Dear Class of 2019,

I enjoyed spending time together during Admitted Students Visiting Day. During our session, you demonstrated many of the qualities that make me love teaching students at Oregon Law: you were engaged, curious, insightful, and supportive. I hope you enjoyed your time here and will join us in August.

In response to a question, I offered three suggestions for preparing for law school: relax, read, and review. Today, I’m providing more details about the second and third suggestions.

In addition to reading books that spark your passion in law, I suggest reading books that are well written and tell engaging stories. Here are seven of my favorite books, which I suggested to my students last December for the winter break. These books are well written (some beautifully written) and tell fascinating stories. Some are classics, while others are new.

East of Eden, John Steinbeck
And the Mountains Echoed, Khaled Hosseini
Lila, Marilynyne Robinson (and Google the author’s conversation with President Obama)
Constellation of Vital Phenomenon, Anthony Marra
Death Comes for the Archbishop, Willa Cather
Being Mortal, Atul Gawande
Under the Warmth of Other Suns, Isabel Wilkerson

To review writing, I suggest either Plain English for Lawyers by Richard Wydick (book) or Core Grammar for Lawyers by Ruth Ann McKinney (online learning tool). Both are available from Carolina Academic Press. If you want a quick, fun review, take a look at the articles that my colleagues and I write each month for The Legal Writer column of the Oregon State Bar Bulletin: http://www.osbar.org/publications/bulletin/legalwriterarchive.html.

In closing, please feel free to contact me if you’d like to talk more about Oregon Law, especially our Legal Research and Writing Program. I look forward to welcoming you in August!

Best regards,

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James L. and Ilene R. Hershner Professor
Director of Legal Research and Writing

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