

JURIS DOCTOR (J.D.)

Overview

Our reimagined J.D. program merges theory, doctrine, and experiential learning to produce practice-ready lawyers. Our 1L curriculum introduces both lawyering skills and extra-legal competencies. Then, your upper-level "The Lawyer As..." curriculum begins to shape your career with a concentrated focus on specific areas of legal practice. Courses are taught by a full-time faculty with extensive practice experience, along with sitting judges and practicing attorneys.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE JURIS DOCTOR DEGREE (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/jd-program/>)

Admission Requirements

Dickinson Law awards both the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree. Our J.D. program merges theory, doctrine, and experiential learning to produce profession-ready lawyers.

Prospective students may apply to Dickinson Law's J.D. program through the Law School's regular decision process or the binding early decision process. The regular decision application opens on September 1 and closes on June 30, and the early decision application opens on September 1 and closes on December 1. Students who apply through the Law School's early decision process will be notified of a decision by December 30 and, if admitted, these students agree to:

1. withdraw any pending applications to other law schools;
2. not initiate any new applications to other law schools; and
3. enroll at Dickinson Law in the Fall semester.

Dickinson Law is a paperless office and applicants must apply electronically through LSAC. Dickinson Law's admissions team reviews completed applications only and renders decisions on an ongoing basis. Although the Admissions Committee attempts to notify candidates whose files are incomplete, it is ultimately the applicant's responsibility to ensure timely submission of a complete application.

Learn more about the admissions requirements for the Juris Doctor (J.D.) (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/apply-jd/>) degree, including how to apply and the admissions timeline.

Program Requirements

J.D. Requirements

To earn the Dickinson Law J.D. degree, a student must:

- earn at least 88 credits;
- complete with a passing grade all first-year required courses;
- complete with a grade of at least C the course labeled Legal Analysis & Writing I: Objective;
- complete with a grade of at least C the course labeled Legal Analysis & Writing II: Persuasive;
- complete with a grade of at least C one course designated as a Seminar course ("SEMNR");
- complete with a grade of at least C the course in Professional Responsibility;
- complete with a grade of at least C, one course beyond the first-year required courses, designated as having subject matter focused on civil rights, equal protection, or social justice;

- complete with a grade of at least C, or a grade of Credit in Credit/No Credit courses, 12 credits in Experiential Learning from the upper-level curriculum. The student must earn at least 6 of the required 12 credits in an in-house legal clinic ("EXPCL"), an internship ("EXPIN"), or a semester-in-practice ("EXPIN"). The student may earn the remaining experiential learning credits in an in-house legal clinic ("EXPCL"), an internship ("EXPIN"), a semester-in-practice ("EXPIN"), or in courses designated as simulation courses ("EXPSK");
- comply with the Semesters-in-Residence Requirement (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/semesters-residence/>); and
- comply with the Academic Standing Rules (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/academic-standing-rules/>).

Contingent J.D. Requirements

- Students who rank in the bottom quarter of their law school class after the second semester of law school and who earned a grade below C in any first year course must take and pass at least six substantive doctrinal bar courses in order to graduate. (A "bar course" is a course listed in LionPATH with the prefix "BAR.")

Each student is responsible for fulfilling the above graduation requirements. Students should track their academic record and progress using their assigned faculty adviser, the academic dean, the office of the Law School registrar, and other administrative personnel.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE JURIS DOCTOR DEGREE (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/required-courses/>)

J.D. Required Courses

Our first-year curriculum includes not only a set of courses that establishes the core doctrinal, theoretical, and policy foundations of law, but also a series of unique courses that are designed—from the very first day of law school—to fulfill our mission of producing profession-ready lawyers.

Fall 1L Required Courses

- Civil Procedure (4 credits)
- Criminal Law (3 credits)
- Law Practice I: Critical Skills (2 credits)
- Legal Analysis & Writing I: Objective (2 credits)
- Legal Research I (1 credit)
- Race & Equal Protection of the Law (.5 credit)
- Torts (4 credits)

Spring 1L Required Courses

- Constitutional Law (3 credits)
- Contracts (4 credits)
- Law Practice II: Contexts and Competencies (2 credits)
- Legal Analysis & Writing II: Persuasive (2 credits)
- Legal Research II (1 credit)
- Property (4 credits)
- Race and the Equal Protection of the Laws (.5 credit)

Upper-Level Required Courses

- Professional Responsibility (3 credits)
- One writing course designated as a seminar (SEMNR in LionPATH)

- One course beyond the first-year required courses, designated as having subject matter focused on civil rights, equal protection, or social justice.

Experiential Learning Requirement

The capstone of our educational mission to ready you for the workplace is the upper-level experiential learning requirement. To graduate from Dickinson Law, students must earn 12 credits in experiential learning courses, six credits of which must be earned by practicing law in an in-house legal clinic (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/in-house-legal-clinics/>), an internship (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/externships/>), or a semester-in-practice (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/semester-practice-programs/>).

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT REQUIRED COURSES (<https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/required-courses/>)

Professional Licensure/Certification

Many U.S. states and territories require professional licensure/certification to be employed. If you plan to pursue employment in a licensed profession after completing this program, please visit the Professional Licensure/Certification Disclosures by State (<https://www.psu.edu/state-licensure-disclosures/>) interactive map.