

CALL FOR PAPERS

Conference on Contract, Consumer, and Commercial Law (C³)

The Ascension of Contract: Understanding the Crucial Role of Contractual Ordering and of Consumer and Commercial Transactions in the Continuously Evolving Landscape of Modern Society

November 5 & 6, 2025

Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

We are pleased to hereby invite proposals for individual papers and/or panel submissions for our upcoming conference on Contract, Consumer, and Commercial Law (C³) scheduled to be held on Nov 5-6, 2025, at Allard Law School, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. The conference will honour the career of distinguished Allard Law professor of Contract and Commercial Law Bruce MacDougall.

The conference aims to bring together scholars, as well as practitioners, regulators, and policymakers whose work has a nexus to contracts, including those working in contract law, consumer law, commercial law, property and private law. Sponsored by Allard's Centre for Business Law, the theme of the 2025 conference is "The Ascension of Contract: Understanding the Crucial Roles of Contractual Ordering and of Consumer and Commercial Transactions in the Continuously Evolving Landscape of Modern Society". See Page 2 for details and background on the conference theme. Paper and panel proposals are welcome on any topic relating to the conference theme, including but not limited to:

- The multifaceted roles played by contracts in modern life
- Contract's adaptations with the continuously evolving landscape of modern society
- Trends of commodification, propertization, contractualization, privatization, governance by contract
- The impact of digital technologies and AI on issues relating to contract and consumer protection
- Issues relating to supply chains, labour transformations, global commerce, cross-border contracts
- Standard form contracts, consumer contracts, and algorithmic contracting
- Regulation of contracts
- The intersection of contract with competition law, unfair trade practices, or intellectual property
- Issues in commercial transactions (e.g., sales, secured transactions, negotiable instruments)
- State reliance on, and subjection to, contractual power
- Ethical issues, issues of public policy and private ordering, role of contract in social (in)equality
- Comparative perspectives on contract, consumer, and commercial law
- Sociological, historical, economic, and behavioural perspectives on evolutions in these fields
- Contractual issues and coping abilities in times of economic uncertainty

The conference welcomes diversity in backgrounds, and research methodologies and approaches.

The conference aims in part to build on the 44-year legacy of the Workshop on Commercial and Consumer Law led by the late Jacob Ziegel of the University of Toronto. We also welcome those expecting to attend the North American Workshop on Private Law Theory scheduled for UBC Nov 7 whose research or interests relate to the areas covered by the C³ Conference.

Abstracts of approx. 250 words should be submitted **by Aug 25, 2025** to organizers Marcus Moore (UBC) and Marina Pavlovic (UOttawa) at c3lawconf@gmail.com. Please include your institutional affiliation. Panel proposals (3–4 papers) are also welcome. We anticipate sending acceptances by Sept 3, 2025. As we may arrange publication of a collection of selected conference papers, please indicate if you are interested.

Additional Background & Details on the Conference Theme

In 1974 Grant Gilmore declared “the death of contract,” an epitaph for a field he saw as fading into obsolescence. Yet, half a century later, reports of the contract’s demise have proven greatly exaggerated.

Far from being a relic, contract law is not only alive but thriving, omnipresent in the intricate web of our daily lives and global commerce. Contracts are the silent and ubiquitous architects of our interactions, from the digital terms of service to the complex international trade agreements that shape economies.

The burgeoning fields of consumer and commercial law, in particular, highlight contract’s enduring vitality and evolving nature. These dynamic areas demonstrate how traditional contractual principles are continually reinterpreted, challenged, and expanded to address emerging technologies, shifting economic realities, and evolving societal demands.

Trends such as commodification, propertization, transactionalization have expanded the reach of contract into every sphere of personal and community life. Contract, previously credited with contributing to the dismantling of class divisions and social inequality, is now seen as contributing to their reconstitution.

Meanwhile, the expanding role of contractual ordering in state and non-state governance arrangements add to the picture of the ascendance of contract.

The conference theme explores these and other issues relating to the ascension of contract, a half-century after the premature announcement of its demise.