

## **I. The Academic Program**

### **A. General Requirements**

**For students beginning their legal studies in the Fall of 2016 or thereafter:**

#### **2. Graduation Requirements**

##### **a. First-Year Courses**

All courses in the first-year curriculum are required and must be successfully completed. To successfully complete a first-year course graded on a standard letter grade scale (i.e., "A" through "F"), a student must earn a grade of D- or better in the course; to successfully complete a first-year course graded on a Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory ("S/U") scale, a student must earn a grade of Satisfactory ("S") in the course. If a student does not successfully complete a first-year course, the student must retake that course at the next available opportunity and successfully complete that course in order to graduate.

##### **b. Intensive Writing Experience**

As a requirement for graduation, students must complete at least one intensive writing experience during their second year. Students will satisfy this requirement by choosing among a menu of intensive writing course options that will focus on writing skills. A list of these courses will be provided by the Office of Student Life before course registration for each semester. Satisfaction of the writing experience must be certified in writing by the appropriate instructor. The intensive writing experience is satisfied by completion of written work product that evidences:

- (a) Good organization according to the recognized conventions for the type of document the student is writing;
- (b) Mastery of word usage, particularly legal terms of art and the vocabulary of the legal discipline about which the student is writing; and
- (c) Mastery of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Pursuant to applicable ABA accreditation standards, it is ordinarily expected that the professor will either provide substantive individualized feedback on multiple iterations of one (1) substantial, graded writing project (including feedback on at least one substantial draft prior to the student's submitting the final draft of the project) or provide substantive individualized feedback on multiple graded writing projects assigned during the semester.

That students must satisfy the intensive writing experience through a menu of designated course options during their second year is not meant to limit students from undertaking multiple intensive writing experiences. To this end, students may also undertake additional intensive writing experiences in instructor-supervised writing or drafting projects, whether or not in connection with a regular course. If a course can be used to

satisfy both the intensive writing experience and the experiential learning requirement, the student must indicate which requirement the course will satisfy.

#### c. Experiential Learning Requirement

Each student must satisfy the School of Law's experiential learning requirement to be eligible for graduation. To satisfy the experiential learning requirement, each student must successfully complete six (6) credits of coursework in the School of Law's Clinical Education Program, Field Placement Program, or in courses designated as simulation courses.

The experiential learning requirement provides instruction in and assessment of specific legal skills, including, but not limited to, interviewing and client counseling, trial and appellate advocacy, alternative dispute resolution, negotiation, drafting, transactional work, and/or factual investigation. Experiential courses will:

- (a) Integrate doctrine, theory, skills, and legal ethics, and engage students in performance of legal analysis and reasoning, problem solving, written and oral communication in the legal context, and/or other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession;
- (b) Develop the concepts of the underlying professional skills being taught;
- (c) Provide multiple opportunities for performance; and
- (d) Provide opportunities for self-evaluation.

#### d. Upper Level Courses

All students must successfully complete Evidence, Professional Responsibility and Constitutional Law II. To successfully complete these courses, a student must earn a grade of D- or better in each course. If a student does not earn a grade of D- or better in any of those courses, the student must retake that course and earn a grade of D- or better in order to graduate.

Both Constitutional Law II and Professional Responsibility must be taken before the end of the second year.

Students who have not achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.67 at the end of the spring semester of their first year of law school will be required to successfully complete the "Intensive Legal Reading, Writing, and Analysis" course during the fall semester of their second year of law school.

Students who have not achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.67 at the end of the spring semester of their second year of law school will be required to successfully complete the "Reading, Writing, and Analysis Skills for the Bar Exam" course during the spring semester of their third year of law school.

**For students beginning their legal studies in the Fall of 2013 or thereafter, but before the Fall of 2016:**

2. Graduation Requirements

a. First Year Courses

All courses in the first year curriculum are required and must be successfully completed. To successfully complete a first-year course graded on a standard letter grade scale (i.e., "A" through "F"), a student must earn a grade of D- or better in the course; to successfully complete a first-year course graded on a Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory ("S/U") scale, a student must earn a grade of Satisfactory ("S") in the course. If a student does not successfully complete a first-year course, the student must retake that course and successfully complete that course in order to graduate.

b. Upper-Level Writing Requirement

As a requirement for graduation, students must complete one rigorous writing experience after the completion of their first year. Satisfaction of the writing experience must be certified in writing by the appropriate instructor. The rigorous writing experience is satisfied by completion of written work product that evidences:

- (a) Good organization according to the recognized conventions for the type of document the student is writing;
- (b) Mastery of word usage, particularly legal terms of art and the vocabulary of the legal discipline about which the student is writing; and
- (c) Mastery of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Pursuant to applicable ABA accreditation standards, it is ordinarily expected that the professor will either provide substantive individualized feedback on multiple iterations of one (1) substantial, graded writing project (including feedback on at least one substantial draft prior to the student's submitting the final draft of the project) or provide substantive individualized feedback on multiple graded writing projects assigned during the semester.

Students must satisfy the rigorous writing experience in an instructor-supervised writing or drafting project, whether or not undertaken in connection with a regular course. If a course is designated as a writing course as well as a skills course, the student cannot use that course to satisfy both requirements and must indicate whether the course is being taken to satisfy the writing requirement or the skills requirement.

c. Upper-Level Skills Requirement

Each student must satisfy the School of Law's upper-level skills requirement to be eligible for graduation. Skills courses provide instruction in and assessment of specific

legal skills, including, but not limited to, interviewing and client counseling, trial and appellate advocacy, alternative dispute resolution, negotiation, drafting and transactional work, and factual investigation. Each course satisfying this requirement provides (1) significant skills instruction; (2) the opportunity to practice those skills; and (3) assessment of those skills by faculty.

To satisfy the upper-level skills requirement, each student must successfully complete one Level One course or two Level Two courses. Level 1 courses are courses that have teaching professional skills as the primary goal and provide a minimum of 2 semester credits. Level 2 courses: These are courses that: (1) have a significant component of skills instruction where the teaching of professional skills are interwoven with other learning opportunities or are supplemental to doctrinal instruction or (2) are courses focused primarily on teaching professional skills and earn 1 semester credit.

Note: The Level One and Level Two designations do not indicate the difficulty or importance of the courses or the subject matters. Rather, these designations represent, in the view of the Faculty, the amount of skills instruction relative to the number of credit hours awarded for the course. Students are permitted and encouraged to take more skills courses than are required for graduation.

Students will be notified of the courses offered each term which will count toward satisfaction of the upper-level skills requirement.

#### d. Upper Level Courses

All students must successfully complete Professional Responsibility and Constitutional Law II. To successfully complete these courses, a student must earn a grade of D- or better in each course. If a student does not earn a grade of D- or better in any of those courses, the student must retake that course and earn a grade of D- or better in order to graduate.

Constitutional Law II will be taken in the fall of the second year.

Students who have not achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.67 at the end of the spring semester of their first year of law school will be required to successfully complete the “Intensive Legal Reading, Writing, and Analysis” course during the fall semester of their second year of law school.

Students who have not achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.67 at the end of the spring semester of their second year of law school will be required to successfully complete the “Reading, Writing, and Analysis Skills for the Bar Exam” course during the spring semester of their third year of law school.