



Effective Advocacy

Opening and Closing Submissions

13-15 July, 2026

18:00pm – 20:00pm

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

I. METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

The method of instruction for this program includes doctrinal lectures/demonstrations (*seeing*), followed by hands on workshops (*doing*).

First, your faculty will provide you both the doctrinal and the practical basis for the skill you are about to practice in a “lecture/demonstration”.

Then participants will practice perform the exercises based on the attached casefile. It is a good idea to become familiar with the casefile BEFORE you arrive at BAU on 13 July!

Each time you perform, an instructor/coach will share ways for you to take your existing skills and become even more effective by providing you specific ways for you to present and be more successful in representing your client’s needs.

II. PRE-PROGRAM PREPARATION

We have compressed a LOT of information into these three days. It is important for you to do the pre-work to get the most out of your experience! What is the pre-work?

READ THE CASEFILE! Before the program begins read and become familiar with the casefile materials that were emailed to you. The casefile is the platform that we will use to work on presentation and advocacy skills.

Participants will present oral submissions (opening statements/closing arguments) based on this casefile. At the start of the program, Participants will be designated as either an “A” or a “B”. “A’s” will perform exercises where they represent one side of the case. “B’s” will represent the other side of the case.

III. SCHEDULE

Monday, 13 July 2026

6:00pm – 6:30pm **Program Introduction and Opening Remarks**

Feridun Yenisey - Legal Advisor to the Board of Trustee at Bahçeşehir University
Dr. Salih Oktar, Director of BAU Legal Professions Practicum
Matthew Williams - Washington State Superior Court Judge, ret., PALS Global Professor
Phyllis Cox, Attorney, PALS Global Professor

6:30pm – 7:15pm **Introduction to Opening Statements/Initial Submissions**

Lecture/Demonstration: Showing the Judge the Benefit of an Opening Submission; Examples of Techniques, Structure, and Language to capture and keep attention; The role of “storytelling” in Opening submission.

Assignment of side of the case.

7:15pm – 8:00 **WORKSHOP #1**
Review of the Casefile: Factual and Legal Analysis

Participant Workshop: Participants will work together with faculty and each other to identify, discuss, and analyze the “best ”/”worst” facts for each side within the casefile.

Participants will develop a case plan and **theory of the case** using good facts/bad facts. Students will evaluate which facts support/hurt their side of the case, what evidence they will need to support those facts, and how/when to present those facts to the Judge.

To prepare, we recommend that students review the case file and create a **legal theory** (why the law says your side should prevail under the specific facts of this case). Then do a factual analysis to of the case to see how the facts plug into the law, i.e., develop a **theory of the case**. Your theory of the case is a timeline or a “story” that explains how what happened fits into the legal principles that apply. Try to analyze the facts (good and bad) supporting and those detracting from your case.

This **case theory** is your client’s version of what happened that leads your fact finder to do what you want at the end of the case based on the law. The **case theory** should have sufficient detail to hold together, account for (and explain) the bad facts, and show the right solution to the problem. Your theory should not ignore the bad facts - either admit them, give them a logical explanation that supports your theory, or use them to support your theory. It should tie to the law and give the fact finder sufficient reason to feel good about agreeing with your client.

HOMEWORK: Prepare for Tuesday, by constructing a:

- 1) A brief statement of your case theme (30 seconds maximum)
- 2) A six (6) minute opening statement

Tuesday, 14 July 2026

6:00pm – 6:05 pm **Receive Breakout Room Instructions**

All meet in main Room.

6:05pm – 6:30 pm **WORKSHOP #2: Honing your First Words (Breakout group)**

Participant Workshop: Honing your first words: Present the first 30 seconds of your opening statement. Faculty will help fine-tune your theme to enhance its persuasive power.

6:30 pm – 7:15pm **WORKSHOP #3: Full Initial Submissions (Breakout)**

Participant Workshop: Remain in the same room. Using the feedback you received in workshop #2, present your complete 6 - minute opening submission. Focus on your theme and storytelling. Help your judge understand the case in a way that allows them the evidence they are about to hear.

7:15pm – 8:00pm **Closing Argument/Final Submissions (Main Room)**

Lecture/Demonstration: Using Primacy/Recency and “storytelling” to weave together law and fact. Creating a compelling argument for your judge.

HOMEWORK: Prepare for Wednesday, by constructing a Seven Minute Final Submission Closing argument.

Wednesday, 15 July 2026

6:00 pm – 7:30pm

WORKSHOP #4: Final Submissions/Closing (Main Room)

Participant Workshop: Deliver your closing argument (up to 8 minutes) as you would at trial. Present your complete closing argument. Focus on your theme and storytelling. Help the trier of fact to reach a verdict by merging your client’s version of the facts with the applicable law, and don’t forget the ask! Start with your theme. End strong. Listen carefully to your opponent’s closing argument. If you could do a short “rebuttal”, what would you say. Be prepared for your faculty to offer you that chance!

7:30pm – 8:00pm

Reflections and Close of Program (Main Room)