

Valparaiso University School of Law

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■ Introduction

Valparaiso University School of Law was founded in 1879. Throughout its 127-year history, and even more so today, Valpo Law is renowned for the following four traits:

Exceptional Legal Research and Writing: According to a survey by the American Bar Foundation, hiring partners at law firms ranked research and writing skills as the most important skill set a new lawyer can bring to the job. It is common for law schools to have one year of legal writing as part of the first-year curriculum. We have three years of research and writing.

Enduring Core Competencies: No matter how much the world and laws change, no matter how often attorneys change their practice, there are certain constants: the ability to engage in critical, analytical, and creative thinking, and the ability to communicate clearly and concisely. These core competencies comprise the cornerstone of your Valpo Law education. Visit www.valpo.edu/law/academics/.

Truly Personal Manner of Teaching and Learning: The teaching and learning style of Valpo Law is highly collaborative and integrated. You interact with faculty both in and out of the classroom. We know who you are and strive to provide a legal education that is tailored to you and your aspirations. Every pedagogical component, including the smaller student body, is designed to help you, as an individual, succeed in your professional endeavors. Visit www.valpo.edu/law/academics/faculty/program/.

Law as a Calling: We are a community dedicated to imparting not just skills and knowledge, but also values, a sense of self, and a commitment to service. Our graduates are not just solid lawyers, but great people; not just successful men and women, but noble men and women; not just influential leaders, but ones who use their influence for the highest service and the profoundest good.

■ Curriculum

Valpo provides a comprehensive and intensive study of the foundations of law, an introduction to the substantive areas of law, and an opportunity for advanced study in specific areas. The curriculum provides a grounding in legal analysis, legal writing and research, practical skills training, perspectives on the law, and ethics.

The Valpo Law curriculum may be segmented into six areas: **general practice, business law, public interest representation, property, litigation, and taxation.** To learn more, visit www.valpo.edu/law/academics/courses/ and www.valpo.edu/law/bulletin/.

Students may participate in externships and enhance their skills in one of our six legal clinics. No matter how you choose to apply your education, you will have the tools and foundation to succeed.

Upon completing the required first-year curriculum, students are given the opportunity to explore various avenues of study. During the second year, students begin to take electives. By the third year, almost all required courses will be completed and students select courses for general legal competency or focus on areas of interest.

The School of Law is committed to the highest standards of professional ethics and to an inquiry into values, and is

concerned that students not view the legal system as unchangeable and untouched by their own ethical and intellectual analysis. A 20-hour commitment of pro bono legal service is required of all students. Valpo Law is one of a few select law schools that require pro bono work.

■ Degree Programs

We offer full-time, part-time day, and two-and-one-half year options for our JD program. In addition, we offer dual-degree programs such as: JD/MA Psychology; JD/MA Clinical Mental Health; JD/MA Liberal Studies in either Gerontology, English, Ethics and Values, History, Human Behavior and Society, or Theology; JD/MBA; JD/MSSA Sports Administration; and JD/MSICP International Commerce and Policy. Valpo Law also has a one to one-and-one-half years full-time LLM program for international students who already have a law degree.

■ Special Programs

Clinical Law Program—Students enrolled in the live-client law clinic represent indigent clients and participate in all stages of representation. The six clinics based on practice areas are criminal, civil, mediation, juvenile, tax, and sports.

Current Representation—Faculty members often invite students to work on cases in which they are providing legal representation.

Externships—The School of Law currently sponsors over 70 externships throughout the US, including semester-away externships. To learn more, visit www.valpo.edu/law/academics/externships/.

Summer Study Abroad—Valparaiso's interest in international and comparative law is enhanced with its Summer Study Abroad program in Cambridge, England, and its new summer course in International Human Rights in Chile and Argentina.

Honors Program—The Honors Program offers an academic challenge to talented students. First-year students are selected after either the first or second semester based on academic credentials and demonstrated leadership skills. Personal interviews are required.

Summer Public Interest Scholarships—Each summer we award students who work in a public interest capacity a Summer Public Interest Scholarship. Visit www.valpo.edu/law/admissions/financialaid/summerpublicinterestscholarship/. Furthermore, Valpo Law has a Loan Repayment Assistance program. This program is designed to offer financial assistance to graduates who have chosen to go into public service employment, and who have accumulated substantial debt from educational loans. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$6,000 each year. This program is available to alumni who have graduated within three years from the law school.

Academic Success Program—The Academic Success Program is available to students who seek assistance with the transition from college or the work-force to law school.

■ Career Planning

Our service mission is to assist all students and graduates in planning career paths, preparing for the job market, and

identifying or creating professional opportunities, and to work closely with employers in developing career-related networks for all our law students. Eighty-seven percent of our graduates are employed within nine months of graduation, and our bar passage rate averages 88 percent.

Our programs help you identify, define, and verbalize your goals; build the confidence to overcome obstacles; and articulate your skills and accomplishments.

■ Faculty

Our professors have been Fulbright scholars, clerks to federal appellate and state supreme court judges, and have served in government. They bring to their teaching practical experience in public and private sectors. Their scholarship interests span a broad range. Professors practice an open-door policy and each student is paired with a faculty advisor in the first year. Visit www.valpo.edu/law/academics/faculty/program/.

■ Library and Physical Facilities

The law library is the largest legal research facility in northwest Indiana. Individual and group study carrels are available for student use. A computer lab provides facilities for word processing and Web access, and offers access to LexisNexis, Westlaw, CALL, FolioViews, LOIS, and Dialog. Wired and wireless network ports are available for students' use throughout the campus. Wireless printing is also available. The School of Law occupies two buildings that house classrooms, the law library, a state-of-the-art courtroom and a jury room, the law clinic, and administration and faculty offices.

Applicant Profile

We seek highly motivated and talented individuals, therefore, LSAT scores and GPAs alone do not guarantee admission or denial.

■ Student Activities

The *Valparaiso University Law Review* is a scholarly journal published three times a year. Because of Valpo's emphasis on legal writing, membership on the *Law Review* is based upon academic achievement as well as a writing submission.

Students interested in enhancing their advocacy skills may try out for the client counseling, mock trial, negotiation teams, and Moot Court Society (a program that provides the opportunity for study in persuasive writing and oral arguments at the appellate level).

Valpo Law has over 25 student organizations. Just as the students represent a wide cross section of society, so too do the organizations on campus. Visit www.valpo.edu/law/studentlife/studentorganizations/.

■ Student Body Profile

Our first-year student body is ethnically and religiously diverse, averaging a composition of students from 130 different colleges and universities, 35 states, and 5 foreign countries. The average age is 25, with an age range from 21 to 54.

■ Expenses and Financial Aid

Approximately 65 percent of the student body received merit scholarships or need-based grants. The School of Law awards approximately \$3 million annually in financial aid. In addition, 90 percent of all law students received assistance through loan programs. Valparaiso also offers a Public Interest Loan Repayment Assistance Program and a Summer Public Interest Scholarship.