to encourage transfer. Transfer specialists note that bridging from one context to another requires some knowledge about where one has been and where one is going. Students must also be able to envision future applications so that they are both (1) cued to recall and use the schema when faced with a baffling new context; and (2) encouraged to engage in “forward-reaching transfer” by encoding general information now, for later use in known applications. From a motivational standpoint, anticipating possible contexts for application also can reduce anxiety, which further improves the environment needed for meaningful transfer. Finally, this process of envisioning also helps students to avoid negative transfer, which occurs when one tries to use prior learning in a new environment, but in the wrong way.

Naturally, this process of orientation and anticipation is not perfect. Ultimately, students will need real-life experience in these environments before the information becomes truly useful. This is why re-orientation to the schema should ideally be employed in the middle of the first-year, at minimum, perhaps through a reminder or module presented by the law school’s academic support program. For contexts occurring outside the classroom, such as clinic, externship, and so on, it may be wise to address transfer, including the core skills approach, in programmatic orientation programs and handbooks, too.

Each of the four applied skills guides presented in the Appendix is tailored to one quadrant of the core skills compass. For example, a miniature, “nutshell”

---

236 HASKELL, supra note 2 at xv; FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at 96-99.
237 SOUSA, supra note 21 at 137.
encapsulation of the concept for the formal analysis applied skills guide would look something like the representation in Figure B, immediately below.

![Fig. B: Micro-encapsulation of an applied skills guide](image)

2. The Four Quadrants of the Core Skills Compass

The four categories used in the core skills compass are mutually-reinforcing rather than exclusive, and they often overlap. For example, high-quality formal legal analysis requires advocacy, critical reasoning, and professionalism in execution. Even the “purest” advocacy, such as an opening argument to a jury, contains elements of formal legal analysis, such as rules, facts, and proposed applications. It also often requires the honed ability to perceive cultural context and critical subtext in the law and in human psychology. Accordingly, the circular design, the four-fold division, and the categorization of the different skills are open to adaptation, innovation, and debate.

The core skills diagram appears in the form of a circle or wheel not only because of the compass metaphor, but also because schema theory is supported by the myriad world traditions that use circular schema—sometimes called mandalas—to encode worldviews. The core lawyering skills described here contain not just a set of abilities, but also the core values of the legal profession. In that sense, this schematic promotes a lawyering worldview or orientation to one’s professional calling. Similar wheel-like schemas are found in cultures worldwide, perhaps most visibly in eastern religious practices and Indigenous classification systems.

---

239 See, e.g., Cajete, supra note 168.
although one must be careful to distinguish between the sacred and the mundane. The four-part organization within the circular schema is also common around the world and across cultures.\textsuperscript{240}

The four quadrants of the skills compass include many different lawyering skills and values. Arguably, some of the skills could be classified in different categories. The categorizations are necessarily loose, and the educators using this or a similar schematic can easily adjust the tool to suit their own views and needs. Moreover, the core skills identified here contain within them aspects of the value systems belonging to various reforming forces within legal education, including various aspects of clinical pedagogy, community lawyering, therapeutic justice, and the humanizing movement. Law schools and individual educators should create schema that reflect the values consistent with their missions, and which they hope to instill in their students.

Formal Legal Analysis connotes the traditional, syllogistic formula for legal analysis, which most of us learned as IRAC. The quasi-syllogistic\textsuperscript{241} IRAC paradigm forms the basis for virtually all traditional legal analysis, whether written or oral, exam or practice, formal or even informal. More experienced law students usually make this connection during the second or third year, typically through a long period of trial and error that pervades at least their entire first year, and usually their first practice-based experience such as clinic or a summer clerkship. Students should not be left to make this connection—or other important transfers—through a process of trial and error, when it would be fairly simple for the curriculum and the faculty to point out and demonstrate how formal analysis skills pervade the curriculum and the “real world” of law practice. As shown in the appendix, this compass quadrant encourages students to see the “IRAC connection” along the continuum between casebook classes, skills classes, and a live-client setting.

Because part of successful learning transfer is identifying what previous knowledge is appropriate for the new context, this tool also illustrates how the IRAC formula adapts to suit the context. For example, the emphasis on IRAC “layers” changes according to whether the analysis is intended for exams, oral argument, or written analysis for law practice. Accordingly, law professors who specialize in legal analysis, research and writing have developed numerous variations on the IRAC theme, such as CREAC, CRuPAC, and IRREAC,\textsuperscript{242} in order to encourage students

\textsuperscript{240} The author intends only to invoke cross-cultural aspects of circular schemas due to their universal appeal, and not to co-opt any unique cultural expression.


to expand and deepen rule proof and application for law practice. Newer law
students sometimes fail to make the connection between IRAC and CREAC until
second semester, even though they are variations of the same syllogistic formula.
Even more subtly, the applied skills guide can help cue a student about the failings of
IRAC. IRAC is based in a particular, Anglo-American cultural approach to rhetoric
and reasoning, and may fail to take into account cross-cultural reasoning.\footnote{243}

Advocacy involves both techniques that are proven successful to prevail on a
client’s behalf, such as argumentation strategy, cross-examination, and negotiation;
and a gradually-developed intuition about what persuades a certain audience, when
to emphasize certain facts, when to rely on narrative over rule (or vice-versa), and so
on. Many students might be inclined at first to see advocacy only in terms of trial
work—in other words, the kind of advocacy conveyed in popular culture, like Law &
Order, John Grisham novels, and even classics like To Kill a Mockingbird. It is
important to convey early that advocacy skills are inculcated over time, have a strong
intuitive component, and pervade legal work. Some students seem to be attracted to
law studies because they are natural advocates, perhaps even former debaters. For
those students, it is important to see that advocacy can take increasingly subtle
forms, such as the fine art of diplomacy needed for delicate business negotiations;
the compassion, tact, and patience needed to persuade a client from an imprudent
course of action; and the cultural literacy necessary to perceive and address unwitting
cultural biases held by jurors, judges, and other players in the justice system or even
the business world.

Critical Thinking in legal education often means a person’s ability to understand
and perceive both context and subtext within legal authorities, as part of the process
of formal legal analysis. It can also be expanded and overlapped with
professionalism and advocacy to connote the resources need to reflect critically on a
client’s unstated needs, on biases within the legal system, and so on:

\begin{enumerate}
\item Seeking out evidence and giving evidence when questioned;
\item Suspending [judgment] when there is insufficient evidence;
\item Logical reasoning abilities;
\item Recognizing ambiguity in reasoning;
\item Distinguishing reason and fact from opinion;
\end{enumerate}

(6) Distinguishing what is relevant from what is irrelevant;
(7) Identifying contradictions in arguments;
(8) Identifying and evaluating assumptions underlying beliefs, ideas, and values, including one's own;
(9) Transferring ideas and concepts to new contexts and situations; and
(10) Making interdisciplinary connections and using insights from one subject to illuminate other subjects.

In the compass, critical thinking is extracted as a generalized, developed skill in reasoning, including the ability to look beyond formal law and to perceive ethno-socio-political-historical context. Critical thinking easily can blend here with the kind of cultural literacy skills so often needed for effective advocacy, as described above.

_Professionalism_ has generated much recent discussion in the academy as a core lawyering value to be conveyed to students through modeling and through the curriculum. While not all agree as to what professionalism entails or whether it must be taught, the arguments in favor of a holistic approach are made rather strongly in influential reports like _Carnegie_ and _Best Practices_. Here, I envision professionalism as a set of life and interpersonal skills that incorporates and dovetails with the formal rules of professional responsibility, but expand into the kind of human credentials needed for a sustainable and effective practice. As demonstrated in Figure C, it can include everything from good trust accounting practices to effective listening skills. This quadrant adopts a rather expansive definition, encouraging students to recognize that professionalism is not limited to client interaction, even though that is the focus of the ethical rules, but instead extends into all other areas, from arguing to a jury to proofreading a contract to handling one’s own financial affairs and mental health.

---


245 See Donald L. Burnett, Jr., _Neither Mess Nor Menace: Legal Education and the Erudite Apprentice_, 18 PROF. LAW. 2, 22 (2008).

246 See Burnett, _supra_ note 245 at 22.
For general discussions of what we should include in the concept of core lawyering skills, see BEST PRACTICES, supra note 4 at 52-54, and the MACRATe REPORT, supra note 207. As additional support for the argument that cross-cultural lawyering skills should be considered as central, see generally Susan Bryant, The Five Habits: Building Cross-Cultural Competence in Lawyers, 8 Clinical L. Rev. 33 (2001); Susan Bryant & Jean Koh-Peters, Five Habits for Cross-
B. Maneuvers: Teaching (and Learning) for Transfer in Law School

Because the compass and accompanying “navigational charts” are designed to help formulate only the “big picture” about how lawyering skills permeate both law study and law practice, more tools are needed to aid transfer within courses and between more specific applications. For this reason, the core skills approach goes beyond schema to encourage students to use more bridging and hugging tools, including modeling, problem-solving, anticipation, generalization, analogizing, and metacognitive reflection, to name a few. These conscious strategies are designed to cue knowledge out of latency and into potency, not just in one context, but across learning domains, and at ever-higher levels of functioning. In combination with the schema, these hugging and bridging strategies take on strength that they might not have had before. The schematic maps and hugging and bridging maneuvers work together synergistically, along with the internal motivators discussed later.

In the core skills approach advocated here, hugging and bridging tools enter by way of an all-purpose reflective exercise that students can use to consciously engage in transfer thinking, and which is presented in the Appendix. When resources allow, the approach also encourages professors to tailor the all-purpose exercise for specific assignments, so that students can become more independent in their work. These reflective exercises foster self-direction in students by cuing them to use the different strategies. Those strategies, such as generalization, identifying expectations, and analogizing to parallel problems, help students to recognize current and past coursework that applies to the assignment, and to reflect upon how to use that knowledge.

1. Hugging Strategies for Near Transfer

As introduced in the earlier section on the evolution of transfer theory, Perkins and Salomon identified five hugging strategies for near transfer: setting expectations, matching, simulating, modeling, and problem-based learning. Most of these strategies are used well in legal skills courses—even if subconsciously—but not in most doctrinal courses—at least not as a complete, interlocking strategy. Perhaps more importantly, even when skills courses are using hugging strategies, they occur inside one course and do not connect courses throughout the curriculum. The above schema can assist greatly with that problem, but law schools and curriculum

---

Cultural Lawyering, cleaweb.org/multiculture.pdf (2000); Organick, supra note 201; and Weng, supra note 74.
sub-groups, like certificate programs, may wish to consider spending some time consciously cultivating transfer with these tools.

*Setting expectations* involves the seemingly simple act of discussing with students the practical “payoffs” for learning the material.\(^{248}\) Discussing future applications “sets the stage for future use”\(^{249}\) and alerts students to the simple fact that they are not acquiring this knowledge as an end unto itself, but to integrate it with other lessons and use it to solve problems.\(^{250}\) “This may seem so obvious to the professor that it often fails to be mentioned.

*Matching* relates primarily to exercise and problem design. It calls upon educators to design classroom experiences and problems that resemble the context in which the knowledge eventually be applied. Presently, most law courses involve Socratic discussion of dissection of case decisions. Matching calls for greater use of skills-based exercises. For example, while studying “acts of God” as excuses for breach of contract, the professor might explain how such events can arise in ordinary practice environments, and have students fill in sections of a sample complaint alleging force majeure, or draft a contractual clause dealing with the issue.

*Simulating* is already well-known in legal education, and is a primary pedagogical tool in clinical instruction. Transfer theory suggests that all legal educators can enhance transfer by simulating practice environments through writing for transactional or litigation practice, mock negotiations, mock client interviews, and so on. To enhance transfer in law school, simulated problems should mimic an authentic law practice environment, including the shifting, evolving nature of the facts, the urgency for thoroughness, and the human context of the law office environment.\(^{251}\)

*Modeling* is another centerpiece of clinical and other skills instruction, often underused in traditional casebook courses. It involves demonstrating a skill or process within a “running monologue” that describes that is happening, but also reveals the instructor’s internal reasoning and decision-making matrix. In my classes, for example, I tend to teach students about drafting detailed, narrowly focused issue statements for memos and briefs by writing one myself in a Word document displayed on the classroom’s overhead projector. I try sentences, erase them, critique them out loud, start over again, and describe why I am including each fact or legal term and the logic behind their order and phrasing. I then ask the students to break into small groups and craft another. We discuss the results as a group and arrive at a

---

\(^{248}\) [FOGARTY ET AL., *supra* note 27 at 33.]

\(^{249}\) *Id.*

\(^{250}\) *See id.*

\(^{251}\) [Provenzano & Kagan, *supra* note 11 at 173-75.]
good working issue statement for one of the issues in their assignment. They then have to write the rest of the issue statements on their own, without assistance, until it is time for them to receive formal, written feedback with their grades. The “monologue” need not necessarily occur orally; it can also take the form of an annotated sample product. The annotations should not consist merely of labels, but should also provide insight into the writer’s internal thought processes.

Problem-based learning calls for “immersing” students in the active use of knowledge by engaging them in problem solving. Problem-based learning is the quintessence of skills-based law courses. Casebook courses also use problem-solving extensively in that they ask students to work through highly complex hypothetical legal scenarios. Where they often fall short is in making the problem-based learning active. This is exactly where active learning proponents argue we fail most students by encouraging them to be vicarious learners. Active learning requires each student to roll up his sleeves. Active learning strategies are becoming well-covered in the legal literature and are not addressed here.

2. Bridging Strategies for Far Transfer

Fogarty, Perkins, and Barrel named five additional, “bridging” strategies for far transfer: anticipating applications, analogizing, generalizing, parallel problem-solving, and metacognitive reflection. Law schools already greatly exceed all other disciplines at training students in the skill of analogizing concepts, which is considered one of the most important “mental muscles” needed to become a good transfer thinker. This is probably why Haskell uses legal examples so often in his commentaries on how transfer works, and why he feels that, conversely, the best lawyers are also transfer thinkers. We also do fairly well, when compared with other academies, at parallel problem-solving, at least in the sense that our courses offer chances to apply knowledge in many different kinds of similar problems on practice exams, formal exams, and in legal writing and other simulated and live-client skills courses.

Anticipating applications is very similar to setting expectations. In the latter, the professor and students discuss how students can make more immediate use of the information in an upcoming examination or problem, or in an applied environment that relates directly to the topic at hand, for example, the use of force majeure clauses in contracts, while learning about them from the perspective of past litigation. Anticipating applications merely means setting expectations for

252 FOGARTY ET AL., supra note 27 at xvii-xviii.
253 See HASKELL, supra note 2 at 63.
applications farther into the future and in more remote contexts. In the previous example, this might involve asking students to brainstorm the kinds of situations in which a force majeure problem might arise in practice in their region of the country—tornadoes, flooding, and agriculture in the Midwest, hurricanes and tourism in the Southeast; earthquakes, volcanoes and shipping on the West Coast, and so on. When future applications are anticipated through metacognitive reflection, students should perform better at “forward-reaching” transfer, a form of high-road transfer in which they generalize concepts with the conscious intent to perform them in a new context at a later time.

**Generalizing concepts** means actively engaging students in the process of abstracting universal principles from specific material. For example, in discussing Mrs. Palsgraf and the dreaded railroad scales, educators should disclose that one of the primary goals of the dialogue is understand what the court’s holding and reasoning tell us about how the rules of proximate cause work, including their exceptions and limitations. Professors should also clarify that these extracted principles are meant to be used to compare to similar and dissimilar situations in legal problem-solving. Arguably, most of the work in casebook courses involves the process of gleaning abstract rules from specific cases and then applying them to new situations. In that regard, law school teaches generalization well. Where it seems to falter is in making this goal clear, as well as in using the remaining bridging techniques to reinforce the generalizations and foster their transfer to new situations.

**Using analogies** is another bridging tool that law schools perform inordinately well. Generalization and analogy are two central components of any legal analysis. Students must understand how an “act of God” in one case is like or unlike an act of God in another case in order to predict the likely outcome. As with generalization, where many other disciplines’ pedagogies may fail, law excels. We do not need more instruction and opportunities to practice the art of analogy, but rather to support its transfer by incorporating the remaining hugging and bridging strategies. Without them, students will still eventually master transfer, but the process arguably will take longer.

**Parallel problem-solving** extends the earlier problem-based learning strategy into more attenuated applications. Newer law students tend to struggle with increasing levels of abstraction between classroom hypotheticals and decided cases. While they grow

---

254 Palsgraf v. Long Is. R.R. Co., 162 N.E. 99 (N.Y. 1928). Most readers will be familiar with this classic torts case, in which two railroad employees, attempting to save a man who appeared to be falling between the train and platform, caused him to drop a package containing fireworks. *Id.* at 99. The resulting fireworks explosion caused scales to fall on the hapless Mrs. Palsgraf, the plaintiff, giving rise to the rule of proximate cause. *Id.* at 99, 101.
as skilled analogical reasoners, educators can ease the process somewhat by engaging them in the mindful practice of parallel problem-solving. In the force majeure example, problem-based learning for near transfer might involve analyzing a new shipping-based case from other cases involving transportation of goods. In parallel problem-solving, the assignment would challenge them to use “stereotypical” shipping or natural disaster cases to attack a fact pattern not encountered in the assigned cases, perhaps one involving a “ripped from the headlines” problem like a terrorist attack, global warming, or pandemic influenza. Happily, it seems that law schools also excel at providing parallel-problem-solving opportunities. Most law school hypotheticals involve fact patterns well removed—and often even outrageous when compared to typical cases. The foil is that they tend to come at the very end of the course, during the examination, and also that they tend to arrive without any opportunity to practice problem-solving with highly analogous hypotheticals, i.e. a transportation-based scenario solved with opinions from shipping cases. Moreover, they tend to focus within only one discipline. This probably makes sense during the first-year curriculum, but transfer theory would also support greater use of multidisciplinary problems in upper-level courses, so as to break through the firewalls between the formal legal disciplines.

Metacognitive reflection means “planning, monitoring, and evaluating one’s own thinking . . . [and] thinking about how to approach a task this time or to do better next time.” This kind of critical evaluation through deep reflection is the gold standard of transfer tools. Metacognitive strategies can include a host of exercises and techniques, some of which have already been explored in the legal literature. One of the most popular is journaling about clinical and externship experiences. Another is the “private memo” to record struggles, inspirations, and decision-making during the writing process, as a form of “in the moment” dialogue with one’s legal writing professor or clinical supervisor. Professor Schwartz’s Expert Learning for Law Students includes a workbook with a wealth of reflective exercises designed to engage students in “thinking about thinking,” as well as planning their time and

255 Fogarty et al., supra note 27 at 91.
256 See Perkins and Salomon, supra note 27 at 28-31.
258 See Provenzano & Kagan, supra note 11 at 170-73.
259 Supra note 213.
understanding their own learning habits and styles. They provide good inspiration and templates for designing one’s own exercises. Because these forms of metacognitive reflection are well-addressed for law study by existing resources, this Article will focus on an underused form in law school: the reflective exercise for “backward-reaching” transfer. 261

C. Motivation: Fostering Internal Incentives and Autonomy
   For More Effective Transfer

   As educators, we know from experience that the best-performing students are usually those who are highly self-motivated and inquisitive. It may not be surprising to learn, then, that psychological research shows that strong internal motivation is one of the key factors in successful transfer of learning. It is known to enhance the ability to retain, access, and adapt information for later use within different contexts. To be sure, many students are sufficiently motivated by external factors, primarily grade performance and social standing, to perform well in a given course. 262 But it is unlikely that those students will be as able effectively to recall and use that stored knowledge in a future context without much more trial and error, as well as external prompting. According to Haskell, an essential ingredient of the transfer equation must therefore be both a “culture and spirit of transfer,” which involves both an institutional culture of collaboration and learning, as well as the student’s own internal motivation.

261 For a simple illustration from K-12 education, see Delaware Social Studies Education Project, Backward Reaching Transfer [Exercise], http://www.udel.edu/dssep/transfer/Backward%20Reaching%20Transfer.pdf (last accessed November 15, 2008).

262 See HASKELL, supra note 2 at 125-26. John Biggs’ research on medical students revealed three kinds of motivation, each tied to a different level of learning success: surface, achieving, and deep. Id. at 125-26, citing and describing John Biggs, Institutional Learning and the Integration of Knowledge, in LEARNING IN MEDICAL SCHOOL: A MODEL FOR THE CLINICAL PROFESSIONS 25 (J. I. Balla, M. Gibson, and A. M. Chang, eds., Hong Kong University Press 1989). Surface learners had little current motivation, and were moved instead by some other, longer term, external force, such as the need to obtain employment, to please one’s parents, and so on. Id. Achievers are also moved by external forces, but they are more immediate, and tend to center around grades. Id. They gear their strategies for success toward the short-term goal of mastering an examination or a project according to the teacher’s objective expectations. Id. Deep learners are the holy grail of students; they feel an internal motivation to learn, are stimulated by the subject matter, and find meaning in the topic and their own growth. Id. This self-driven motivation gives the student the energy to reflect, investigate, converse, and relate the learning to his greater world and life experience. Id. Deep learning thus correlates with the other key elements of transfer: critically reflective understanding of the topic and the ability to generalize and analogize to new contexts. Id.
cultivation of a holistic disposition toward professional growth and the learning process. Haskell notes that much of what creates a highly self-motivated student has to do with cultural cues, family priorities, and past educational experiences. Law schools probably cannot do much to alleviate pop culture messages that eschew intellectual pursuits, family and employer pressure to achieve the highest grades, or peer pressure to maintain a high class standing.

Fortunately, however, transfer and other learning research shows that there are still at least two main approaches that legal educators can use to instill transfer-friendly motivation in receptive students. First, they can emphasize mastery and human growth as the ultimate goal, to coexist with more external motivators like grade performance. Even in a traditional grade-based evaluation system, educators can emphasize mastery through discussion, reflection, and messages embedded in curriculum and course design. Second, law schools can motivate students to transfer their learning to new domains by teaching them about transfer—disclosing the challenges of our brains’ context-based approach to learning, and teaching the above tools for navigating those challenges.

In what may come as a surprise to many, studies seem to show overwhelmingly that internal goals based on altruism and professional mastery tend to lead to happier and more effective learners than external goals based on performance measures and rewards. Larry Krieger has reported on the research that internal motivations are highly associated with professional well-being among law students and lawyers, while external motivations are highly associated with depression, anxiety, and other indicia of professional malaise. Law schools tend to fail their students by overlooking the fundamental importance of including internal motivation in both the pedagogy and curriculum. According to Professor Krieger’s recent study with psychology professor Ken Sheldon, the results are devastating:

263 Haskell, supra note 2 at 116-19.
264 Id. at 119-21.
265 Cf. id. at 146-47.
268 See Haskell, supra note 2 at 116-30.
269 See generally Krieger, Inseparability, supra note 267.
270 Id. at 429-34.
Well-being and life satisfaction fell very significantly during the first year. More fundamentally, the generally intrinsic values and motivations of the students shifted significantly towards more extrinsic orientations. These shifts have distinct negative implications for the students’ future well-being. In the sample followed for the final two years of law school, these measures did not rebound. Instead, students experienced a further and troubling diminution of all of their valuing processes (both intrinsic and extrinsic) beginning in the second year, suggesting a sense of disinterest, disengagement, and loss of enthusiasm. This loss of valuing is a serious occurrence and a likely cause of the continued loss of well-being measured among these students. It may well mark the beginning of the destructive ‘values-neutral’ approach of many lawyers.271

What may surprise readers even more is that internal motivators not only lead to happier professionals, they also encourage students to encode learning in such a way that it is easier to recall and use in new situations.272 In other words, they improve transfer.

Research on motivation and transfer seems to be closely linked to parallel studies on mood and transfer, in which researchers found that positive, happy moods boost the cognitive processes that enhance transfer, while negative, sad moods deteriorate them.273 Accordingly, given the implications of proper motivation for both professionalism and transfer, this failure to inspire internal motivation is much more egregious than we may have realized. A recent empirical study of second- and sixth-grade children concluded that when lessons emphasized mastery over performance, the children—particularly the sixth-graders, were better able to transfer a skill to a new problem.274 Children who internalized mixed motivations experienced decreased skills transfer.275 The authors posit that the more base motivations centering on grades and status may simply take up too much cognitive energy, focusing the student’s attention on social status and on discursive thoughts that interrupt cognitive processes that support transfer.276 They also noted that

271 Id. at 433.
273 Serge Brand, Torsten Reimer, & Klaus Opwis, How Do We Learn in a Negative Mood? Effects of a Negative Mood on Transfer and Learning, 17 LEARNING & INSTRUCTION 1, 9-16 (2007).
274 Bereby Meyer & Kaplan, supra note 272 at 11.
275 Id.
276 Id.
according to earlier literature, adolescents are better able to handle mixed motivations without loss of transfer ability.\textsuperscript{277} Interestingly, however, a recent brain-imaging study showed that the areas of the brain that correspond to happiness and fulfillment are activated when adults encounter an altruistic motivation, but the centers associated with greed and addiction are activated when confronted with performance- and reward-based messages.\textsuperscript{278} Even more significantly, scientists found that both areas of the brain could not be activated at the same time.\textsuperscript{279} What this means for the possibility of a healthy, dual motivation in law school remains to be seen.

This research dovetails with a fascinating study from Switzerland. The Swiss government needed to find a community to house a nuclear waste dump, and set about to encourage the citizens of two small communities to agree to accept the site near their towns.\textsuperscript{280} Researchers compared two test groups. One group was offered an annual cash payment to every person in the town as a sort of hazard pay.\textsuperscript{281} A majority of the townspeople consistently refused, even when the cash offer was exponentially increased.\textsuperscript{282} The other group was told that they would be doing a service to their country, and that some town would have to volunteer for the good of the whole. No cash or other material benefit was offered.\textsuperscript{283} A majority agreed to accept the waste site.\textsuperscript{284}

The message for legal education may be not that we need to do away with grades and social pressure – both of which seem a rather tall order – but that we need to find ways to emphasize mastery over these other, sometimes destructive factors. One approach drawn from Professor Krieger’s scholarship is to discuss matters frankly with our students.\textsuperscript{285} In this context, we should talk to them openly and often about how mastery versus performance motivation can affect their ability to develop intellectually, as well as to effectively store and retrieve general knowledge and skills for later use. This part of the approach relates to instruction in transfer

\textsuperscript{277}Id.
\textsuperscript{279}Brafman & Brafman, supra note 31 at 141.
\textsuperscript{281}Brafman & Brafman, supra note 31 at 133-35.
\textsuperscript{282}Id. at 133-35.
\textsuperscript{283}Id. at 133-34.
\textsuperscript{284}Id.
\textsuperscript{285}Krieger, Inseparability, supra note 267 at 426-27.
skills, discussed further below. Another is to engage students in none other than the very metacognitive reflection exercises described earlier. Professor Krieger actually has students write their own eulogies, disclosing to them later that they have just identified many of their own core values.\(^{286}\) The class engages in periodic reflection on these core human values in order to maintain perspective over time, while also acknowledging the benefits and natural inclination toward performance-based motivations like grades, class rank, and appearing capable when called upon in class or giving a presentation.\(^{287}\) Finally, to connect the values-driven material to the curriculum, Professor Krieger has his class brainstorm the tasks required to perform some sort of lawyering task such as conducting a trial.\(^{288}\) The class actively works through which aspects of the lawyer’s job are truly within her control and which are not. He reports that students are often surprised to see how little they can control, and report a decrease in performance-based anxiety and an increased recognition of the benefits of mastery-based goals.\(^{289}\)

Other approaches may also help to encourage motivation based on mastery over performance. For example, altruistic motivators that enhance transfer should be triggered by the ability to solve community-based problems with a real-world impact. Legal educators can gear more examples and problems around real stories and cases from surrounding communities, such as partnering with local legal service agencies\(^{290}\) to write a complaint in the area under study, or designing a legal writing appellate brief problem to create sample work product that can be shared with the agency. In another example, professors might include more “moral dialogue” about the law in their discussions of legal problems and justice.\(^{291}\) Many students come to law school with high ideals about achieving justice, and few understand the complexities of legal process, including non-legal drivers\(^{292}\) like money, power, and dominant culture. Because many times law school exams send the message that any moral dialogue achieved in class is actually undesirable in the practice of law, and that

\(^{286}\) Id. at 435-38.

\(^{287}\) Id. at 437-38.

\(^{288}\) Id. at 439-40.

\(^{289}\) Id.


\(^{292}\) Id. at 248.
only blackletter law matters, professors might also consider adding one exam problem that encourages policy analysis and more holistic, non-legal analysis alongside blackletter IRAC.

Finally, it can also be beneficial to help students identify mastery and growth-based motivators on an even more personal level. Ways to connect the learning material to causes or connections personally meaningful to the student are many, and may result from reflective exercises or even just from one-on-one dialogue. The motivations and meaning that drive students to excel and adapt within a wider variety of settings may not necessarily be only related to identifiable causes outside of themselves. They might revolve around personal interests, or deeply personal reasons for practicing law that go beyond the desire for status, and career stability. Some Native American law students study law with the hope of benefiting their home communities or Indigenous peoples in general, and have been referred to as “legal warriors.” I have seen several students choose to enter into family law practice, driven by personal experiences and a drive to improve the lives of children, fathers, mothers, or other groups sometimes perhaps underserved by the system. I have also seen other students who were strongly motivated to learn the law because they wanted so much to practice in an area related to a deep personal interest or secondary vocation, such as professional sports or military service.

Teaching to motivation is difficult in that it is hard to balance the disparate interests that exist across a classroom. To help students anticipate future sources of motivation based on growth and mastery, orientation programs provide a good opportunity to connect students’ personal interests with ‘real world’ outcomes. One platform for achieving this might be a panel of community partners from a diverse range of practice environments, social backgrounds, and generations. For example, representatives from the practice of business law, family law, legislative law, criminal law, and practitioners involved in social justice issues, could be assembled to speak directly to the specific environments students will one day find themselves in. On a practical level, a panel of community partners has “real-world” credibility that students do not always attribute to law professors. This can help students to understand the daily realities of the areas in which they hope to practice. This deepens the knowledge of secondary learning domains, a requirement for transfer considered so crucial by Haskell and others. Even outside of a formal orientation program, law schools can call upon community partners and alumni from the public...

service sector to speak to their students about how they will use their newfound knowledge to solve problems for clients in need. These “war stories” can center not just on how lawyers navigate courtroom and law firm life, but on how they have used their law school training to serve people in need.

Finally, it might be easy to overlook the need to instill in students the motivation to use transfer tools in the first place. Understanding “transfer thinking” is another key component of Haskell’s “culture and spirit of transfer.”295 If students are not motivated to use instructional schema like the core skills compass, or if they cannot see any importance behind metacognitive exercises, they may tend to see these deceptively simple devices as mere “fluff.” In the communities of practice that I envision, learning is enhanced because educators articulate the premises behind their instructional methods and curricular design. Experienced practitioners can assist newcomers to find “an opening, a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement.”296 The core skills continuum is designed to cultivate within students a drive to master the dynamics of transfer. This sense of drive will most likely take the form of a circular feedback loop, in which the various schemas reveal the interconnectivity of the law school curriculum, thereby reducing the stress-filled barriers that students feel when they view law school as a series of disjointed experiments. In this way, the world of law school is reduced to “manageable proportions.”297 By seeing that successful navigation is possible, and reducing the appearance of discontinuity, students can become more strongly motivated, even if only in terms of lower, external motivators like grades and class rank. As a result of the reduced stress and increased familiarity that this viewpoint enables, students are more likely to “encode” their knowledge for storage and retrieval in terms of transfer.298 These first tastes of success can also lead to an increased understanding of the immediate benefits of transfer theory to one’s education, with the capacity to reveal deeper benefits for personal and professional growth.

295 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 116-30.
297 HASKELL, supra note 2 at 25.
298 Id. at 119-21.
D. Charting a Course for Transfer: Four Steps for Better Transfer of Learning in Law School

In summary, the core skills approach draws upon the best of the transfer of learning research to help students (1) integrate the curriculum; (2) anticipate how skills will apply in new and different contexts; (3) identify helpful strategies to transfer skills and knowledge to any new assignment; and (4) draw upon concrete knowledge and skills suitable for a very specific assignment. The steps are sequenced from general to specific so that students can get their “bearings” before attempting to apply knowledge and skills in a particular, unfamiliar context.

**Step One.** Students can use the compass to integrate the curriculum and brainstorm applicable skills from the different quadrants. To newer law students, the law curriculum usually seems disjointed. Even though their professors usually are trying to instill the same basic professional values and the same skills in analysis, critical thinking, and advocacy, students typically do not make this connection until much later in law school or even in practice. Moreover, schema theory tells us that our brains encode information according to the environment and experiences we had when we learned it. Knowledge thus remains tied to particular courses, cases, exams, and teachers, and does not transfer easily. For these reasons, Step One is very simple: students use the compass and its accompanying list of core lawyering skills as a set of schemas to view the curriculum as a continuum, unified by a set of constants in the form of the four core skills constellations.

**Step Two.** Students may use the applied skills guides to anticipate which particular skills to use and in what form. Even when students learn to view the curriculum holistically, unified by core lawyering skills, they soon discover that those skills are expressed in different ways, depending on the context. In Step Two, the applied skills guides serve as an anticipatory schema, designed to help students determine when and how they can practice their developing skills sets. When learning to write their first memorandums, they can see the utility and expression of their newly-developing formal analysis skills in a practice environment or even in oral argument later that year. The applied skills guides also help to avoid negative transfer, i.e. using skills in a way that is inappropriate for the context, such as writing an appellate brief in a tone more befitting the closing argument in a jury trial. Each quadrant on the core skills compass has its own applied skills guide.

**Step Three.** Professors and students may next use the general metacognition exercise to identify knowledge, skills, resources, and orientations for any task in coursework or clerkships. In Steps One and Two, students learn to unify the curriculum using abstract core lawyering skills as constants, and then to anticipate how to apply skills to real problems in different contexts. Step Three is a general,
reflective exercise designed to encourage students to draw upon transfer strategies whenever they encounter a new problem in their law courses or clerkships. Students can use this all-purpose exercise to analyze the expectations for the assignment; draw upon generalizable knowledge from prior learning; explore analogous learning for creative solutions; identify the skills required for the assignment; find and explore new resources to increase knowledge and hone skills; locate and troubleshoot potential models; anticipate future applications for new knowledge and skills gained through the assignment; decide when to talk to the professor; and tap into holistic motivations that facilitate deeper learning and transferability. This step draws in part upon Schwartz’s information-processing analysis tool, in the assignment instructions walk the student through a decision-making matrix.299

Step Four: Professors can draft a similar, but tailored exercise to approach a very specific, major assignment. Although Steps One through Three can stand alone as an effective approach to transfer, law professors can encourage even better transfer to the current assignment (and into practice) by tailoring a reflective exercise or checklist to the current problem in class. The exercise looks very much like that in Step Three, but emphasizes the particular doctrinal area(s), issues, and skills involved in completing that task. The key again is to cue out of latency the knowledge, procedures, motivation, and other resources that the student has encoded in her internal schema, so that they can be connected to the newly-forming schematic centered on the current learning experience.

V. CONCLUSION

The material presented here is the first attempt to address a comprehensive method for improving transfer of learning in legal education by integrating the curriculum, relating it to core lawyering skills, and then relating those concepts to the assignment at hand. Hopefully, it will generate much additional scholarship and many new ideas, modules, and shared experiences.

The core skills approach is meant to reflect an emphasis on the conscious cultivation of a deep, underlying motivation to achieve transfer and intentional maneuvers for accomplishing it. As learners, we desire to develop a steady, experienced, hand with which to guide the ship of our inquiry. The steady hand, strong intent, and useful maneuvers necessary to guide the ship are no replacement for the deep-seated knowledge base required to use them. This approach steers directly to the center of the pendulum-like extremes of educational theory. It does

not view metacognitive strategies as a replacement for a well developed knowledge base, nor does it assume that transfer will happen automatically as a result of it. The ship in this example is the knowledge base itself. Motivation and maneuvers can only enhance its use. In our travels there are elements that must be taken into account that go beyond these themes. The tides, and prevailing winds of subtle internal factors such as learning styles, situated power, pre-existing mental models, psychological, and cultural dispositions must be brought into conscious awareness, addressed, and utilized effectively in order for transfer to be successful.

The roles of faculty within this journey are numerous. As guides, they will inspire students to envision new destinations, or learning areas in which to transfer their knowledge. They will orchestrate opportunities for students to gain basic exposure to the customs, procedures, landmarks, and activities that await them in their future destinations so that they experience a degree of familiarity when they arrive. As translators, they help create a common lexicon for the wide variety of disparate terms used to describe similar phenomena. As cartographers, they assist students to chart core pathways for transfer. They assist students to navigate sometimes difficult terrain, helping them to follow paths of connection, cueing their ability to function within a new learning domain, which is the essence of transfer itself.
APPENDIX

The Core Skills Approach: Sample Documents

- Core Skills Approach Overview
- Step 1: The Core Skills Compass
- Step 2: Applied Skills Charts
- Step 3: All-Purpose Transfer Exercise
- Step 4: Tailored Transfer Exercises

Please Take Note:

This proposed, sample system for enhancing transfer in legal education is premised on the use of a meta-schema based on core lawyering skills. Legal educators may wish to explore other possible bases for schema connecting the curriculum. Moreover, the core lawyering skills identified here contain within them aspects of the value systems belonging to various reforming forces within legal education, including various aspects of clinical pedagogy, community lawyering, therapeutic justice, and the humanizing movement. Law schools and individual educators should create schema that reflect the values consistent with their missions, and which they hope to instill in their students.
The Core Skills Approach:  
Four Steps for Better Transfer of Learning in Law School

Overview

The Core Skills Approach draws upon the best of the transfer of learning research to help students (1) integrate the curriculum; (2) anticipate how skills will apply in new and different contexts; (3) identify helpful strategies to transfer skills and knowledge to any new assignment; and (4) draw upon concrete knowledge and skills suitable for a very specific assignment. The steps are sequenced from general to specific.

Step One

To newer law students, the law curriculum usually seems disjointed. Even though their professors usually are trying to instill the same basic professional values and the same skills in analysis, critical thinking, advocacy, students typically do not make this connection until much later in law school or even in practice. Moreover, schema theory tells us that our brains encode information according to the environment and experiences we had when we learned it. Knowledge thus remains tied to particular courses, cases, exams, and professors and does not transfer easily. For these reasons, Step One is very simple: students use the compass and its accompanying list of core lawyering skills as a set of schema to view the curriculum as a continuum, unified by a set of constants in the form of the four core skills constellations.

Step Two

Even when students learn to view the curriculum holistically, unified by core lawyering skills, they soon discover that those skills are expressed in different ways, depending on the context. In Step Two, the applied skills guides serve as an anticipatory schema, designed to help students determine when and how they can practice their developing skills sets. Each quadrant on the core skills compass has its own applied skills guide.
Step Three

In Steps One and Two, students learn to unify the curriculum using abstract core lawyering skills as constants, and then to anticipate how to apply skills to real problems in different contexts. Step Three is a general, reflective exercise designed to encourage students to draw upon transfer strategies whenever they encounter a new problem in their law courses or clerkships. Students can use this all-purpose exercise to analyze the expectations for the assignment; draw upon generalizable knowledge from prior learning; explore analogous learning for creative solutions; identify the skills required for the assignment; find and explore new resources; locate and troubleshoot potential models; anticipate future applications for new knowledge and skills gained through the assignment; and tap into holistic motivations that facilitate deeper learning and transferability.

Step Four

Although Steps One through Three can stand alone as an effective approach to transfer, law professors can encourage even better transfer to the current assignment (and into practice) by tailoring a reflective exercise or checklist to the current problem in class. The exercise looks very much like that in Step Three, but emphasizes the doctrinal area(s), issues, skills, and resources involved in completing the task.
The Core Skills Compass: A Tool for Transferring Core Legal Skills throughout Law School and Practice

Roughly four clusters of core legal skills will govern your education and your law practice, including your doctrinal law school classes, where you discuss law and policy at a deep, theoretical level; your skills classes, where you apply your new knowledge in a simulated practice environment; and your real-world law practice experiences, such as clinic, externships, clerkships, and your career after graduation. They are mutually-reinforcing and overlapping, rather than mutually exclusive.

Even though the same core skills are used across all of these different environments, novice attorneys often struggle to recognize them or to identify what is expected from them by their professors and supervisors. By using the core skills compass and accompanying navigational charts, you can better anticipate when and how to develop and use these skills. When in doubt, clarify with your professor or supervising attorney.
Applied Skills Guides

As seen in the Core Skills Compass, one way of seeing your law studies as a unified whole is to think of each course in terms of what core lawyering skills it aims to teach you. These charts can be used to help navigate your different courses, externships, clinical experiences, and clerkship experiences based on the skills represented by each of the four quadrants: Advocacy, Professionalism & Ethics, Critical Reasoning, and Formal Analysis.

The charts follow on the next four pages, and then are followed by Steps 3 and 4 in the Core Skills Approach.
Law School & Bar Exams

- (i) Intense focus on exhaustive issue-spotting, from the highly relevant to the tangential.
- (ii) Exclusively focused on generalized, blackletter rules rather than an open-ended issue.
- (iii) High degree of focus on blackletter law. There may be some added expectation that the student will also examine and compare jurisdictions.
- (iv) Increased emphasis on formally describing cases and other authorities, including the language of specific code provisions, as well as the facts, holding, and rationale in cases. Calls for more complex, detailed comparisons with authority, using multiple examples from different ranges of fact patterns.
- (v) The focus is much different from law school exams. Instead of an exhaustive assessment of many issues, the writer must focus on just one or a few narrow, highly relevant issues of immediate concern. This issue now takes the form of a prediction/conclusion about one discrete issue.
- (vi) The law must now focus on the law of the particular jurisdiction, rather than generalized blackletter law. An informal memo or routine brief with a more conciliatory analysis is usually called for only when the rule and application are relatively non-controversial or reasonably settled in the jurisdiction, requiring only a modicum of proof.
- (vii) Because the issue in this type of work product tends to require less complex analysis, the focus is on comparison with a small number of key authorities.
- (viii) Predicts or argues how the court would rule.
- (ix) Examples: research memo, motion for extension of time.

Take-Home Exams

- (i) Usually the same as timed exams to the left. The professor may ask the student to predict on an open-ended issue.
- (ii) The professor may ask the student to predict or persuade on just one or a few narrow, highly relevant issues of immediate concern. There is now a form of a prediction/conclusion about one discrete issue.
- (iii) The focus is much different from law school exams. Instead of an exhaustive assessment of many issues, the writer must focus on just one or a few narrow, highly relevant issues of immediate concern. This issue now takes the form of a prediction/conclusion about one discrete issue.
- (iv) The law must now focus on the law of the particular jurisdiction, rather than generalized blackletter law. An informal memo or routine brief with a more conciliatory analysis is usually called for only when the rule and application are relatively non-controversial or reasonably settled in the jurisdiction, requiring only a modicum of proof.
- (v) The application also typically is not as straightforward as in an informal memo or routine brief. Rather than merely demonstrating how the jurisdiction has resolved similar issues, the writer must engage in detailed analogy and argumentation with binding and persuasive authorities that demonstrate a variety of fact patterns, reasoning, and holdings.
- (vi) Predicts or argues how the court would rule.
- (vii) Examples: research memo, motion for extension of time.

Informal Memos and Routine Briefs in Practice & Clinic

- (i) The focus is much different from law school exams. Instead of an exhaustive assessment of many issues, the writer must focus on just one or a few narrow, highly relevant issues of immediate concern. This issue now takes the form of a prediction/conclusion about one discrete issue.
- (ii) The law must now focus on the law of the particular jurisdiction, rather than generalized blackletter law. An informal memo or routine brief with a more conciliatory analysis is usually called for only when the rule and application are relatively non-controversial or reasonably settled in the jurisdiction, requiring only a modicum of proof.
- (iii) The writer must now focus on the law of the particular jurisdiction, rather than generalized blackletter law. An informal memo or routine brief with a more conciliatory analysis is usually called for only when the rule and application are relatively non-controversial or reasonably settled in the jurisdiction, requiring only a modicum of proof.
- (iv) The application also typically is not as straightforward as in an informal memo or routine brief. Rather than merely demonstrating how the jurisdiction has resolved similar issues, the writer must engage in detailed analogy and argumentation with binding and persuasive authorities that demonstrate a variety of fact patterns, reasoning, and holdings.
- (v) Predicts or argues how the court would rule.
- (vi) Examples: research memo, motion for extension of time.

Formal Memos and Briefs for Practice, Clinic, & LARW

- (i) As indicated to the left, a simulated or real law practice environment, the prediction or conclusion about how a court should rule on that issue is typically including a brief summary of the reason why.
- (ii) The main focus is on accurately identifying the major issue and identifying the major issue in a particular case.
- (iii) Emphasis on blackletter rules.
- (iv) Emphasis on identifying the applications from various key cases from the reading, and using those examples, plus hypothetical variations developed by the professor and the text, to come to a highly theoretical understanding of the rule, including its logical extremes. Formal analysis for law practice also relies extensively on theory, but contrasts because there, the theory is grounded in legislative history and precedent rather than upon extreme hypothetical scenarios.
- (v) Example: when a professor asks the student to predict how a court likely would rule in light of the understanding developed during the conversation. Here, as in exams, it is important to distinguish between hypothetical extremes and the existing applications demonstrated by the authorities. Hypothetical extremes are designed to show the limits and possibilities of the rule, and to expose the political, historical, racial, and policy-oriented underpinnings.
**Applied Skills Guide: Advocacy** (Objective to Holistic to Persuasive)

- **Objective**
  - Most common contexts are (1) client counseling and (2) dispute resolution by a neutral authority, such as a court.
  - The goal is to be able to examine the matter from each point of view in order to either give frank, balanced legal advice or to advise a dispute.
  - Common work product examples are memos, judicial opinions, client advice letters, in-person client counseling, theoretical classroom discussions.
  - Most common topics are law, narrative (clients’ stories), and non-legal considerations like culture, policy, and emotion.

- **Holistic**
  - Refers to a variety of contexts in which the advocate is not involved in win/lose litigation, or where the current object of the litigation is to settle.
  - The emphasis is on balancing the needs of the client with the needs of the community and the other participants, so as to reach a mutually-beneficial result.
  - Depending on the situation, a mutually-beneficial result is often in the best interests of the individual, represented parties, such as in disputes between business partners or family members.
  - Common examples of non-litigation contexts may include legislative drafting, administrative rulemaking, and transactional work (e.g., putting together a business deal).
  - Common examples of litigation contexts that call for holistic practice are mediation, collaborative lawyering (e.g., collaborative divorce practice), tribal peacemaker courts or circles, and drug court.

- **Persuasive**
  - Tends to focus on litigation and arbitration contexts, but can also include lobbying in the legislative and executive branches, as well as negotiating in transactional practice.
  - The emphasis is much more on achieving a favorable result for one’s client, even if that success must come at the expense of other parties or the community.
  - Common examples of persuasive work product include briefs, oral argument, settlement proposals, contract proposals, and so on.
Applied Skills Guide: Critical Reasoning (Law School to Law Practice) (Concrete / Emotional / Theoretical)

Law School Exams & Bar Exam
- Focused on applying blackletter rules to hypothetical facts. Ideal exam answers will also include fact pattern comparisons with cases discussed in class and in the text. In law school exams, there is some degree of emphasis on applying the deep, theoretical understanding developed through critical reflection and conative dialogue with the professor, but unlike the classroom setting (see next slide), theory should be clearly distinguished from blackletter law, and the clear emphasis placed on blackletter analysis.

- Requires the ability to analogize and distinguish among cases and statutes that, at first blush, may seem highly attenuated. This is also particularly true in formal analysis for law practice.

- Critical reasoning of the historical-political-social-cultural variety is less valued on law school exams (and not on bar exams), although take-home exams may call for increased reflection given the greater amount of time to explore and analyze the issues.

Holistic Law Practice Contexts
- Examples: client counseling, business transactions, community activism and other causes, lawyering, lobbying, legislation, drug court, tribal peacemaker courts.

- Many tasks in law practice of all types fall outside the formal, win/lose litigation environment emphasized so heavily in law school. Much lawyering, even litigation, calls for skills that fall outside the concrete world of legal rules and precedent.

- Sometimes a client is looking for a remedy that can only be satisfied emotionally but not legally, and may need to be referred for other services. In other situations, straightforward legal rules may need to be applied in such a way that the client’s emotional needs or desired outcomes are taken into consideration. When community lawyering, cause lawyering, and other contexts arise that call for law reform, critical reasoning requires the ability to reflect upon the legal system, to comprehend its underpinnings and biases, and to develop good-faith arguments for the extension or reform of existing legal principles and structures.

Formal Analysis for Law Practice
- Examples: briefs, formal memoranda, oral argument, formal client advice letters.

- In these contexts, critical reasoning occurs within the framework of formal, concrete legal rules, tests, standards, and precedents. It requires the ability to read for both text and subtext when analyzing the authorities, and to recognize social, political, and historical underpinnings, as well as any inherent cultural, racial, or gender bias that may result in an unjust application of the law in any case.

- Observe the high degree of overlap between formal analysis, critical reasoning, and advocacy in the context of formal analysis for law practice.

Classroom Discussions
- Like both exams and formal analysis, classroom discussion calls for creative analogies and distinctions among authorities and between authorities and the given hypothetical problem.

- Often, there is not enough time in class to discuss the cultural, political, and social bases that underlie given decisions or statutes, although this tends to occur more in subjects like criminal law and constitutional law, which deal with pervasive social issues. In either event, to the extent that the student is well-read and can reflect upon these factors, the student will perform at a higher level in class as long as she is also proficient at identifying blackletter issues, rules, and case examples.
The Core Skills Approach
Step 2 / Guide 4

Applied Skills Guide: Professionalism (Personal to Law School to Practice to Community)

---

**Student Life**
- Like medical students, social work students, and other professionals-in-training, law students are considered novice members of the professional community. Accordingly, the bench, bar, faculty, and student body will encourage students into standards for professional behavior and will expect students to begin meeting those standards while in school.
- Obeying the law school's Honor Code
- Observing the rules of professional conduct for lawyers when engaged in any client related work
- An attitude of respect toward all peoples and collegiality toward fellow members of the profession, including professors, classmates, and law school staff
- A strong work ethic and commitment to quality work product
- A developing commitment to pro bono service and social justice
- Sample contexts: classroom, homework, exams, extracurricular activities, internships, clinic work, representing the law school to the community, representing the legal profession to the community

---

**Client Representation**
- Strict adherence to the formal rules of professional conduct in one's jurisdiction.
- Protecting the client's dignity: treating with respect
- Lifelong commitment to learning cultural literacy and communication skills
- Competent representation
- Diligent representation

---

**Courtroom Advocacy**
- Dignity and respect in conduct toward others, including not only the parties and judge(s), but also jurors, court staff, opposing counsel, and onlookers.
- Preparation
- Appropriate deference to authority figures and legal institutions
- Candor toward the tribunal
- Competent representation

---

**Community Leadership**
- Creating a positive public impression of the legal profession, rule of law, and legal institutions
- A commitment to social justice and pro bono

---

© 2009-2010 Tonya Kowalski | True North: Navigating for the Transfer of Learning in Legal Education
All-Purpose Transfer Exercise

Instructions

Sometimes it is difficult to digest all the different topics and assignments in law school in such a way that you can “encode” them for future use. This exercise draws upon research in the science of “transfer of learning” to help you use your work not just to succeed in school, but to develop into a prepared and engaged professional. The purpose of this exercise is to help you to draw upon previous instruction and experience in order to complete an assignment in law school, or perhaps even in a clerkship or externship. It is also designed to help you learn from the assignment in such a way that you can eventually transfer your experience to law practice. Finally, the exercise also encourages the development of motivation around “big picture” concerns beyond grades, in order to make the learning deeper and easier to access later, when you are practicing law. As you get used to using these methods for “transfer thinking,” eventually, you should no longer need to use this formal exercise every time. Instead, when you feel stuck, you can read it occasionally as a refresher.

Understanding Expectations

☐ What are the goals of this task or assignment? What instructions were provided? Is it clear what you are supposed to learn from it? If not, reflect on the content of the chapter you are reading or on the material you have discussed in class, and see if you can connect it to the task at hand.
☐ Take a moment also to look at the Core Skills Compass and the list of skills it contains in each of the four quadrants. While you are in “big picture,” brainstorming mode, what kinds of skills seem to be called for in this task?

Drawing upon General Knowledge

☐ Whatever type of project you are working on, it is designed to help you process and deepen your understanding of the topic you are studying in class. Whether you are taking a course or working in a practice environment, your current task likely also builds upon knowledge you learned earlier, perhaps even in other courses.
☐ What doctrinal area is implicated by your problem, and does it intersect with any other areas of law? Do you see any familiar legal concepts or terminology that you have also noticed in your other courses? Are you supposed to be looking at the law for a particular jurisdiction, or the general blackletter law (note that the blackletter law is sometimes divided into majority and minority views)?
☐ Usually problems on exams, in books, or in law practice look different from the cases and materials studied in class. Every case is different, so working on problems that don’t exactly fit with what you already know is great experience for new lawyers. Looking back over the material you have studied, what general rules or principles can you extract from the cases and statutes you studied? You probably studied cases and hypotheticals that applied those principles in varied situations. How is your current fact pattern similar or different to those situations?

Drawing upon Lawyering Skills

☐ Now take a look at the Applied Skills Guides for skills clusters on the Core Skills Compass. If the skills for one of the quadrants seem strongly implicated by the assignment, for example, a memo
calling for mostly formal analysis, or a textbook exercise calling for critical reasoning about history and policy, how should you likely apply that skill in the given context?

- What past opportunities have you had in law school to practice these skills? For example, if you are doing a simulation for a depositions class, think about how your experience with formal analysis in legal writing and other classes have prepared you to think about problems in terms of the elements of a cause of action. If you are preparing for a simulated client counseling session, think not only about the elements of the claim, but about how professionalism and ethics are implicated by how you communicate with the client, and how critical thinking skills, like the ability to solve problems and see non-legal solutions, plays into your counseling approach.

Finding and Working with Models

- When faced with a new assignment, it is natural to want to see samples of a successful product, and perhaps even an unsuccessful product for comparison. Sometimes your professor will be able to provide models, but it is not always feasible. For some things, you can also find models in other places.
- What sample models are available from your professor or from secondary sources? Your library probably contains video tutorials of depositions and trial technique. Your professor may have old exams or briefs on reserve or on your course website. Large legal research databases like Westlaw and Lexis often contain sample complaints, briefs, and motions, as do litigation forms series like Moore’s Federal Practice and Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice. Similar series contain transactional forms for different practice areas.
- Both in law school and in practice, models are typically imperfect, and rarely well-tailored to a new case or problem. Instead of searching in vain for the perfect model, try to adapt from the naturally flawed examples you find after a reasonable search. What are the potential pitfalls in the model I am using? Are there places where I could improve upon the technique, explain something better, or tailor it to my facts and jurisdiction? Is the language in a sample form archaic, and in need of a plain-English overhaul?

Drawing upon Analogous Experience

- If this is the very first time you have done this kind of assignment, for example, your first memo, you can expect to struggle with it. But you can still draw upon your previous experiences. What writing habits, research habits, scheduling, and editing processes have worked well for you in the past? What classroom or textbook exercises helped you practice the components of the task you are doing now?
- What life experiences, moral and political questions, and other areas of law might come to bear on this problem? Be careful to make sure that your task calls for analysis outside of the blackletter law. Consult your assignment instructions, models, professor, and Applied Skills Guides to anticipate how to use your knowledge and skills appropriately for the given context.

Anticipating Future Applications

- The main goal of law school is to develop knowledge and skills that you can carry into any kind of practice. If you envision some likely future applications now, it is more likely that you will be able to “encode” your knowledge for access later.
- Can you envision a case in which you might use the type of legal knowledge you are studying? Even seemingly archaic rules like those in property come into play surprisingly often in certain kinds of practice. Consider talking to a lawyer-mentor. If you have trouble imagining a case, remember that any practice you get in legal problem-solving builds your repertoire for practice.
Cultivating Internal Motivation

- Research shows that relying solely on performance-based motivators, like grades and class rank, tends to inhibit the ability to transfer skills and knowledge to a new problem. On the other hand, emphasis on “mastery”-based motivations, like becoming a competent advocate and helping others, tend to enhance that ability.

- What was your primary motivation for coming to law school? If it was to get a secure job in an interesting field, how might you relate this assignment to that goal? If you like mathematical problems and issues with clear rules attached, does it help to think of your task as a puzzle to be solved? If your primary motivation centered on concerns like justice or a particular cause, how might you think of this assignment as a stepping stone toward your goal? Can you relate the particular skills and knowledge to part of your plan for becoming a lawyer competent to carry out that mission?
Tailored Transfer Exercise 1:
Legal Writing to Clinic (Client Advice Letter)

Instructions

The purpose of this exercise is to help you to recall legal analysis and letter-writing skills that you learned in your first-year legal writing class. Your supervising attorney may wish you to use it as a checklist, or, if you are new to the clinic, you may be asked briefly to answer these questions and turn them in with your first draft letter. You may also have business letter writing experience in your employment history. If you did not work on client letters in your legal writing course, this exercise will ask you to locate and study instructional resources before undertaking this project.

Locating Resources

☐ What textbooks and legal writing guidebooks do I already own that could help me get started on this task? Are there any relevant instructions in the clinic manual?

☐ Using the law library catalog, are there any other legal writing textbooks or guides that would help me develop a good set of criteria for a client letter?

☐ What sample letters are available in the clinic bank, or in previous client files? Are they good samples? From my research, what criteria should I use to evaluate the quality of a sample letter?

Formal Components

☐ What style letterhead does my clinic use, and how do I locate it on the computer network? Should I try to incorporate the letterhead myself, or does the clinic prefer that our support staff perform that function?

☐ What typographical formatting style does my clinic prefer, for example, margins and alignment? Do we use block style, modified block style, or semi-block style (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/653/02/)? What about the font type and size?

☐ Should anyone else other than the client file receive a copy of this letter? Normally, no one but the client gets a copy of the client letter, due to ethical considerations for client confidentiality. But in a rare case, such as where the client has a guardian, those names should appear on the cc: line under the signature block. Does my clinic note copies to the client file on the cc: line?

☐ Who will sign the letter, me or my supervising attorney?

Purpose

☐ What is the goal or purpose of this letter? Is it to provide advice in the form of a prediction, such as the likelihood of success on the merits? Or perhaps the advantages and disadvantages of taking a certain course of action? Will it require legal analysis, or more of a pragmatic assessment such as financial or emotional costs and time requirements? If unsure, you may need to talk to your supervising attorney again.

☐ Is the purpose of the letter clearly stated in the opening paragraph?

☐ Are there any secondary purposes to the letter, such as to create a record of attorney/client communication, or even a series of difficult communications with the client? If so, be sure to include that information in a diplomatic way so as to protect yourself, your supervisor, and the clinic.
Audience and Tone

- What is the client’s level of education or business experience?
- What is the client’s level of familiarity with the legal process and legal terminology?
- If working with a child client, is he or she so young that the audience is truly an adult reader, such as a guardian? Should the letter be addressed to that person instead? Or is he or she old enough that the letter should be written with her education and developmental level in mind?
- Is there a language barrier?
- Is the client in emotional distress? If there is bad news, how can it be stated accurately but compassionately?
- Would this client benefit from statements of empathy? If so, what is an appropriate amount of empathetic tone and language given the client’s age, emotional state, personality, and familiarity with you and the law clinic?
- If the client has experienced frustration due to delays in court proceedings, difficulties obtaining evidence, and so on, what kind of reassurance or sympathy can you provide without providing false hope?
- If the client is frustrated with the clinic’s legal representation, or likely to become frustrated with the nature of the advice rendered, what diplomacy might you exert in the letter to help assuage the situation?
- Have you taken into consideration this letter’s future or unknown audience? If the client ever entered into a dispute with the clinic, would you feel comfortable about an outside attorney or judge reading this letter?

Factual Basis

- What underlying assumptions does the legal advice make about the facts of the case?
- Would any additional information or clarity affect the analysis or advice given?
- Have you protected the clinic by asking the client to verify the facts, to identify inaccuracies, or to provide new information?

Legal Analysis

- Given the client’s level of legal sophistication, should you cite authority in your explanation of the law? Even if your client would be overwhelmed by formal citations, should you identify your authorities for the future or unknown reader mentioned above? If not, are the authorities well documented elsewhere in the client’s file, such as in an internal memo?
- Does the analysis follow a basic IRAC structure for each issue, providing an issue-specific topic sentence, legal rule, comparison and contrast to authority, and a conclusion?
- Is enough information provided that the client could, without any further information, make a meaningful, potentially life-altering decision based on what he has read?

Advice

- Given the letter’s purpose, identified above, is the advice to the client clearly stated? Is it stated both in the early paragraphs of the letter and then clarified and re-stated at the end?
- Does the letter state a clear position, rather than an open-ended “it depends” answer? If the advice centers on the likelihood of a certain outcome, is it phrased in terms of probability rather than possibility (almost anything is “possible,” but is it likely to occur)? If an “it depends” answer is necessary, are the different variables and outcomes established in “if/then” form, so that the client can assess the outcomes?
Does the advice follow with an offer to clarify information or establish a time to meet and discuss it? If the letter’s purpose is to memorialize a recent meeting on the same topic, does the opening paragraph establish the date of that meeting and what was discussed?

Have you considered the non-legal factors that should inform your advice, such as emotional or financial costs, or non-legal solutions like public services?

Submission and Filing

What is the deadline for this draft, and what is a reasonable amount of time to produce the final letter, given its purpose and the standards of professional conduct within the legal community?

Should I print my draft on a special color of paper (see clinic manual)? Which versions need to be placed in the client file?

Do I need to turn in a memo or checklist with my draft letter?

What is my plan for seeing this letter through to completion and taking responsibility for meeting deadlines and making sure that the letter is carefully proofread, processed and mailed in a timely manner?
Tailored Transfer Exercise 2:  
Casebook topic to exam answer (generic)

Introduction

The purpose of this exercise is to help you to focus what you have learned in this module on [example: anticipatory repudiation] and apply it to your upcoming examination. Recall that classroom discussion designed to develop not only blackletter rules and theoretical applications, but also critical thinking about the legal system, public policy, and even the moral implications of different legal rules and applications. In contrast, timed, in-class law school exams are designed to test almost exclusively the blackletter rules and their range of potential applications to different fact scenarios.

Sometimes, take-home exams ask for more policy-oriented discussion because of the greater time allowed. They typically do not call for advocacy because they require objective analysis rather than persuasive. For purposes of exams, professionalism comes into play in terms of your preparation and competence, quality of presentation (dependent on test conditions, of course), and adherence to honor code rules, including plagiarism concerns. Be sure to clarify these expectations with your professor.

Type of exam and expectations

- Is the exam a timed, in-class exam or a take-home exam? Multiple-choice or essay? Open or closed-book?
- Depending on the length of time permitted and whether the exam allows notes or books to be open, does the professor expect citations to authority?
- If the exam is a longer one, such as an open-book take-home exam, should I discuss policy and philosophical considerations in addition to the blackletter analysis?

Compiling the rules and exceptions

- What are the primary sources of law for this subtopic? Do they come from a uniform or model code, like the UCC, then further explained and modified by case law? Exclusively from the common law? Does my professor rely on the Restatement in this area of law as a source of common-law rules? If so, how do the Restatement and case law rules compare and contrast?
- Does my outline clearly list each major rule in this section and identify its exceptions? Have I drawn rules from the different sources identified above? Where they contrast, do I explore under what circumstances they apply, or how the changes in the rule can affect the outcome?
- Which cases provide examples of the application of each rule and exception? What is the basic fact/holding/rationale description for each major case?
- Did my professor discuss cases that were not covered in the textbook? Are they woven into my outline now? Do I need to go download and read those cases to understand what was discussed in class?
- Does the textbook discuss cases that we did not cover in class? (Unless the professor states otherwise, assume that any material in the assigned reading will be covered on the exam.) If so, have I also digested those rules and applications for my outline?
Spectrums of application

☐ For each rule, what are the various applications represented by the relevant cases (and possibly the model code or restatement comments)?

☐ Using a linear outline, flowchart, or a continuum line (spectrum line), mark which cases identify positive examples of [anticipatory repudiation] and which cases provide examples where a court or commentator felt the situation was not an example of [anticipatory repudiation]. What made the difference in each case? If the courts applied different rules, be sure to identify the split in authority and learn the difference (e.g. the Third Circuit approach versus the Restatement approach).

☐ Compare and contrast the positive outcomes versus negative outcomes. What were the determinative facts and rules that decided when [a party’s actions] qualified as [an anticipatory repudiation]?

☐ Identify the hypothetical scenarios discussed in class and in the text. Given what you now know about how the rules have been applied in past factual contexts, how would they probably apply in these hypothetical situations? Where does the hypothetical scenario fall along the spectrum of applications between [“anticipatory repudiation”] and [“not anticipatory repudiation”]? Be sure to concretely compare and contrast to existing cases or commentary.

Organization and presentation for essay exams

☐ After considering the expectations above, complete some practice exam answers and consider how to make grading easier for your professor:

☐ Use IRAC formula.

☐ In a longer, take-home exam, have I clearly identified a topic sentence for each paragraph so that the issue (I) can be matched to the grading rubric? Does the professor want a conclusion/prediction or an open-ended issue statement?

☐ Have I clearly identified the rule (R) so that it can be matched to the rubric? If there are competing rules, have I identified them and their sources, and analyzed each one? What about exceptions and sub-rules?

☐ Have I mentioned the names of key cases so that they also can be identified for grading?

☐ If permitted, have I underlined key legal terms of art and case names to make checklist-style grading easier?

☐ If my handwriting is terrible, is there an option to type? Can I use print-style handwriting efficiently?

☐ If typing, be sure to use an appropriate font type, size, and margins, and determine whether your professor prefers double or single spacing.