

# DECISION WRITING SEMINAR

ONLINE PROGRAM | JUNE 3-4, 2024



[REGISTRATION FORM](#)

This two-day online seminar on decision writing is offered jointly by the [Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice \(CIAJ\)](#) and the [Council of Canadian Administrative Tribunals \(CCAT\)](#). The program is designed for members of administrative agencies, boards, tribunals, etc.

The seminar provides essential tools for decision writers, new or experienced, to improve their decision writing skills. It includes lectures, discussions, and workshops that stress the nature of good prose, gender neutral language and the special requirements and challenges of decision writing.

Since the art of writing is a skill that can be improved through practice, much of the instruction will centre on practical written exercises. Each attendee will be assigned an instructor who will read a sample of the attendee's writing prior to the seminar and coach the attendees during the seminar workshops.



## Keynote Speaker

The Hon. Justice  
John Norris  
Federal Court

This program is  
offered by an  
accredited provider of  
professional content

# AGENDA | JUNE 3

## START TIME ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT TIME ZONES IN CANADA

**PT:** 8:00 am **MT:** 9:00 am **CT:** 10:00 am **ET:** 11:00 am **AT:** 12:00 pm **NT:** 12:30 pm

**NOTE:** The time zone used in the program is Eastern Time

**10:45 – 11:00 am** **LOG IN — STAND BY**

**11:00 – 11:10 am** **WELCOME REMARKS**

**11:10 am – 12:10 pm** **LECTURE: GOOD REASONS** [VIRTUAL PLENARY ROOM]

*Presenter:*

- [The Honourable Justice John Norris](#), Federal Court

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**12:10 – 12:25 pm** **BREAK**

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**12:25 – 1:25 pm** **LECTURE: WHAT IS AN ISSUE-DRIVEN STRUCTURE?** [VIRTUAL PLENARY ROOM]

*Presenter:*

- [Virginia McRae](#), Co-Director, Legal Writing Academy, University of Ottawa
  - Key principles of issue-driven structures
  - Identify the deep issue
  - Identify the issues
  - How to write your issues

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**1:25 – 1:55 pm** **LUNCH**

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**1:55 – 2:30 pm** **GROUP WORKSHOPS: ISSUE STRUCTURE** [VIRTUAL BREAKOUT ROOMS]

- Identify the deep issue

**2:30 – 3:10 pm** **LECTURE: OVERVIEWS & POINT-FIRST WRITING** [VIRTUAL PLENARY ROOM]

*Presenter:*

- [Virginia McRae](#), Co-Director, Legal Writing Academy, University of Ottawa
  - Overview
  - Context
  - Point-first writing
  - Context before details
  - Headings

**3:10 – 4:30 pm** **GROUP WORKSHOPS** [VIRTUAL BREAKOUT ROOMS]

- Write the overview

# AGENDA | JUNE 4

**10:45 – 11:00 am**      **LOG IN — STAND BY**

**11:00 am – Noon**      **LECTURE: CLARIFYING THE ORGANIZATION OF YOUR JUDGMENT**  
[VIRTUAL PLENARY ROOM]

*Presenter:*      • **Marjolaine Condrain-Morel**, Lawyer, Senior Legal Advisor, Éducaloi

**Noon – 1:00 pm**      **GROUP WORKSHOPS** [VIRTUAL BREAKOUT ROOMS]  
- Select the facts, evidence and law appropriate for each issue

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**1:00 – 1:45 am**      **LUNCH**

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**1:45 – 2:45 pm**      **LECTURE: CLEAR WRITING** [VIRTUAL PLENARY ROOM]

*Presenter:*      • **Professor Barbara Morris**  
- Sentences and words  
- Paragraphs and sentence revision

**2:45 – 4:30 pm**      **GROUP WORKSHOPS: WORKSHOPS ON CLEAR WRITING & REVISIONS**  
[VIRTUAL BREAKOUT ROOMS]

(Break during the workshop)

**4:30 – 4:45 pm**      **Q&A AND TAKEAWAYS** [VIRTUAL PLENARY ROOM]

*Presenters:*      • **Marjolaine Condrain-Morel**, Lawyer, Senior Legal Advisor, Éducaloi  
• **Caroline Mandell**, Legal communication and litigation consultant  
• **Virginia McRae**, Co-Director, Legal Writing Academy, University of Ottawa  
• **Christine Moisan**, Communications Consultant, Christine Moisan Communications  
• **Professor Barbara Morris**  
• **Professor Craig Patterson**, Humber College, Liberal Arts & Sciences  
• **Professor Cheryl Suzack**, University of Toronto

*Workshop Facilitators:*

**Marjolaine Condrain-Morel • Caroline Mandell • Virginia McRae • Christine Moisan • Professor Barbara Morris • Professor Craig Patterson • Professor Cheryl Suzack**

## BIOGRAPHIES

**The Honourable Justice John Norris** was appointed to the Federal Court in 2018. Prior to his appointment, he maintained a trial and appellate practice in the areas of criminal, constitutional and national security law. He appeared as amicus curiae in several national security matters before the Federal Courts. He also acted regularly on interventions by public interest groups in appeals before the Supreme Court of Canada. He was a member of the roster of Special Advocates for security certificate proceedings under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act from 2008 until 2018. From 1996 until 2018 Justice Norris was an adjunct member of the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, where he taught Advanced Criminal Law, Evidence Law, Advanced Evidence, Constitutional Law, National Security Law and Legal Ethics. He has also taught in the part-time LL.M. Program in Criminal Law at Osgoode Hall Law School. Justice Norris is a frequent contributor to continuing legal education programs, the author of several scholarly articles, and was an Assistant Editor of the Canadian Rights Reporter for many years. He has been a Director of the Canadian Council of Criminal Defence Lawyers, a Senior Associate with the Global Counter-terrorism Law and Policy Group at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, a member of the Advisory Group for the David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights and a member of the Board of Directors of Canadian Journalists for Free Expression. Justice Norris received a B.A. (Honours) in Philosophy from Carleton University and an M.A. in Philosophy from the University of Western Ontario. He received his LL.B. from the University of Toronto in 1991 and was called to the Bar of Ontario in 1993. In 2011, he received the Catzman Award for Professionalism and Civility from The Advocates' Society.

**Caroline Mandell** is a legal communication and litigation consultant based in Toronto. She is on the faculty of decision writing programs for the National Judicial Institute, the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice, the Society of Ontario Adjudicators and Regulators, and Osgoode Professional Development. Caroline has a particular interest in the neuroscience of information processing and brings an evidence-based perspective to her work on effective communication. Caroline has been an adjunct professor of Legal Research and Writing at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law and a Subject Matter Expert in Legal Research and Writing in Toronto Metropolitan University's Law Practice Program. She is also a popular instructor in Osgoode Hall Law School's Professional LLM program. From 2017–2019, Caroline was an adjudicator with Ontario's Health Professions and Health Services Appeal and Review Boards. From 2007–2017, she was counsel to the judges of the Court of Appeal for Ontario. She has a JD and an MA from the University of Toronto and was called to the Ontario bar in 2005.

**Marjolaine Condrain-Morel** is a lawyer and a senior plain language specialist at Éducaloi. As part of her functions, she assists the team of plain language specialists in developing information content for the general public. Marjolaine is developing an expertise in clear legal communication, notably through training for members of various tribunals and organizations. She also takes part in projects meant to simplify and clarify the law. She is passionate about enhancing access to justice for all and, in this regard, she is interested in collective actions and alternative dispute resolution methods. A member of the Quebec Bar since 2008, she practiced as a civil law researcher in private practice before joining the Éducaloi team in 2018.

**Virginia McRae** has been teaching legal writing since 1979. She was in private practice in Ottawa before joining the Department of Justice where for 28 years she practiced administrative law, human rights law and the Charter, family law and policy. She was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister in 2007. She was also on faculty in the Bar Admission Course for 11 years teaching Public Law, Legal Research, and Legal Writing. She joined the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law in 2011 and is now co-Director of the Legal Writing Academy. She teaches advanced legal writing, Legal Writing and Social Justice, the Writing Leadership course, and diverse writing workshops. She designs and runs customized legal writing programs for law firms, government legal departments, tribunals, justices of the peace, and judges.

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Professor Barbara Morris** (Ph. D., U of Toronto), legal writing instructor and consultant, was formerly Program Coordinator and Professor of English Literature and Composition at Humber College in Toronto. Her current work in effective legal writing includes CIAJ's Decision Writing Seminar for Judges held annually in Montreal and CIAJ's Customized Training in Decision Writing for Tribunals, including The Refugee Appeal Division, The Immigration Appeal Division, The Human Rights Commission, The Social Security Tribunal of Canada, The Ontario Energy Board, Canada Elections, and the newly-formed Akwesasne Tribunal. She is a presenter and instructor for Osgoode's annual course on Written Advocacy in Toronto, for The School for Public Prosecutors' annual course in Ottawa, for SOAR/OPD's Advanced Decision Writing Seminar in Toronto, and for SOAR's "Writing Crisply" course. In addition, she has conducted writing courses and given lectures for The Federal Court of Appeal, The BC Provincial Court Judges, The Advocates' Society, The Parole Board of Canada, The Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Tribunal, The Ontario Masters, The Immigration Division of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Board, The Privacy Commission, and many other legal firms and government organizations.

**Christine Moisan**, M.A. Lettres françaises, is a professional writer and trainer in French writing. Her areas of specialization are clear and concise writing and strategic writing. Her clients include the Senate of Canada, the Parole Board of Canada and the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Ottawa. She also writes speeches for ministers and elected municipal officials, and numerous communications tools for a variety of clients.

**Dr. Craig Patterson** is a writing consultant, coach, and instructor. He was formerly a professor in the division of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Humber College, where he taught courses in effective writing and twentieth-century literature. In his more than twenty-five years' experience as a writing consultant, he has designed and delivered courses on professional writing in diverse settings, including small to large law firms and for lawyers in non-governmental organizations. He has also worked as a writing coach for practitioners working in general litigation, tax, environmental, intellectual property, aboriginal issues, and government. Patterson has taught in numerous programs in decision and judgment writing for the CIAJ, the Ontario Energy Board, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, the Bermuda Human Rights Tribunal, the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons, and the Canadian Border Services Agency, among others. He has also taught in written advocacy programs for Osgoode Hall/Advocates' Society and the Public Prosecution Service of Canada. His publications include academic articles on criminality in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries and journalistic attempts at travel writing and popular history.

**Professor Cheryl Suzack** is an associate professor cross-appointed to English, Indigenous Studies, and Law at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *Indigenous Women's Writing and the Cultural Study of Law* (2017) and a co-editor and contributor to *Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture* (2010). Her research and teaching focus on law and humanities, Indigenous studies, Indigenous legal orders, and Indigenous women's writing. She has been a writing instructor with the Osgoode Written Advocacy Program since 2009, and with the CIAJ Judgment Writing Seminar from 2007-2009.

# NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE LAW WEEK

A CIAJ & CCAT JOINT EVENT

June 3-6, 2024

Join your colleagues from across Canada in person or online for this second edition of the National Administrative Law Week, organized jointly by the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice (CIAJ) and the Council of Canadian Administrative Tribunals (CCAT). This cutting-edge training program offers a variety of activities on topical administrative law issues:

<https://ciaj-icaj.ca/en/upcoming-programs/national-administrative-law-week-2024/>

## Activities:

- June 3-4, 2024: Decision Writing Seminar (Joint Program) – *Online*
- June 5, 2024: CCAT Symposium – *In person in Ottawa & Online*
- June 6, 2024: CIAJ National Roundtable on Administrative Law – *In person in Ottawa & Online*

*\*\*More details and registration forms to come.\*\**

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