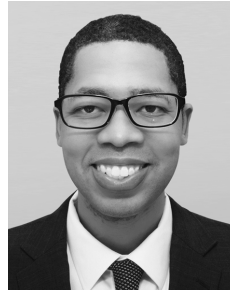


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## Self Introduction



Andrew Allen

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### **Learning How to Think Like a Lawyer**

What does it mean to “think like a lawyer” when the laws, and the logic behind them, often change depending on where you are in the world? As someone who has practiced law in both the United States and Japan, I have come to deeply appreciate the value of a legal education that prepares students for the complexities of a globalized world. Whether advising clients on cross-border transactions or helping students understand how legal analysis works in practice, I have found that the ability to think critically and communicate clearly is essential in the twenty-first century, regardless of one’s career path. It is with this mindset that I approach teaching, and I hope that the background and goals I share below will help you better understand my perspective.

### **Drawing from Professional Legal Experience**

I obtained my Juris Doctor degree from the College of William & Mary, which is the same institution that Channing Moore Williams,

the founder of Rikkyo University, attended as a university student. After passing the bar exam in Virginia, I practiced law across multiple jurisdictions, including Atlanta, Georgia, and Tokyo, Japan. My work focused primarily on commercial real estate and mergers and acquisitions. I advised clients on a wide range of complex real estate transactions, including joint ventures, acquisitions and dispositions, senior and mezzanine financing, and hotel deals. In the mergers and acquisitions space, I counseled both public and private companies on domestic and cross-border mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and other strategic matters. My clients included U.S., Japanese, and other international institutions ranging from Fortune 500 companies to startups across a variety of industries, such as technology, automobiles, software, and energy.

### **Building Skills Through Business English and Legal Reasoning**

A central goal of my courses is to help students communicate effectively using business English. Through classroom discussions and assignments grounded in real-world scenarios, students will develop analytical and critical thinking skills that are essential in any professional setting. I understand that taking a law course in English can feel intimidating, but I believe learning to analyze complex material in a second language is one of the most valuable skills a student can develop, especially in an international context.

There are several reasons for this. First, in my own legal career, nearly every cross-border transaction involved English as the shared language among lawyers and businesspeople. Because English is

widely regarded as the unofficial language of global business, the ability to articulate complex ideas effectively in English is a significant asset, especially at companies in Japan with international operations. Second, many domestic firms send employees abroad early in their careers. Having strong business English skills can open up these kinds of opportunities earlier in your career than you might expect. Third, for those considering careers outside Japan, fluency in business English is often a baseline requirement. Lastly, if you're planning to attend law school and work as a corporate lawyer, particularly on cross-border transactions, being able to navigate English-language legal discussions, whether in meetings, negotiations, or written communications, is essential. Strong English communication skills can significantly broaden your professional opportunities.

### **Teaching Students to Reason Like Lawyers**

Another key focus of my teaching is helping students learn to reason like lawyers by applying legal thinking to real-world scenarios. For example, in my Mergers and Acquisitions seminar, I designed a case study in which students were divided into two groups—one representing the buyer, the other the seller. Each team received confidential instructions about their company's goals, then worked to reach a deal through negotiation. In another assignment, I had the class meet with me acting as their CEO in smaller groups to walk through potential acquisition targets and advise on which company we should acquire.

These activities are designed to simulate real professional

conversations and challenge students to analyze information, develop arguments, and reach logical conclusions. I stress that there isn't always a clear answer. Instead, the goal is to develop the ability to think clearly and evaluate options, a skill I believe employers value across many industries.

I also work to create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable participating in class discussions. While most law schools in the United States use the Socratic method, where professors randomly call on students to analyze different sets of issues, I generally call for volunteers. I do this for the same reason my professors did: to train students to respond clearly and confidently under pressure. Although it may feel challenging at first, this practice mirrors real-life professional settings where your opinion may be sought with little warning.

Whenever possible, I invite practicing lawyers in Japan to speak with my students. When I was a student, I found guest speakers especially helpful in understanding what legal work looks like in daily life. In my mergers and acquisitions seminar, for example, I invited a lawyer from DAZN to share their experience. I regularly invite professionals from various fields, including litigation, corporate law, and in-house roles, so that students can better understand the broad range of careers available to those with legal training, even if they do not become licensed attorneys.

These speakers offer a valuable window into how legal principles are applied in practice and help students reflect on what skills they may want to develop during university. Students can also ask

questions about the legal job market, the challenges of practicing law, or the realities of working in cross-cultural legal environments, when applicable.

### **Teaching Legal Writing Structure and Logic**

My courses also emphasize how to structure legal writing clearly and logically. At William & Mary Law School, we were taught to organize our writing using the IRAC method: issue, rule, analysis, and conclusion. The issue identifies the legal question, the rule explains the principle being applied, the analysis connects the rule to the facts, and the conclusion answers the question. I aim to give students a strong foundation for organizing their reasoning effectively in writing.

In class, we practice applying this framework through exercises that mirror real-world scenarios. For instance, students may be asked to write a note advising a client on potential legal issues, or to summarize a negotiation position in clear, persuasive English. These assignments not only reinforce logical structure but also train students to think from the reader's perspective—something that is critical in legal and business writing.

I also stress the importance of clarity and conciseness. In legal writing, ambiguity can lead to serious misunderstandings, especially in cross-border deals where parties may interpret the language used differently. Learning to choose words carefully and to structure arguments in a coherent and accessible way is a key part of developing workplace communication skills through writing. Even outside the legal field, I believe the ability to present complex ideas

clearly and logically is highly valued across many industries.

Finally, we explore how legal writing can change depending on the audience and the purpose of the writing. Writing to a client requires a different tone and structure than writing for a judge or for shareholders. Students learn how to adapt their style based on context, while still applying the same underlying principles of legal reasoning. My goal is to help you write with purpose and confidence, regardless of whether you are drafting a legal memo or business email.

### **The Citizen Lawyer: A Broader Educational Mission**

One of the core principles at William & Mary is the idea of training citizen lawyers. This does not just mean mastering legal rules. It means using legal knowledge to engage thoughtfully with society and contribute to one's community. I believe this idea applies not only to attorneys but also to individuals who may never practice law yet still benefit from the ability to think critically, evaluate arguments, and understand the role of law in society, especially in an international context.

While my courses emphasize international legal reasoning, I also encourage students to reflect on how Japanese legal values influence approaches within corporate law. Although my classes are not focused exclusively on Japanese law, learning how different legal systems approach the same issue can reveal a great deal about a country's values and customs. This, in turn, can deepen your understanding of different legal cultures and help you contribute meaningfully to your

own community, wherever your career takes you.

I hope this brief introduction gives you a clear sense of the kind of legal education I aim to provide. Whether or not you pursue a legal career, I hope my courses help you sharpen your reasoning, develop your voice, and engage with others across cultures and disciplines. I believe these skills are not only central to legal practice but also to leading a thoughtful and engaged life. I look forward to seeing you on campus, and hopefully in class.