

## **MOOT COURTS AS ONE OF THE SUCCESSFUL TEACHING METHODS IN TEACHING LAW**

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What is the first association of the moot court? Legal experts dressed up as judges (the wig – why not?), young students eager to make an impression and academic trainers biting their nails. Interviews for winners, a little statue and maybe a prize in the end.

However, before and besides this final stage, the moot court has another, equally important role. Moot court is a widely accepted teaching method, especially in procedural law. It gives the basic perception of legal practice. Moot court is an ‘extremely fluid pedagogical tool which can be used for more than learning about the law or the judicial process’. This method has the characteristics of a ‘student-centred, teacher-guided’ learning tool. Both civil procedure and criminal procedure subjects could be practised throughout this teaching tool. However, the benefits of moot court for substantive law subjects shouldn’t be undermined. Even though students practise the rules of procedure, they should also know the rules of substantive law. Some authors compare this method with the medical students’ practice; however, it is hard to draw this parallel because medical students practise on the ‘real’ or ‘live’ students, and law students only simulate the real or hypothetical case.

The advantages of this learning method can be seen in two ways. Firstly, the students have to learn the rules of procedure, usually even some rarely used ones, as well as the current case law, even in non-precedent countries. Secondly, not less importantly, they should know what to do with these rules. That considers the way of approaching the court, adequate terminology as well as addressing judges. Students learn how important the court as the institution is, and with how

much respect it should be treated. The dress code together with the seriousness and dedication of students fulfils this impression.



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*I've learnt a few special things, but there is one especially worth mentioning – work ethics. Thanks to my coaches and their inexhaustible will to achieve top results, I realized how important the right work ethic is in achieving excellence.*

**Toni Kolak. student at Faculty of Law. University of Sarajevo**

However, the moot court as a teaching method usually requires more time and energy. It creates a closer relationship between professors/coaches and students and could be a solid base for further moot court competition. It also builds a bridge among the students, especially when a large group of students is divided into smaller groups.

Nevertheless, this teaching method also has its cons. Sometimes only a limited number of students could be involved which leads to the inferior position of other students, (un)fair criteria for choosing them and the lower amount of knowledge and skills that students out of the moot court get. Also, if a professor uses regular classes for preparation, he/she cannot go through the planned curricula. If the professor uses the extra time, students have less time to focus on other subjects. Moreover, some students have a stage frame from public appearances and don't want to expose themselves to the public eye.