



Dear Incoming Law Students,

Congratulations on your offer to study law at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Law starting September 2023. On behalf of our staff, professors and practicing professional instructors, I extend a warm welcome to you and look forward to seeing you in person at Robson Hall for Orientation.

Please check [Orientation Week – UM | Faculty of Law \(robsonhall.com\)](https://www.robsonhall.com) for important information on your first week of classes.

Welcome to Manitoba's Law School

Legal education first started in Manitoba in 1877 and the Manitoba Law School was established in 1914, making us one of the oldest law schools in Western Canada. Our alumni have included extraordinary legal practitioners who have pioneered key developments in common law, Indigenous Legal Orders and novel ways of thinking about the law.

Balancing Classroom with Courtroom

Today, informed by our tradition of innovation, our vibrant academic culture values both research and experiential learning. This affords students opportunities to study all the traditional basic essentials critical to a solid legal education, but also get hands-on practical experience through our comprehensive clinical program later in your JD program. Our Director of Clinics and team will be coordinating the University of Manitoba Community Law Centre (UMCLC) in cooperation with Legal Aid Manitoba, the L. Kerry Vickar Business Law Clinic, the Desautels Centre for Private Enterprise and the Law, the Legal Help Centre, the Rights Clinic, an Indigenous Law Clinic, the Moot competition program, and much more.

You will be introduced to the courtroom through the Legal Systems course, Judge Shadowing program, and opportunities to volunteer for Pro Bono Students Canada, the Welcome Place, and starting the summer after you finish first year, the UMCLC.

Choose Your Path

Starting this year, you have the opportunity to choose one of four voluntary "Concentrations" that will be noted on your transcripts upon graduation. These include:

- [Access to Justice in French](#)
- [Criminal Law & Justice](#)
- [Law & Society](#)
- [Private Enterprise & the Law](#)

You do not need to choose a Concentration, but if you do, you may complete only one Concentration. There is one exception: if students choose Access to Justice in French, they may also choose a second Concentration.

If you are interested in taking a Concentration, you must choose the appropriate courses when registering for your second and third years of the JD program. You do not have to declare your Concentration until the final term of third year – so you can change your mind, or not choose a Concentration at all; Concentrations are totally optional.

A Further Note on the French Concentration

In Manitoba, Canada's Constitution guarantees equal access to the legislatures, the laws and the courts for francophones and anglophones alike. Our Concentration in Access to Justice in French allows law students to take about one-third of their legal training in French in order to improve access to justice for Manitoba's French-speaking population. Please check out [the French Concentration webpage](#) and [enjoy this video](#) explaining some of the advantages of studying law in French, including mention of specific scholarships that are available for students who have learned French in an immersion program.

Implementation of Call to Action 28

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 28 calls upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course on Indigenous people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. I am pleased to say we have more than just one course to offer our law students:

- [Aboriginal Peoples and the Law](#)
- [Aboriginal Law, Criminal Justice and Family Law](#)
- [Indigenous Economic Development and the Law](#)
- [Indigenous Methodologies and Perspectives](#)
- [Oral History, Indigenous Traditions and the Law](#)
- Treaties and Land Claims in Canada
- Kawaskimhon moot competition

Fund your Legal Education

Our tuition remains among the most affordable among Canadian law schools, and we have more bursaries available than any other professional faculty at the University of Manitoba. Approximately 50% of the student body receives needs-based financial aid from one of our dedicated endowment funds. Performance and merit-based awards are distributed to students in every course, recognizing academic excellence. Dean's Honour List Students entering second year and third year receive a substantial scholarship and are named Pitblado Scholars. We strive to ensure that all eligible students will be supported according to their needs. Please contact Rory Churchill-Henry for further information: Rory.Churchill-Henry@umanitoba.ca

Automatic Registration for First Year Law

The Faculty of Law will take care of your registration in August. You do not have to do anything.



Student Life

While you are a JD student, be sure to take part in the active student life available to you through the many student groups that operate as part of the [Manitoba Law Students Association](#) and the [Manitoba Indigenous Law Students Association](#). You will find groups focused on different areas of legal practice, groups advocating a cause or celebrating identity, and groups that encourage you to take a moment to breathe, socialize and enjoy your experience at Robson Hall. I encourage you to make the most of your time here – it will fly by faster than you realize!

Until we see you in September, [please visit our website](#) and remember to check [Orientation Week – UM | Faculty of Law \(robsonhall.com\)](#). Feel free to contact us regarding any questions you may have. We look forward to welcoming you as part of the class of 2026 and again, congratulations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Jochelson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Richard Jochelson

Dean of Law