**CASE BRIEF TEMPLATE**

**WRITING A CASE BRIEF**

**What is a Case Brief?**  
A case brief is a written document that outlines and condenses a legal case, presenting the legal facts and rulings of that particular case. In other words, a case brief is a complete summary of a legal decision.

**Why are Case Briefs Important?**  
Case briefs are a very beneficial resource for students undergoing law- or criminology-based programs.

***Case briefs are useful for a number of reasons:***

* They pinpoint the most essential aspects of a case, making it much easier to produce the information;
* They outline the legal principles and rules that were established in a case;
* The place cases in context with other materials learned in a course;
* They are an excellent study tool.

**Key Aspects of a Case Brief**

**Style of Cause**

* Provide the case name and citation.
* Describe who was involved in the case.

**Facts**

* Explain what happened in the case.
* This section provides an overview of the most important facts of the case, including all of the relevant people, actions, locations and objects involved.
* If applicable, provide information about which courts have heard the case already.
* Consider how has the case moved through the court system and what the court’s decision was in prior trials.

**Issues**

* Explain the legal issues that the court must decide.
* This section outlines the main legal questions that the court was asked to decide. These issues can be written in question form and should summarize what legal issues are being addressed by the case. It’s typically helpful to write the questions in a “yes/no” format.

**Holding**

* Describe the results of the case.
* Summarize the decision the judge made in this case.

**Ratio Decidendi**

* This is in other words, the reasons for the holding.
* Discuss what legal principle this decision stands for.
* The ratio identifies what is important about a case from a legal perspective and also what effect it might have on society. It is important because the legal precedents set by the Supreme Court of Canada are binding on lower courts and therefore influence how they decide similar cases.
* Summarize the explanation the court gave for its decision.
* Include the legal rules and precedents the court followed to make its decision to it justify its application of the law in this particular case.