Suggested Essay Topics:

The following is a list of possible topics that could be used to begin your independent study unit. Please remember that these are only general topics. You will be expected to focus your independent study on a specific thesis and set of legal questions. This is not a complete list and you are encouraged to choose your own.

The Courts and Judges:

* Is the judiciary too powerful?
* Should judges be elected in the manner of the USA lower courts?
* Have Canada's courts become too politicized?
* Are the Courts too soft on offenders?
* Our Judicial System: Needed Reforms

Criminal Law:

* Are the Criminal Code provisions regarding assisted suicide unjust?
* Is capital punishment justified?
* Are the rights of victims sufficiently protected under the law?
* How should the law deal with young offenders?
* Wrongful convictions (e.g. Marshall, Milgaard, Morin, Truscott etc.)
* Reforms in criminal sentencing/Alternative Sentencing Practices
* Sexual Assault
* Youth and the Law
* Legalization of Marijuana
* “Club Fed” Humanitarian Prison Systems, Inmates and Parole
* Contact Sports and the Law
* Bullying: Is It a Crime? Should it be?
* Pornography: Should it be Restricted by Law?
* Organized Crime in Canada
* Causes of Criminal Behaviour: Implications in Criminal Law

Charter of Rights and Freedoms/Constitutional Law:

* Should the 'notwithstanding clause' in the Charter of Rights be repealed?
* Should the distinct character of Quebec society be recognized in the Constitution?
* Should special status for Natives be enshrined in the Constitution?
* Should individual rights take precedence over collective rights?
* Do women have a right to abortion?
* Should denominational schools receive public funding?
* Are laws governing child pornography in literature an unreasonable limit on freedom of expression?
* Are laws governing drug use an affront to liberty?
* Should the amending formula be changed?
* Was the Charter of Rights and Freedoms a mistake?
* Does pay equity lead to a more just society?
* Should economic rights be enshrined in the Charter?
* Was the Clarity Act an appropriate response to the threat of Quebec separatism?
* Individual Rights vs. Rights of the Majority
* Affirmative Action Programs: Are They Still Needed, or do they foster Mediocrity?
* Roe vs. Wade for Men: Reproductive Rights for Men
* Constitutional Law
* Aboriginal Rights
* Drug testing in the workplace?
* Freedom of Expression and the Internet
* Censorship and Music
* Advertising Restrictions
* Gay/Homosexual Rights
* Right to Strike: Public Sector Workers

Terrorism/Anti-Terrorism:

* Was the American invasion of Iraq a violation of International Law?
* Is the Patriot Act a greater threat to American liberties than terrorism itself?
* Can international law deal with the threat from terrorism?
* Security vs. Freedom
* The War Measures Act vs. the Anti-Terrorism Act
* Terrorism in Canada

International Law:

* Is the UN still relevant?
* Do we need an international criminal court?
* International Law & State sovereignty?
* Oil and Water?
* Does International Law exist?
* Amnesty International
* Customs and Immigration

Environmental Law:

* Environmental Law: Is self-Regulation superior to Government Regulation?
* Kyoto: Path to a Cleaner Future or Meaningless Symbol?
* Do environmental laws really promote a cleaner environment?

Labour Law:

* Labour Law: 21st century relevance?
* Drug testing in the workplace?
* Right to Strike: Public Sector Workers Law and Technology
* Computer Crime: Electronic Copyright
* Protection of Personal Privacy: Surveillance Equipment, E-Commerce
* Cybercrime
* Facebook Follies - legal consequences
* Freedom of Expression and the Internet

Social Issues:

* Legalized Gambling: Should we Have It?
* Should Movie Ratings be more Strict?
* Should Bars/Bartenders be Partly Liable for their Drunk Patrons?
* Responsibility and the Insurance Industry
* Does pay equity lead to a more just society?
* Can morality be promoted via the law?