

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE MOOT COURT IN TEACHING?

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Introducing moot court competitions in teaching has enormous benefits, primarily for the students participating in these events but also for the law faculties and the legal profession in general, as well as society at large.

To begin with, moot courts help students gain deeper knowledge of the law and offer students an opportunity to find out more about their own interests and/or professional (legal) preferences. By working on concrete legal questions encompassed in the particular moot case for many months, students are becoming better acquainted with the law and the manner in which to approach the studying and practising of the law in the future, and they are also more curious and enthusiastic about the law. So, moot court competitions incite students to investigate, analyse, and dig deeper into the legislation, case law, and academia regarding the case at hand, which is not something that they usually do during a regular university law curriculum.

In addition to this, moot courts improve the learning process by adding a practical, real-world dimension to legal education. Moot courts are the best way to place students in real-life simulations and require them to think as legal representatives. These events necessitate the active interaction of students with the legal rules: students need to find the applicable laws and regulations, analyse them, critically reflect on legal issues, and devise and structure arguments in support of their positions. Moots help students cope with future real-life situations by learning how to construct and choose among different legal arguments and at what point or in what order to present those arguments before a court for the purpose of maximising their chances of success in the stimulated trial.

Moot court certainly helped me to apply the theoretical knowledge that I acquired through studying at the university in a specific, creative and interesting way in practice.

Martina Kocjan, student at Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka

Moot court competitions also foster critical thinking. Students that participate in these events are required to consider the legal rules and the factual problems in the cases that they are facing from different perspectives, to distinguish the strong from the weak arguments, the important from the less important points for their case, to find the grey areas and potential legal loopholes and/or errors in their opponents' arguments, and to be able to articulate their positions with

What I would also single out as an interesting part of participating in a moot court is that the participants learn not to take the other side's words personally, and not to get angry with each other. Through the 'game' they learn to accept that someone has a different opinion and that they have to offer a better argument in front of the court if they want to win.

Tarik Čančar, student at Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo

clarity.

Related to this, moot courts contribute to developing students' advocacy skills. Students need to provide, especially during the oral hearing, a convincing representation of the assigned position, but they often are required to represent both parties in the same dispute, meaning they need to advocate for completely opposite positions. Thus, students learn how to defend and represent parties with whom they do not personally agree or who do not have a 'favourable' starting position in a legal dispute. This, in turn, contributes to developing their critical thinking and advocacy skills.

Additionally, moot courts enable students to become better orators. The preparation and competition are great opportunities for students to improve their oral presentation skills, to work on their public speaking and body language, to learn and practise how to address oral questions,

to improvise in situations in which they do not have a prepared answer, but which require an immediate response, and so on.

Another great benefit from moot courts is the development of students' research and writing skills. While preparing the written submissions for the competition, students need to conduct research and write a structured and stylistically refined construction of various arguments



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By practicing public speaking in front of experts for months, the nervousness is reduced to a minimum and all the problems we may have with self-confidence and public speaking skills slowly disappear.

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supported by relevant legal resources (like court judgments). This helps students not only for their future as legal professionals but also for their university written assignments and (potentially) master and PhD theses, meaning for their potential future careers as researchers and/or scholars.

Together, the oral presentations and writing of submissions for the moot courts – when they are held in a non-native language such as English, which is most often the case – not only strengthen students' critical thinking and advocacy skills but also improve the students' knowledge and level of this language as well.

Furthermore, moot courts also develop the students' ability for teamwork and related skills, such as dividing jobs and coordinating different roles in a joint project. All the duties

during the moot court are divided among the students, but they also need to collaborate and support each other in the research and participation in the competition because most of the issues they work on are related to each other and because helping each other out is indispensable for achieving a good result in the competition.

Participation in the moot courts makes students more competitive and highly coveted on the job market. Individual lawyers and companies tend to contact professors or faculty chairs directly, asking them to recommend students who have participated in moot court competitions, deeming such an experience desirable and giving them an advantage over other candidates or students.

Finally, there are several 'intangible' but not less significant benefits of moot court competitions. Firstly, moot competitions add an extra quality to students' educational process. From the student's perspective, taking part in a moot court is the most interesting and exquisite (learning) opportunity and event that they experience during their studies. This extraordinary event, not part of the mandatory university curriculum, is work-intensive and challenging but also a highly rewarding experience. During the moot and pre-moot competitions, students travel to different countries and meet fellow students and legal professionals from all around the world, making friends and professional connections that could open many future career opportunities for them, and which, in any case, make them culturally wealthier. Last but not least, because of all of the above benefits, after graduating, many students stay involved within the broader community of the moot court in which they have participated, either as judges/arbiters or as coaches to the students from their alma mater. Thus, they contribute to the maintenance and spread of this practice and the benefits it brings to future generations of students.

