

City University of New York School of Law

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■ Mission

Following its motto of “Law in the Service of Human Needs,” the mission of the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law is to train excellent public interest lawyers through a curriculum that integrates doctrine, legal theory, clinical education, and professional responsibility.

■ Academic Program

CUNY Law’s unique and integrated curriculum has made it a national leader in progressive legal education heralded by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The curriculum engages students in a thoughtful combination of rigorous coursework in traditional substantive areas and a lawyering program that teaches the skills recognized by the American Bar Association as necessary for competent practice (problem solving, legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, factual investigation, and communication—including legal writing and oral argument, counseling, negotiation, litigation and alternative dispute resolution procedures, organization and management of legal work, and recognition and resolution of ethical dilemmas). All first-year students take a required two-semester Lawyering Seminar where they focus on the fundamental skills of legal analysis and legal writing and engage in simulations requiring a wide range of lawyering tasks: they draft documents, interview and counsel clients, engage in negotiations, and make arguments before trial and appellate courts. Faculty guidance, supervision, and feedback permeate the process. In the second year, each student elects a four-credit Lawyering Seminar focused on developing more advanced lawyering skills in a subject matter area of his or her choice, including trial practice, mediation, labor, and appellate advocacy. Forty-one CUNY law students were offered Revson Fellowships in the summer 2008. Excellent and comprehensive academic support is provided by the Irene Diamond Professional Skills Center.

■ Clinical Programs

Clinical Programs include Battered Women’s Rights, Criminal Defense, Community Economic Development, Economic Justice Project, Equality, Civil Rights, Health Law, Immigrant and Refugee Rights, International Women’s Human Rights, and Mediation. Following Lawyering Seminars in the first two years, all students have opportunities to participate in 12- to 16-credit clinical courses in their third year. Students engage in individual representation of clients and work on projects in collaboration with community groups, organizers, and international organizations to address issues of social justice. Recent work includes legal victories in low-wage labor campaigns, amicus briefs to International Tribunals, community education projects throughout New York, and interdisciplinary representation of clients who have suffered trauma from torture and domestic abuse.

■ Diversity

The diversity of New York City is reflected in our dynamic student body and faculty. Women constitute 64 percent of the

student body; minorities, 32 percent. Faculty percentages are similar: 65 percent are women and 34 percent are people of color. The concern for diversity is also threaded through the curriculum; for example, a required course for all first-year students is Liberty, Equality, and Due Process, which examines issues of racial and gender equality and sexual orientation in the context of legal and historical analysis.

■ Student Life

Despite the relatively small size of the law school, numerous student organizations thrive on campus. Students also have a major role in the law school’s governance, recognizing and preparing them for their future as professionals and community leaders. One exemplary student program is the Mississippi Project that, since 1992, has sent a delegation of law students to Mississippi over midyear break to work with lawyers in civil rights organizations across the state. CUNY students work and learn together in an exceptionally collaborative, noncompetitive atmosphere and interact on a first-name basis with the faculty. The student experience is further enriched by New York City’s cultural offerings and by the exceptional resources of the third-largest university system in the country, CUNY.

■ Faculty

Most of the faculty have themselves been public interest practitioners, with experience in a wide area of issues, including employment discrimination, immigration, racial justice, environmental law, women’s rights, labor, and international law. They have worked in China, Haiti, South Africa, Mongolia, Costa Rica, the Middle East, Russia, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Central America, the Philippines, and many other countries. Their prestigious awards include Fulbright, Ford, MacArthur, Revson, Rockefeller, and National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships. Their scholarship reflects their interest in, among other areas, international human rights and access to justice for underserved communities.

■ Career Opportunities

CUNY law graduates are employed in the full range of public interest jobs—legal services and public defender organizations, government agencies, international human rights organizations, not-for-profits, and the judiciary. Approximately 95 percent of alumni/ae secure positions within eight months of graduation. Historically, 60–65 percent of graduates enter the public interest/public service profession each year, while 25–30 percent are employed at private firms from large to small and solo community-based practices. CUNY law graduates are consistently awarded judicial clerkships and prestigious public interest postgraduate fellowships that include the Equal Justice Works, Skadden, Soros, Echoing Green, New Voices, Independence Foundation, and the Georgetown University Law Center fellowships. Although the vast majority are employed in the mid-Atlantic states, CUNY graduates can be found throughout the United States and abroad where they are engaged in international human rights work.

■ Child Care

The law school offers an on-site Children’s Center, which provides high-quality, reasonably priced all-day care for children (ages two to six) of students, faculty, and staff. The Center provides an age-appropriate curriculum based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards. The Center enables parents to pursue their education and further their career while fulfilling their responsibility to their children.

■ Special Opportunities

The law school offers a number of unique programs and initiatives that enrich the experience of students and provide continuing support for graduates. The Haywood Burns Chair in Civil Rights is a visiting faculty position, which allows distinguished faculty, practitioners, and jurists—for 2008–2009, Professor Margaret Montoya from the University of New Mexico School of Law—to share their experience and knowledge of civil and human rights. The Community Legal Resource Network provides resources and supports graduates working in solo or small-firm practices in underserved

communities. Students in CUNY Immigrant Initiatives expand their knowledge of issues facing immigrant communities and provide direct service in a variety of areas. A new curricular initiative, the Worker Employment Labor Program, is designed to develop legal skills in representing workers in diverse settings. Finally, the law school is part of a rich university, the City University of New York, and law students may take some interdisciplinary graduate courses with the approval of the Academic Dean.

■ Nontraditional Students

The law school’s student profile includes many individuals returning to school after careers, and many who possess advanced degrees. The average age of the student body is 27; some students enter directly from undergraduate school while others are older, making the law school a comfortable environment.

■ Affordable Tuition

CUNY offers an excellent legal education at substantially less than half the cost of most private law schools.

Applicant Profile

City University of New York School of Law
This grid includes only applicants who earned 120–180 LSAT scores under standard administrations.

LSAT Score	GPA																				Total			
	3.75 +		3.50–3.74		3.25–3.49		3.00–3.24		2.75–2.99		2.50–2.74		2.25–2.49		2.00–2.24		Below 2.00		No GPA		Apps	Adm		
	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm		
175–180	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
170–174	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
165–169	5	5	8	8	3	3	4	3	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	26	22	
160–164	15	15	21	18	25	15	18	12	12	1	4	2	3	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	102	65		
155–159	27	25	43	28	66	43	60	31	39	12	26	7	17	2	4	0	2	0	7	2	291	150		
150–154	51	23	69	36	117	62	115	54	115	43	33	2	32	3	8	0	3	0	14	8	557	231		
145–149	42	14	72	16	138	24	153	10	110	10	78	2	31	0	16	0	4	0	23	1	667	77		
140–144	16	0	33	0	74	2	90	0	80	1	51	0	22	1	10	0	2	0	17	0	395	4		
135–139	4	0	18	0	30	0	18	0	29	0	22	0	24	0	9	0	2	0	12	0	168	0		
130–134	3	0	2	0	3	0	8	0	11	0	13	0	5	0	5	0	1	0	2	0	53	0		
125–129	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	6	0		
120–124	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	164	83	268	108	458	151	467	111	401	69	228	13	137	6	55	0	14	0	79	14	2271	555		

Apps = Number of Applicants
Adm = Number Admitted
Reflects 99% of the total applicant pool.