

## EXPERT PREPARATION

Prof. Travis

As explained in the syllabus, a portion of your grade will be based on class participation, including acting as an “expert” for one of our substantive class discussions. While everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate in each class, I typically will turn to the designated experts to begin the class discussion and to facilitate our conversation. Below is a list of general questions to consider as you read the assigned law review articles. We will not discuss all of these questions for each article, but spending time considering these questions should help you engage in the type of critical reading that is necessary to prepare for your expert role.

1. Can you identify the specific legal issue or problem that the author is analyzing?
2. Can you summarize the current state of the law governing the specific legal issue or problem that the author is analyzing?
3. What is the author’s thesis? (I.e., what is the basic contention of which the author is trying to convince you?)
4. What are the primary arguments that the author makes in support of his/her thesis?
5. Are there any weaknesses in the author’s arguments? What are potential counter-arguments that undermine or are at odds with the author’s thesis? How does the author respond to (or fail to respond to) those arguments?
6. Are there other solutions to the legal issue or problem besides the solution that the author proposes? If so, what are the pros and cons of the author’s solution versus the alternative solutions?
7. Overall, does the author persuade you of his/her thesis? Why or why not?
8. Is there anything missing from the article that you think would make it clearer or more persuasive?
9. Are there any portions of the article that are not necessary to develop or support the author’s thesis and that could have been omitted?
10. How well organized is the article? Are there any places in which you would reorganize the article for clarity or persuasive effect?
11. How well written is the article? Are there any writing techniques that are particularly effective or ineffective?