

Dear all of our incoming first year students,

When I went to law school, my father, who was a lawyer, composed a 17 page hand-written letter to me with so much advice and wisdom packed into it that I could barely get through orientation. Happily for you, I don't usually pull out that letter until I see you in third year, for our course on ethics and professionalism!

Nevertheless, I do want to sincerely welcome you to the University of Manitoba Faculty of Law to pursue your Juris Doctor degree. On behalf of our academic faculty, practicing professionals and administrative staff we are delighted that you have chosen to pursue your legal studies with us and we offer you a very warm and heart-felt "Welcome". We're known colloquially as Robson Hall, and you're now one of us.

This is going to be a very different year as you begin your studies under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. It's not the way we ordinarily like to do things, because at Robson Hall we try to be people-friendly and present, in order to help you get acclimatized to law school. But we will all adapt and we will get you launched in the best way possible.

We are proud to be one of the oldest Law Schools in Western Canada, having celebrated our centenary in 2014, and last year, our 50<sup>th</sup> year of the Law Faculty being housed on the beautiful Fort Garry Campus of the University of Manitoba. By joining us you are becoming part of the legacy of an institution that is well recognized for its dynamic and innovative approach to teaching, research and scholarship. We offer an exceptional educational experience, providing an opportunity to work with accomplished professors, whose works are widely published in leading journals, boasting national and international standing. Our strengths lie in the fields of human rights, Aboriginal law and policy, business law and professional practice, as well as international and comparative law. We are home to several well-known scholarly journals, including *The Canadian Journal of Human Rights* - Canada's only journal focusing on human rights, *The Manitoba Law Journal*, and the *The Asper Review of International Business and Trade Law*. Last fall, we welcomed our first Master of Human Rights students who hail from many different countries and academic disciplines.

Our students receive excellent training in the skills of critical and analytical thinking, advocacy and diverse legal knowledge through experiential and classroom learning (which, for at least the first term will be delivered online). Our Externships provide opportunities to get hands-on experiential learning that will be available to you in your upper years. We pride ourselves on offering these opportunities in a range of courses and volunteer organizations which are both practice-based and research-informed, including Pro Bono Students of Canada, the L. Kerry Vickar Business Law Clinic, the Legal Aid Manitoba University Law Clinic, an expanded Court Clerkship program, the Legal Help Centre, our many moots, and various competitions. At Robson Hall, we recognize the transformative power of education for individuals, their families and communities.

We are all looking forward to welcoming you to Robson Hall and answering any questions you might have regarding your studies with us. You are the heart of Robson Hall and we are here to support you. All we ask is that you work hard, commit to the program, and we'll be there to help you to realize your goals.

David Asper, Q.C.  
Acting Dean, Faculty of Law