

Northwestern University School of Law

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■ Introduction

Northwestern University School of Law, founded in 1859, advances the understanding of law and produces graduates prepared to excel in a rapidly changing world. Northwestern uniquely blends a rigorous intellectual environment within a collegial and supportive community. With one of the lowest student-faculty ratios in the country, students have unusually close contact with full-time professors who are noted scholars.

The law school's lakefront location in the heart of downtown Chicago provides a wealth of part-time employment options for students while in school and a spectacular setting in which to study law. Northwestern's proximity to courts, commerce, and public interest activities enables students to experience the practice of law as well as its theory.

■ Enrollment and Admission

By limiting the total JD enrollment, the law school maintains a close-knit and supportive community that fosters friendships among students and faculty. Northwestern seeks students diverse in experience, background, and perspective. The Admissions Committee considers many factors beyond test scores and GPAs when evaluating applicants. More than 90 percent enter with at least one year of full-time work experience; 75 percent have two or more years of work experience. Through its unique interviewing program, Northwestern attracts not only students with strong academic credentials, but also those with the interpersonal skills and maturity needed to thrive in the law school community.

■ Faculty

The faculty is composed of nationally recognized scholars, diverse in background and perspective, whose research and writing make major contributions to important academic and public policy debates. Northwestern professors have a passion for teaching and for engaging students in theoretical and practical legal applications.

The faculty includes scholars with advanced degrees in economics, history, philosophy, and political science, as well as law. It includes a former chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission; a former US Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues; a leading expert on race, gender, and the law; an author of more than 50 books on tax law; the first American attorney to argue before the European Court of Human Rights; and the senior author of the most widely used casebook on American legal history. The full-time faculty is supplemented by a distinguished group of adjunct professors who teach a wide variety of specialized courses.

■ Curriculum

In the rigorous first year of study, Northwestern provides a superior foundation in legal reasoning, analysis, and writing, as well as a thorough understanding of the structures and policies of the law. Communication, teamwork, cross-training in business, and real-world experience are also hallmarks of Northwestern.

The law school's size enables students to have one-on-one relationships with professors. Required first-year courses are taught in sections of approximately 60 students. The JD program requires 86 semester hours of credit and can ordinarily be completed in three years, although permission can be given for a four-year program.

The broad and flexible curriculum gives upper-level students the opportunity to specialize in particular areas, to pursue advanced research in legal theory, or to pursue a range of hands-on simulation and live-client opportunities. The Owen L. Coon/James A. Rahl Senior Research Program enables third-year students to do individual research under the supervision of a professor, using library, field, and interdisciplinary research methods.

■ Special-degree Programs

A combined program in law and business is offered with Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management in which students earn both a JD from the law school and an MBA degree from Kellogg after only three years of study. Students may also enroll in a joint JD/PhD program with the law school and one of the social sciences departments. In a joint program with Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism, non-JD students interested in reporting about the law and legal institutions can earn both a Master of Science in Journalism (MSJ) degree and a Master of Studies in Law (MSL) degree.

Students who wish to specialize in the study of tax law can earn an LLM in Taxation. Students educated outside the United States can earn an LLM through a nine-month program of advanced study or an LLM degree and a certificate in business administration from Kellogg through a 12-month program in law and business. Legal and business professionals in Korea and Europe can earn an LLM degree from Northwestern through our Executive LLM Programs in Seoul, Korea, and in Madrid, Spain.

■ Legal Clinics

In Northwestern's comprehensive clinical program, students learn strong litigation and negotiation skills and gain direct experience with representing clients and reforming laws.

The innovative simulation-based curriculum, including the **Program on Advocacy and Professionalism** and the **Program on Negotiation and Mediation**, gives students the skills they need to negotiate and communicate effectively, solve problems, prepare briefs, examine witnesses, present evidence, and argue cases.

Students represent impoverished clients as well as challenge the fairness of our legal institutions and propose solutions for reform. Working in teams, they prepare cases in juvenile justice, immigration and asylum, and criminal matters. In addition to fine-tuning their skills as advocates, they often effect change in the law and legal institutions. **Bluhm Legal Clinic centers—Fred Bartlit Center for Trial Strategy, Children and Family Justice Center, Small Business Opportunity Center, Center for International Human Rights, Center on Wrongful Convictions, Investor Protection Center, and MacArthur Justice Center**—are nationally recognized for their direct involvement in legal reform.

■ Library and Physical Facilities

With more than a half million volumes and access to a wide range of electronic resources, the Pritzker Legal Research Center is one of the country's largest law libraries.

Wireless technology and Ethernet connections are available throughout the law school. Most large classrooms are equipped with smart podiums including video projection and Internet connections. The law school's three interconnected buildings along Chicago's lakefront also house the national headquarters of the American Bar Foundation.

■ Student Activities

Northwestern students take an intense and energetic interest in their community and education. Six scholarly journals are available for research, writing, and editing. Students automatically belong to the Student Bar Association, which gives them a voice in curriculum and administration, and they have an opportunity to participate in more than 30 student organizations. Students also enjoy the benefits of living, studying, and working in one of the most vibrant legal and business communities in the world.

■ Expenses and Financial Aid

The law school annually awards \$5.5 million in grants and scholarships in addition to long-term, low-interest institutional loans. These resources enable the law school to cover 100 percent of a student's calculated financial need. Approximately 85 percent of the students currently enrolled are receiving financial aid.

■ Career Services

The Center for Career Strategy and Advancement staff aggressively cultivates relationships with potential employers while assisting students in focusing their goals and developing short- and long-term career strategies. In the fall of 2005, more than 700 national employers recruited our students. In recent years, approximately 75 percent of the recruiters were based in regions outside the Midwest. In 2005, about half of our students chose to remain in the Midwest.

Applicant Profile

At Northwestern, emphasis on teamwork, communication, and interpersonal skills begins during the admission process in which every applicant is urged to interview. Currently about 75 percent of applicants are interviewed, and college seniors must

be interviewed. We also place a heavy emphasis on work experience, which contributes to an environment where students learn a great deal from not only faculty but also each other.