

CORNELL LAW SCHOOL
2019-20 Curricular Recommendations and Degree Requirements

CURRICULAR INSTRUCTION

The professional curriculum at Cornell Law School conforms to American Bar Association Standard 302 for Approval of Law Schools.

- (1) the substantive law generally regarded as necessary to effective and responsible participation in the legal profession;
- (2) legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem solving, and oral communication;
- (3) writing in a legal context, including at least one rigorous writing experience in the first year and at least one additional rigorous writing experience after the first year;
- (4) other professional skills generally regarded as necessary for effective and responsible participation in the legal profession; and
- (5) the history, goals, structure, values, rules and responsibilities of the legal profession and its members

It also offers substantial opportunities for:

- (1) live-client or other real-life practice experiences, appropriately supervised and designed to encourage reflection by students on their experiences and on the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, and the development of one's ability to assess his or her performance and level of competence;
- (2) student participation in pro bono activities; and
- (3) small group work through seminars, directed research, small classes, or collaborative work.

JD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Please read the information below to understand the credit and curricular requirements for the Cornell JD degree. Each student is responsible for ensuring that all graduation and bar admission requirements are met. The Registrar and his staff are available to advise students on requirements.

Summary of requirements for the JD degree.

- Six credits of experiential learning courses.
- A 3 credit course which satisfies a writing requirement
- A course dealing with issues of professional responsibility.

***All Students: Please note that you cannot use one course to fulfill multiple requirements.** For example, if a course is marked as WR OR EL, you may use it to fulfill the writing requirement or the experiential learning requirement, but not both.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING REQUIREMENT

All students are required to take 6 credits of experiential learning courses before graduation. Many students already enroll in clinics, externships and simulation classes that will satisfy the requirement. The experiential learning courses are marked with a (EL) symbol on the [Courses by Category](#) site.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY REQUIREMENT

All students must complete an upperclass course in professional responsibility before graduation. The professional responsibility courses are marked with a (PR) symbol on the [Courses by Category](#) document.

WRITING REQUIREMENT

All students must satisfy the writing requirement before graduation. The writing requirement is met by satisfactorily completing a 3 credit course. The course must be taken for a letter grade. Enrollment in colloquiums, problem courses and seminars is limited. The writing courses are marked with a (WR) symbol on the [Courses by Category](#) document.

CREDIT RESTRICTIONS

A student electing a course outside the Law School for credit or otherwise must also register for at least 9 credit hours in the Law School each term. Regardless of the number of courses elected outside the Law School, a student must earn 72, of the required 84 semester credit hours in professional law subjects.

A law school may not permit a student to be enrolled at any time in coursework that would exceed 20 percent of the total coursework required by that school for graduation. Students in the JD program may not take more than 17 credits in any one semester. Students in the JD-LLM program may take a maximum of 21 credits per semester. The Registrar will provide similar maximum semester credit information for those in various joint degree programs.

During the second and third years, JD students may not register for fewer than 12 hours or more than 17 hours during any one term or fewer than 26 hours in any one academic year. Exceptions to the credit hour requirements must be approved by the Dean of Students. Students must submit an [exception to hours form](#) before the end of add/drop.

20 credit rule

Students may take no more than 20 credits outside of regularly scheduled law school classes. Review the [Restricted Category of Courses](#) document for more information. For those interested in doing a full-term externship or a semester abroad, advance planning will be more critical to avoid disappointment. See [ABA Standard 311 and Interpretation 311-1\(b\)](#).

31 credit rule

A student may take no more than 31 credits of externships and all clinics. Review the [Restricted Category of Courses](#) document for more information.

13 credit rule

A student may take no more than 13 credits outside of the law-school curriculum. This includes all courses taught in other departments on campus and not cross-listed in the Law School. Review the [Restricted Category of Courses](#) document for more information.

GRADING

All externships and directed reading, supervised writing and supervised teaching will be graded S/U. These classes do not count towards the two classes S/U limit (mentioned below) since these classes are mandatory S/U.

Grading Option

Each JD student, after the first year, may elect to take up to two upperclass courses at Cornell Law School on an S/U basis. Students will be notified when the S/U grading link is available (typically available soon after add/drop ends). If made, the election shall be irrevocable. Students may not make this election in courses that they use to satisfy the law school's upperclass writing requirement. In addition, instructors may designate specific courses that they teach as not eligible for the S/U election.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required on a regular basis beginning on the first day of the semester. Irregular attendance or neglect of work may result in removal from the course with a grade of F or other sanctions. Regular attendance is required for certification to the bar examiners.