

# The Socratic Method

Socrates (470-399 BC) was a Greek philosopher who sought to get to the foundations of his students' and colleagues' views by asking continual questions until a contradiction was exposed, thus proving the fallacy of the initial assumption. This became known as the Socratic Method, and may be Socrates' most enduring contribution to philosophy.

Our students discover quickly that the Socratic Method is a tool and a good one at that used to engage a large group of students in a discussion, while using probing questions to get at the heart of the subject matter. The Socratic Method is not used at UChicago to intimidate, nor to "break down" new law students, but instead for the very reason Socrates developed it: to develop critical thinking skills in students and enable them to approach the law as intellectuals.

The Law School is proud of its excellent teachers and their use of this time-tested method. For more about the Socratic Method at UChicago, see the essay by Elizabeth Garrett from this [The Green Bag](#) website. (Copyright 1998 by The Green Bag, Inc.)