

Juris Doctor – Academic Advising Guide

QUICK SNAPSHOT	
<input type="checkbox"/>	87 Credit Hours (individual grades of D or higher; overall average grade of 2.000 or higher)
<input type="checkbox"/>	First-Year Required Courses
<input type="checkbox"/>	Upper Level Required Courses
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Skills or Experiential Learning Requirement
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Residence Credits (1 credit is earned per 12 term hrs. or more; ¾ credit is earned per 9-11 term hrs.; ½ credit is earned per 6-8 term hrs.; ¼ credit is earned per 3-5 term hrs.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	30 Hours of Public Service

FIRST-YEAR REQUIRED COURSES		
The first-year curriculum is set. It is designed to teach the fundamentals of legal analysis, to introduce you to legal subjects on which most of the law is built, and to give you a strong foundation in legal research, writing and advocacy skills:		
	Hours	<i>Fall Semester</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Civil Procedure I
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00	Contracts I
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00	Property I
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Torts I
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Legal Research and Writing I
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Criminal Law
	16.00	Total hours fall semester

	Hours	<i>Spring Semester</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00	Civil Procedure II
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Contracts II
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Property II
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00	Torts II
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Legal Research and Writing II
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00	Constitutional Law I
	15.00	Total hours spring semester

UPPER-LEVEL REQUIRED COURSES

In addition to the first-year classes, all students must take the following courses. Do not wait until your last semester to satisfy these graduation requirements. Scheduling can become problematic if you need too many required courses in your last semester. After the first year, most students take 14-15 hours per semester. No student can take more than 17 hours in a regular term.

<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Constitutional Law II
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	Professional Responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00	1 Edited Writing Course (EW)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00 or 3.00	1 General Writing Course (GW) or Law Review (if selected) or Directed Research Paper (with a supervisor) Note that a second EW can substitute for the GW requirement but a GW cannot be used to satisfy the EW requirement

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS REQUIREMENT OR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING REQUIREMENT

Students who enrolled in law school before fall 2016 must satisfy the “Professional Skills” requirement. Students who enroll in fall 2016 or after must satisfy the “Experiential Learning” requirement.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Skills Requirement: Complete at least one upper-level course that includes professional skills generally regarded as necessary for effective and responsible participation in the legal profession. Courses satisfying this requirement designated with a (PS) on the upper-class course list.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Experiential Learning Requirement: Complete one or more experiential course(s) totaling at least six credit hours). An experiential course must be a simulation course, a law clinic, or an externship. Courses satisfying this requirement designated with an (EL) on the upper-class course list. Note that LRWA II satisfies 3 of these hours.

BAR EXAM AND ELECTIVE COURSES

SMU Dedman Law offers a rich variety of elective courses each semester in a number of areas. Choose courses that interest you or that you think might help you in your practice. Most students take Business Enterprises, Evidence, and Income Taxation, which are prerequisites to other courses, academic programs, and clinics. Therefore, you should consider taking these as soon as possible.

You are encouraged to explore different areas of the law, but also make sure you have the necessary foundational courses to later be successful on the bar exam and in your legal practice. Generally, upper-class students should take at least two bar courses each semester. Full-time students with a cumulative GPA below 2.7 must take at least two (and preferably three bar courses) each semester.

The information within each section below should help you select electives and other activities that will help you develop expertise in the relevant practice area. It will also suggest a logical sequence of courses, so that you can build from foundational courses that provide an overview of the area to those that require a high degree of knowledge and sophistication.

Bar Exam Subject Courses	Estate Planning
Antitrust Law	Family Law
Bankruptcy Law	Health Law
Business and Corporate Law	Immigration Law

Civil Litigation and Dispute Resolution	Intellectual Property
Commercial and Consumer Law	International and Comparative Law
Criminal Law	Real Estate Law
Employment Law	Tax Law

CLINICS AND EXTERNSHIPS

Clinics and externships are great ways to obtain practical experience while you are in law school. SMU Dedman Law’s clinical program encompasses 10 specialized clinics and projects where, under the supervision of clinic directors, our students serve as advocates on behalf of the community in many areas of the law. Externships at SMU include both work in a legal setting and an associated class designed to help the extern get the most out of the experience. There are three classes, each of which is associated with a cluster of externships:

Clinics	Externships
Civil Clinic	Corporate Counsel Externship Program
Consumer Advocacy Project	Federal Judicial Externship Course
Criminal Clinic	Government and Public Interest Externship Program
Federal Taxpayers Clinic	
Judge Elmo B. Hunter Legal Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women	
Innocence Clinic	
Patent Law Clinic	
Small Business and Trademark Clinic	
VanSickle Family Law Clinic	
W. W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic	

BEYOND THE LAW SCHOOL CLASSROOM
Directed Research - A student may register for a total of three hours of directed research while in law school.
Study Abroad in Oxford - Students may earn five hours of credit in this summer program by taking one course taught by an SMU professor and one Oxford-style tutorial taught by an Oxford tutor.
Courses Outside the Law School – Students may earn up to six hours by taking graduate-level courses in other schools at SMU. Prior approval by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs is required.
Law Reviews – Students may earn up to five hours of academic credit for work as a staff editor and board member on one of our law reviews.
Moot Court and Mock Trial - A student may receive one hour of academic credit for service on the BOA executive board or the Jackson Walker Moot Court Board.