Two compulsory subjects in the University of Melbourne’s JD degree have teaching and assessment methods that largely eschew the tradition of teaching using appellate judgments. In the Evidence subject, nearly all classes are exclusively concerned with working through a single (and real) murder trial, and students are assessed by requiring them to work through a different (and also real) hundred-page brief of witness statements and other documents. In the Criminal Law subject, the classes examine a hundred or so different statutory offence provisions, and the exam requires students to tackle a further provision they haven’t studied. This seminar discusses the reasons for these different approaches to teaching law and their various benefits and downsides.

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