

# JURIS DOCTOR (JD)

## First Year Students

Nebraska Law's curriculum offers students a traditional foundation in legal analysis and reasoning and a wide range of elective upper-level courses that include hands-on practical experience through clinics and externships. The first-year curriculum includes Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law, Property, and Torts. In addition to this strong core curriculum, first-year students immerse themselves in a two-semester Legal Analysis, Writing and Research (LAWR) Skills course that focuses on legal research and writing, professionalism, career planning, and ethics. (<http://law.unl.edu/first-year-curriculum> (<http://law.unl.edu/first-year-curriculum/>))

First year students will be taking 15 hours during the fall semester and 15 hours during the spring semester. The fall and spring classes are:

LAW 501	Contracts I	5
LAW 516	Civil Procedure I	4
LAW 609	Constitutional Law I	3
LAW 508	Criminal Law	3
LAW 513	Legal Analysis, Writing and Research (LAWR)	3
LAW 514	Legal Analysis, Writing and Research (LAWR)	3
LAW 505	Property I	5
LAW 503	Torts I	4

Final exams are given for each course at the end of semester in which taught and final grades will be assigned. LAWR is the exception, which will not receive a final grade until the end of the spring semester.

## Upperclass Students

The upper-level curriculum offers a broad array of choices for students as they begin to explore future careers. Students can concentrate in a specialty area, such as litigation, business law, solo and small firm practice, intellectual property, space law, environmental law, and so forth. Any student can create an individualized program of study supervised by a professor. Many students also get real-world experience by participating in a clinic or doing a field placement. Nebraska Law offers clinics in civil practice, criminal practice, immigration practice, as advisors to entrepreneurs and start-up businesses and as guardians ad litem for vulnerable children. In these clinics, students represent real clients under the supervision of a professor.

## Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, students must satisfactorily complete 93 credit hours. It is possible for a student to graduate in 2 ½ years by attending summer school after their second year of law school or both. A student cannot graduate from the College of Law any earlier than 2 ½ years after starting law school without special faculty permission.

All law students are responsible for six semesters of the Law College fee. Students who graduate in December will pay the sixth semester fee in their last semester at the Law College.

**Transfer students** must complete at least 45 graded hours at the College of Law and have a 7.000 GPA to be eligible for a degree with distinction.

## Required Courses

Although students have great freedom to choose which courses to take during the second and third years, there are some requirements and limitations. Those requirements and limitations are as follows:

(1) Students must take a **seminar** that has a substantial writing requirement. The seminar may be taken at any point during the second or third years.

Psycholegal Research *does not* satisfy the seminar requirement, except when taken by a student enrolled in the Law/Psychology joint degree program.

Research in a Selected Field *does not* satisfy the seminar requirement, unless

(a) taken by a student during his/her last semester at the College of Law;

(b) all seminars offered that semester are full; and

(c) the student has received permission from the Assistant Dean of Students.

(2) Students must take a course in Professional Responsibility. **Legal Profession** meets this requirement.

(3) Students must take at least 6 credit hours of upper level **professional skills courses** to graduate (also an ABA requirement). The courses that meet this requirement are:

- Advanced Legal Research
- Advocacy in Mediation
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Business Planning
- Client Interviewing & Counseling
- Clinical Practice - Children's Justice
- Clinical Practice - Civil
- Clinical Practice - Criminal
- Clinical Practice - Debtor Defense
- Clinical Practice - Entrepreneurship
- Clinical Practice - Estate Planning
- Clinical Practice - First Amendment
- Clinical Practice - Housing Justice
- Clinical Practice - Immigration
- Construction Practice
- Estate Planning Problems
- Family Mediation
- Field Placement (Externships)
- Mediation
- Negotiations
- Patent Practice & Innovation Management
- Pretrial Litigation
- Trial Advocacy

(4) Students must take the course Administrative Law as a second-year student.

(5) Students must take the course Gender, Race, Class and the Law as a second-year student.

### How to Select Courses

There are many more courses offered than students will be able to take over two years as an upperclassman. Some general thoughts on how to decide which courses to select:

1. Take courses which will provide a basic, well-rounded legal education. Such courses include:

- an alternative dispute resolution course ( Advocacy in Mediation, Arbitration or Mediation)
- Business Associations
- a commercial law course (Bankruptcy, Secured Transactions, Banking Law, or Economic Justice)
- Criminal Procedure
- Evidence
- Individual Income Tax I
- Wills and Trusts

2. Take a broad range of courses from a variety of faculty.

3. Take courses because of interest in the subject matter.

4. Be aware of prerequisites and keep options open by taking prerequisites during the second year of law school. For example Business Associations, Individual Income Tax I and Evidence are prerequisites for other classes. If taken during the second year, there may have more options to take classes for which they are prerequisites.

5. Take experiential courses to provide a taste of the practice of law, such as courses involving simulations (trial advocacy, business planning, negotiations, client counseling, etc.) or real client interaction (clinics, externship). Many doctrinal courses also include an experiential component. The faculty member teaching a course is always the best source of information as to course content.

6. Decide (during the second year) whether to pursue a Program of Concentrated Study and start taking courses required for that program.

7. Consult with the Assistant Dean of Students, the Academic Advisor, or member of the faculty for general advice. Talk to the faculty member who teaches a particular course for information about that course.

## Juris Doctor Application Requirements

Applicants must have completed all requirements for a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution before they begin their first year of study in the College of Law. There are no required undergraduate courses or majors as a prerequisite to admission.

All states assess the character and fitness of applicants for admission to the bar. Applicants who believe past conduct might affect their admission to the bar in a state in which they intend to practice should contact the appropriate board of bar examiners. A directory of state bar examiners can be found here (<http://www.ncbex.org/>).

Applicants must register for Credential Assembly Service (CAS) through the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) (<http://www.lsac.org/>). Registering for the CAS should be done prior to application. Once a prospective student applies for admission and completes all necessary components of the CAS, the University of Nebraska College of Law will request an applicant's law school report from LSAC. This report will

include an applicant's LSAT scores, summary of academic work, copies of all postsecondary transcripts, and letters of recommendation.

### To Apply

Go to <http://law.unl.edu/apply/> to for additional application requirements or to apply to the University of Nebraska College of Law J.D. program.

### Admissions Policy

In making admission decisions, the Admissions Committee attempts to identify as best it can those applicants who have the ability to compete successfully in a rigorous academic environment, to contribute to a diverse intellectual community, and to engage successfully in the career of their choice in an increasingly diverse society. Because these characteristics are not always captured by an applicant's LSAT score or overall grade point average, the Committee considers any upward or downward trend in the applicant's academic performance over time, the quality of the applicant's undergraduate institution, the applicant's major and activities, letters of recommendation, personal statement, educational or economic disadvantages the applicant has overcome to obtain an undergraduate education, status as the first generation in a family to graduate from college or university or attend law school, commitment of future service to underserved communities, and any other information other than race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin supplied by the applicant.

Neither the Committee nor the College seeks to obtain any particular number or percentage of diverse candidates, but they do seek a diverse mix of students to ensure that the College has a sufficient range of background and experience in its student body to permit a deep, broad, and vigorous intellectual environment. As this description indicates, the admissions process is flexible, no particular factor in itself determines admission or non-admission, and the Committee has sufficient discretion to consider each applicant individually on the basis of the entire file.