

Yale Law School

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■ Introduction

Yale Law School is an extraordinary community in which to study law. Standing at the intersection of the worlds of thought and action, Yale seeks not only to promote an intellectual understanding of the law, but also to sustain the moral commitments that justice requires.

Extensive student-faculty interactions and institutional flexibility are hallmarks of the Yale Law School experience. Students enjoy countless opportunities for research and writing with professors. Our unmatched faculty-to-student ratio allows us to offer a wide range of courses and small classes, with an average class size of under 20 students.

The school is also part of one of the world's great research universities. Yale University is home to an abundance of intellectual, cultural, social, and athletic activities, all of which are accessible to Yale law students.

■ Students

The vitality of Yale Law School depends as much on the knowledge, experience, and interests of the students as it does on the faculty, the library, or the alumni. The school selects its entering class from applicants with the highest academic qualifications. Within this exceptional group, Yale seeks a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and interests. This diversity is reflected in the many thriving student organizations and student-run journals found at the school.

■ Faculty

The faculty at Yale Law School is as broad-ranging in its interests and expertise as it is distinguished. It includes prominent scholars of economics, philosophy, and the social sciences as well as leading specialists in every area of law. Sixty-eight full-time professors are joined each year by visiting lecturers, adjunct professors from other parts of the university, and practicing lawyers. Additionally, dozens of guest lecturers from around the world—ranging from Madeleine Albright to Al Franken—help to make Yale Law School a vibrant intellectual community.

■ Facilities and Housing

The Sterling Law Building occupies one city block in the heart of Yale University and downtown New Haven. The recently renovated building was modeled on the English Inns of Court, with classrooms, a dining hall, faculty offices, and the law library surrounding three pleasant courtyards. All classrooms are Internet accessible, and a wireless network is available throughout the Law School. A day care center is located on site.

Yale campus housing is available, but most students live off campus, close to the Law School. Within a 10-minute walk of the school students can find housing options ranging from high-rise apartments downtown to Victorian houses in quiet residential neighborhoods.

■ Curriculum and Grading

The Yale Law School curriculum is very flexible. Students are able to shape their own course of study to satisfy their unique

intellectual interests and goals. In the fall semester, all first-year students take classes in constitutional law, contracts, procedure, and torts. One of these classes is a small group of about 16 students, which includes instruction in legal research and writing. After the first term, students may select any classes they wish, including independent studies, clinics, and courses outside the Law School. Two major writing projects and courses in criminal law and professional responsibility are required for graduation.

In order to allow students to concentrate on learning, rather than on GPAs, Yale Law School does not use grades in the traditional sense. During the fall of the first year, all classes are credit/fail. In subsequent terms, grades are honors, pass, low pass, and fail, with credit/fail options available. Yale Law School does not calculate class rankings.

■ Joint Degrees, Special Programs, and Clinical Opportunities

Yale Law School sees the study of law as interrelated with other intellectual disciplines and with practical experience. The Law School offers a number of joint degrees with other schools and departments at Yale, including JD/MBAs, JD/PhDs, and JD/MDs. Joint degrees with other universities and opportunities for intensive semester experiences outside the Law School are available.

Yale Law School also offers a number of clinical opportunities to all students beginning in the first year. For example, students gain real-world experience participating in the Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, Supreme Court Advocacy Clinic, Environmental Law Clinic, and the Community Development Financial Institutions Clinic. Other clinics, including advocacy for prisoners, people with disabilities, children, and immigrants, provide opportunities for Yale law students to work on behalf of clients who cannot afford private attorneys.

■ Transfer Students and Advanced Degrees

Students who have completed two semesters of study at another ABA-approved law school may apply to transfer to Yale Law School. Transfer students must complete at least two years of work at Yale Law School.

In addition to the JD, Yale Law School offers an LLM degree for foreign lawyers who are interested in teaching law. The Master of Studies in Law (MSL) is a one-year program designed for professionals in other fields who desire an intensive introduction to the law. Yale also offers a JSD program for the school's LLM students.

■ Financial Aid and Loan Forgiveness

Financial aid is awarded solely on the basis of need, and admission decisions are made independently of financial aid decisions. Approximately 80 percent of the student body receives some form of financial aid. A financial aid award may consist of a portion in grant and a portion in loan; typically, the higher the total financial need, the higher the proportion of grant.

In addition to financial aid during law school, Yale has one of the most generous loan forgiveness programs in the country:

the Career Options Assistance Program (COAP). COAP provides grants to help repay the educational loans of graduates who take relatively low-paying jobs. Unlike many loan forgiveness programs, Yale's COAP includes not only law school loans, but some undergraduate loans as well. Last year, COAP covered over \$2.3 million worth of loan payments for almost 300 graduates.

■ Career Development

Yale Law School graduates occupy leadership positions in a tremendous range of endeavors. The Law School's Career Development Office helps students explore the unparalleled diversity of opportunities available to them. Most students work for public interest organizations, private firms, or government entities during summer breaks. After graduation, a large number of students obtain judicial clerkships. Others work for law firms or corporations, while still others take advantage of public service fellowships available to Yale Law School graduates. In addition, many graduates pursue careers in academia.

■ The Admission Process

Yale Law School considers every application for admission in its entirety and no index or numerical cutoffs are used in the admission process. No single element in an application is decisive; the totality of available information about the applicant is taken into account. A personal statement and a 250-word essay on a subject of the applicant's choice are required. Applicants are encouraged to bring aspects of their personal background or other special characteristics to the attention of the admission committee. Two letters of recommendation are required; additional letters are also welcome.

Each application file is first read by the dean or the director of admissions. A group of the most highly rated files is then considered by faculty. Each faculty member rates applications on the basis of the faculty member's unique criteria; the weight given to various factors is within each reader's discretion.

The Law School issues most of its decisions by the beginning of April, but decisions continue to be made throughout the spring. Use of the wait list varies from year to year, and the list is not ranked until offers are made.

Applicant Profile

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Undergraduate GPA	Average LSAT Score on the 120–180 Scale													
	Below 155		155–159		160–164		165–169		170–174		175–180		Total	
	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm
3.75 +	90	0	116	1	219	11	506	44	469	102	209	94	1609	252
3.50–3.74	128	0	102	0	185	1	306	15	251	13	84	6	1056	35
3.25–3.49	105	0	69	0	84	0	126	0	90	0	31	0	505	0
3.00–3.24	69	0	24	0	35	0	45	0	15	0	8	1	196	1
Below 3.00	106	0	26	0	22	0	21	0	9	0	11	0	195	0
No GPA	33	0	10	0	16	0	14	2	9	4	1	0	83	6
Total	531	0	347	1	561	12	1018	61	843	119	344	101	3644	294

Totals reflect 99% of applicant pool.
 Apps = Number of Applicants
 Adm = Number Admitted