

Harvard Law School

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■ A Legal Metropolis

Harvard Law School combines the resources of the world's premier center for legal education and research with educational settings designed to enrich individual and interactive learning. The result is a uniquely vibrant and collaborative environment. Harvard's scope generates enormous vitality—an unparalleled breadth and depth of academic options, a wide array of research programs, a diverse student body drawn from across the nation and around the world, and a global network of distinguished alumni. Harvard Law School offers students a curriculum of unparalleled breadth: more than 400 courses, seminars, and reading groups that together reflect the remarkable range of the faculty's expertise and interests. Within this dynamic environment, law students have broad opportunities for intellectual engagement with faculty and classmates. More than half of these courses have fewer than 25 students enrolled, including more than 75 seminars in which small groups of students work closely with faculty. First-year sections have fewer than 80 students, and opportunities to work directly with faculty members abound. For example, all first-year students may join in intimate (10–12 students), faculty-led reading groups on topics ranging from cyberlaw to climate change to terrorism. Harvard's extensive resources and collaborative approach create unmatched opportunities to prepare for leadership in public service, private practice, the judiciary, academia, business, or government.

■ Public Service

HLS strongly promotes public service. The school guarantees funding for summer public interest work, and over 373 JD students received funds to work in 35 countries and 27 states plus Washington, DC in 2008. The Office of Public Interest Advising provides comprehensive services to students pursuing public service careers. The Low Income Protection Plan allows graduates substantial financial flexibility to pursue lower-paying employment, and a variety of fellowship programs provide additional support to graduates entering public service. Students may also take advantage of the new Public Service Initiative, which provides a full-tuition benefit for the third year in return for a five-year commitment to public service. Reflecting its public service commitment, HLS has a 40-hour minimum pro bono work requirement, with students actually completing an average of more than 500 hours of pro bono work during law school.

■ Faculty

The centerpiece of the HLS experience is working directly with scholars who shape the landscape of American and international law. The faculty includes leading scholars and specialists in every subject area. Beyond the classroom, students provide critical support to faculty producing cutting-edge research and influencing the development of the law and of societies around the world. The student-to-faculty ratio has fallen dramatically in recent years, and Harvard Law School's commitment to hire more core faculty means that this trend is likely to continue.

■ International Scope

Harvard Law School presents students with tremendous opportunities to engage in the world. With students coming from 63 countries to study here and with hundreds of current students going abroad each year to work, study, engage in research, or advocate for change, HLS is truly a global crossroads. Each year, the Law School offers more than 75 courses, seminars, and reading groups focusing on international, foreign, or comparative law. Research centers, such as the East Asian Legal Studies Program or the Program on International Financial Systems, offer students access to visiting scholars and cutting-edge ideas through colloquia, conferences, and research opportunities. Harvard's more than 4,000 alumni living outside the US provide an unparalleled network of opportunity for potential collaboration and camaraderie for members of the community. In addition, scholars come to HLS from all over the world to make use of the incredible international collections housed in the law library.

■ Student Life

At HLS, a wide variety of extracurricular activities complement and enrich the classroom and clinical experiences. Whether exploring professional interests, serving the public, or merely socializing, students engage in an enormous range of activity on the HLS campus beyond the classroom. At present, there are more than 90 student organizations and journals at HLS. Student organizations based on social, political, service, or professional interests plan workshops, panels, concerts, networking opportunities, and conferences for almost every day of the academic year. Other activities planned by first-year social chairs, the second-year social committee, the third-year class marshals, as well as the Dean of Students Office, create a collegial and community-oriented environment on campus. Students are given a wide range of opportunities to create and implement ideas for activities and are encouraged to pursue their interests by forming new student organizations or planning one-time events.

■ Clinical Programs

The Clinical Legal Education Program is one of the most important and valued aspects of a Harvard Law School education, confirming our commitment to public service and to providing our students with the best possible educational experience. With 29 in-house clinics and hundreds of externships, Harvard Law School has more clinical opportunities than any law school in the world. Some of the clinics include Mediation and Negotiation, Supreme Court Advocacy, Immigration, Human Rights, CyberLaw, Children's Rights, Criminal Defense, Criminal Prosecution, Family Law, Art/Entertainment Law, Death Penalty, Housing, Employment, Civil Rights, Small Business and Nonprofit Organization, Health Law, Special Education, Environmental Law, War Crimes, Predatory Lending, and Recording Artists Project.

Clinical education at HLS helps to introduce and explore the roles and responsibilities of a lawyer. Taking a clinical course may aid students in thinking about what sort of law practice or lawyering work they like most. Mentored practice, in an

educational setting, also helps students begin to understand their practice learning styles while getting a head start on learning the skills they will need when they begin their careers.

The Clinical Legal Education Program at Harvard Law School has three basic components:

- direct student responsibility for clients in a realistic practice setting;
- supervision and mentoring by an experienced practitioner; and
- companion classroom sessions in which clinical experience supports and contributes to further discussion and thought.

In 2007–2008, nearly 700 students participated in at least one clinic. Clinical courses get enthusiastic reviews from student participants, most of whom find them challenging and educational. Many students find that this practical lawyering produces a sense of personal accomplishment as well as professional development because in most cases, they are truly increasing access to justice for the most marginalized members of society. HLS also offers externship placements at various government agencies, nonprofits, and small firms. Students

Applicant Profile

HLS does not provide a profile chart because it would be based solely upon undergraduate GPA and LSAT scores. Admission decisions are based on many factors beyond the GPA and LSAT. Each application is read thoroughly, sometimes by as many as five people, including members of the faculty admission committee. Although most admitted candidates graduated near the top of their college classes and presented LSAT scores in the top few percentiles, a significant proportion of candidates who meet these characterizations

can also design faculty-sponsored independent clinical work projects in any area they cannot find as part of the curriculum. Finally, many students take advantage of the winter term, spending three to four weeks off campus in a clinical setting and then coming back to campus and continuing the work remotely for the following semester.

■ Employment After Graduation

More than 600 employers recruit on campus at HLS each year. Upon graduation, about 65 percent of HLS graduates enter private practice, about 25 percent enter judicial clerkships, and the remainder enter public interest or government work, business and industry, academia, or other unique pursuits. Virtually every year, the number of HLS graduates clerking for the US Supreme Court surpasses the number from any other law school. In fact, approximately one fourth of all Supreme Court clerks over the last decade graduated from HLS. After clerkships, many HLS graduates pursue careers in public interest, government, and academia.

may not be offered admission. At the same time, some admitted candidates apply with lower GPA and LSAT credentials but offer combined academic and other achievements that impress the admission committee. Candidates with higher grades and scores tend to be admitted at higher rates than candidates with lower grades and scores, but at no point on the GPA or LSAT scales are the chances for admission to Harvard Law School zero or 100 percent.