The currency of law is words. We sort and skim daily, but for law school you will also need old fashioned reading skills: the ability to immerse yourself in complex and lengthy texts for sustained comprehension and reflection on ideas. (After all, the 2010 Supreme Court opinion in Citizens United v. FEC has 20% more words than The Great Gatsby!) So our advice is to read – novels, history, whatever engages you – to build your concentration, comprehension, and critical thinking skills.

A great place to start building your reading muscle is newspapers and magazines. They’ll help you have a better understanding of what’s going on in the world, and provide good examples of solid, thoughtful (and sometimes not-so-solid-and-thoughtful) writing. Quality national newspapers like The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, or magazines like The Economist and The New Yorker are excellent sources. If you’re already an avid newspaper reader, try branching out into that section that you typically skip (the business or arts section, for instance.) Regularly tackling new and challenging material will help prepare you for the reading that is to come. (And think about reading them in print. Reading online versions of these publications encourages skimming and skipping around. You’ll need to read more deeply as a law student; and typically you’ll be reading from casebooks, not on a screen.)

Here are some additional reading recommendations as you prepare to join the Santa Clara community. These aren’t assignments, they’re suggestions. Pick and choose based on your own tastes and your available time this summer, including some material that stretches your brain. (Added bonus: this will give you a good reason to visit your local library; libraries are like second homes for law students and attorneys.)

**HOW-TOS FOR LAW SCHOOL AND THINKING LIKE A LAWYER**

*Deconstructing Legal Analysis: A 1L Primer* (Peter Wendel 2009). An explanation of the way that lawyers and law students analyze cases and legal problems.

*Expert Learning for Law Students* (Michael Hunter Schwartz 2008). This book talks about the process by which "expert" law students approach their studies, exams, and life in law school.

*Getting to Maybe* (Richard M. Fischl and Jeremy Paul 1999). This book emphasizes how much more than knowing a "right answer" law school requires.


*Law School Survival Kit* (Jeff Adachi 1999). The nuts and bolts of reading, preparing for class, outlining, and exam writing.


*Reading Like a Lawyer: Time Saving Strategies for Reading Law Like an Expert* (Ruth Ann McKinney 2005). You will spend more time reading in law school than you ever imagined, the strategies in this book will jumpstart your mastery of this critical skill.

*What the L?: 25 Things We Wish We’d Known Before Going to Law School* (Kelsey May, Samantha Roberts, and Elizabeth Shelton 2010). Advice directly from three former law students about their experiences, successes, and failures.
SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

**Becoming Justice Blackmun: Harry Blackmun’s Supreme Court Journey** (Linda Greenhouse 2005). By the long-time Supreme Court correspondent for the *New York Times*, this superbly written biography reveals the workings of the Court and the challenges of decision-making in areas such as the death penalty and abortion.

- To hear Justice Blackmun discuss his time on the Court, visit: http://www.npr.org/news-specials/blackmun/

**Five Chiefs: A Supreme Court Memoir** (John Paul Stevens 2011). Insights into the five most recent chief justices (Justices Roberts, Rehnquist, Burger, Warren, and Vinson) told from the perspective of one of the Court’s longest serving members.

- Justice Stevens’ has written a new book called *Six Amendments* that looks at ways the Constitution should be changed. Read about it in the *New York Review of Books*: http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/jun/05/justice-stevens-refounding-father/

**Illinois Justice: The Scandal of 1969 and the Rise of John Paul Stevens** (Kenneth Manaster 2001). After reading his account of his time of the Court, read about the murky world of Illinois judicial politics that started the career of the future Justice Stevens.

**My Beloved World** (Sonia Sotomayor 2013). A pre-Court autobiography by one of its newest members, and the first Latina to serve on the nation’s highest bench.

**The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court** (Jeffrey Toobin 2007). Someone wrote all the words of the opinions in your casebooks. This book puts many of cases you'll be assigned into context, and introduces you to the personalities and institution of the Court.

FAMOUS CASES

**8** (Dustin Lance Black 2011). A play based directly on the trial transcripts from *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, the challenge to California’s Proposition 8.

- Professor Pat Cain blogs about the impacts of same-sex marriage on tax law at: http://law.scu.edu/category/same-sex-tax/


**Flagrant Conduct: The Story of Lawrence vs. Texas** (Dale Carpenter 2012). A narrative of one of the most significant gay rights cases to make its way to the Supreme Court.

**Gideon’s Trumpet** (Anthony Lewis 1964). A prize-winning account of the case establishing the right of indigent criminal defendants to a lawyer.


**Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America’s Struggle for Racial Equality** (Richard Kluger 2004). The story of the struggle of ordinary people and their lawyers for racial justice and equal educational opportunity provides insight into the Court and constitutional interpretation.

- To see historical documents and images from *Brown*, visit: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/brown-brown.html

**The Snail Darter and the Dam: How Pork-Barrel Politics Endangered a Little Fish and Killed a River** (Brandt Goldstein 2006). The story of *Tennessee Valley Authority v. Hill*, one of America’s most important environmental law cases.
Storming the Court: How a Band of Law Students Fought the President – and Won (Brandt Goldstein 2006). How a group of Yale Law students took on the federal government in a fight for the freedom of a group of Haitian refugees.

LAW, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY

The Agent: My 40-Year Career Making Deals and Changing the Game (Leigh Steinberg 2014). An autobiography of one of America’s leading sports agents (who also happens to be a member of the California Bar.)

Leaders of Santa Clara’s Institute of Sports Law and Ethics blog at: http://law.scu.edu/sports-law/

The American Legal System and Civic Engagement: Why We All Should Think Like Lawyers (Kenneth Manaster 2013). One of Santa Clara’s favorite professors explains how the way we approach problems and questions as lawyers can be used to address our greatest civic challenges.


Professor Eric Goldman blogs about intellectual property and high tech law at: http://blog.ericgoldman.org/

Our Nation Unhinged (Peter Honigsberg 2009). An analysis of the changes to the American legal and political system after the attacks of September 11, 2001.

My Life in Court (Louis Nizer 2012). Personal stories from one of the most respected lawyer-authors on his great courtroom battles.

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness (Michelle Alexander 2012). The author argues that the supposed colorblindness that came with the election of President Obama overlooks a more insidious attack on communities of color through America’s “tough on crime” mantra.

As at part of their 2014-2015 Essential Issues Series, the Center for Social Justice and Public Service will explore issues of race, criminal justice, poverty, and the war of drugs through an ongoing discussion of The New Jim Crow. Students are encouraged to read the book this summer in preparation for these weekly conversations. More information is available at: http://law.scu.edu/socialjustice/

No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship (Linda Kerber 1999). Historical account of legal treatment of women in America, focusing on civic obligations and covering many of the key sex discrimination cases of the past 100 years.

Privilege Revealed: How Invisible Preference Undermines America (Stephanie Wildman 1996). Santa Clara professor Stephanie Wildman brings to light the institutionalized systems of privilege that surround our everyday lives.

Thinking About Crime: Sense and Sensibility in American Penal Culture (Michael Tonry 2006). A discussion of the history of criminal justice policy, and ideas for reforming the system.

War and Responsibility: Constitutional Lessons from Vietnam and Its Aftermath (John Hart Ely 1993). This analysis of the war powers of Congress and the Executive continues to be relevant today.

To learning more about the War Powers Act, visit: http://loc.gov/law/help/war-powers.php

Women and the Law: Stories (Elizabeth Schneider and Stephanie Wildman 2010). The stories behind some of the most important cases advocating for women’s legal rights.

The Law Stories Series offers a narrative look at many of the subjects you’ll learn at Santa Clara. Checkout Contract Stories, Torts Stories, and Property Stories as well.
LEGAL FICTION

_Bleak House_ (Charles Dickens 1853). One of Dickens’ finest, this novel helped spur the reform of England’s Court of Chancery.

_The Crucible_ (Arthur Miller 1953). This play about 17th century Salem witch trials preceded by several years the playwright’s interrogation by the House Un-American Activities Committee.

_The Descendants_ (Kaui Hart Hemmings 2007). Any law student reading this book (or watching the 2011 movie starring George Clooney) recognized the famed Rule Against Perpetuities as its true star.

_To Kill A Mockingbird_ (Harper Lee 1960). Voted by librarians as the best novel of the century, this Pulitzer Prize winner grows out of the author’s childhood in 1930s Alabama, before she studied the law.

_The Trial_ (Franz Kafka 1925). Compared to this, law school is a walk in the park.

LEGAL CAREERS

_Best Friends at the Bar: What Women Need to Know about a Career in the Law_ (Susan Blakely 2009). The author provides insights into the experiences of women in the law, with advice and stories from judges, attorneys, partners, and law students.

_Guerilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams_ (Kimm Alayne Walton 2008). It’s never too early to begin thinking about summer and post-graduate employment. This book provides simple strategies to help you find the right career opportunities for you.

_The Official Guide to Legal Specialties_ (NALP 2000). A guide developed by the leading national organization on legal careers introducing you to the broad range of lawyering work.

⇒ Our Office of Career Management has put together a number of guides on the various career pathways for lawyers. Check them out at: http://law.scu.edu/careers/career-pathways/

_Should You Really Be a Lawyer? The Guide to Smart Career Choices Before, During & After Law School_ (Deborah Schneider 2010). The title says it all; think about what this career path means and how to make the best decisions for yourself.

_Tomorrow’s Lawyers: An Introduction to Your Future_ (Richard Susskind 2013). A guide to the legal profession in the years to come, and how aspiring lawyers should prepare for it.

LEGAL HUMOR

_Disorderly Conduct: Excerpts from Actual Cases_ (Rodney Jones, Charles Sevilla, and Gerald Uelmen 1999). Santa Clara professor Gerald Uelmen and friends point out some absurd and funny true happens from court transcripts.

_Supreme Folly_ (Rodney Jones and Gerald Uelmen 1990). More humor from the legal system.

THE LEGAL WORLD ONLINE

There are a number of great websites and blogs that will help you understand current issues in the law, important cases, and what lawyers and legal thinkers are discussing.

_California Bar Journal_. Updates on the courts and legal profession in California:

⇒ http://www.calbarjournal.com
**Santa Clara Law Blogs.** Thought-provoking articles and ideas from law school faculty (and updates and information from the Administration):

- [http://law.scu.edu/blog/](http://law.scu.edu/blog/)

**SCOTUSBlog.** Likely the most respected blog discussing cases before the Supreme Court:


**Slate Magazine’s Jurisprudence Section.** Analysis and discussion of news, law, and politics:


**The Volokh Conspiracy.** A blog authored by a number of law professors addressing current topics in the law:


**REFERENCES USEFUL IN LAW SCHOOL**

Many references and resources are available online as well as in books. These are not for summer reading, but good for when you get here!

**Black’s Law Dictionary** (Bryan Gardner 2014). Start school with a good legal dictionary; bigger is better with dictionaries.

**Burton’s Legal Thesaurus** (William Burton 2013). The dictionary helps you understand what you read; a thesaurus helps you write what you mean.

**Just Writing, Grammar, Punctuation, and Style for the Legal Writer** (Anne Enquist 2013). A basic overview of legal writing style, including special tips for English-as-a-Second-Language students.


**GREAT LEGAL MOVIES**

The ABA Journal published a list of the 25 Greatest Legal Movies. Balance out your summer reading with a few films.

1. To Kill a Mockingbird (1962)
2. 12 Angry Men (1957)
4. Anatomy of a Murder (1959)
5. Inherit the Wind (1960)
10. The Verdict (1982)
11. Presumed Innocent (1990)
13. A Man for All Seasons (1966)


This document was compiled by the Academic Success Program with recommendations from across the SCU community.  
(6/11/14 DK)