LAW, JD

Penn Law offers a full-time program leading to the JD, the first professional degree in Law. Applicants have completed their undergraduate degrees and, oftentimes, advanced degrees in a broad array of disciplines; many have work experience prior to attending law school. On occasion, Penn Law has admitted international students who hold a law degree from outside the United States but who want to earn a JD degree in the United States. Penn Law also accepts a select group of Penn undergraduates who submatriculate, combining their bachelor's degrees and their JDs.

Penn Law’s program of legal education, combining its rich, interdisciplinary curriculum, varied co-curricular activities, and pro bono responsibilities, prepares its students for admission to the bar and to serve as effective, ethical, and responsible members of the legal profession. Each student will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate a core knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law in a number of different subject areas;
- Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem solving skills, and present findings, analyses, and recommendations efficiently and effectively in both written and oral communication;
- Work collaboratively;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of law and the contributions and benefits to legal analysis and problem solving that other disciplines can make;
- Exercise proper professional judgment and fulfill ethical responsibilities to clients, the profession, and society in general; and
- Utilize a range of professional skills that facilitate active, competent and ethical participation in the legal profession.

For more information: https://www.law.upenn.edu/admissions/jd/

Curriculum

JD candidates are required to complete the following:

- 86 semester hours during 6 semesters in law school residence
  - No more than 22 semester hours may be earned in co-curricular activities
  - One course in Professional Responsibility
  - 6 or more semester hours of experiential learning
  - Pro Bono Requirement
  - A scholarly research and writing project

The First Year (1L)

Penn Law’s first-year curriculum comprises five semester-long required core courses and two spring-term electives, as well as a year-long Legal Practice Skills course.

The Second and Third Years (2L & 3L)

Across the second and third years, course selection is entirely elective and students have a wide range – between 80 to 100 courses, seminars, clinics, and externships per semester – from which to choose.

Students may receive up to 12 semester hours toward their JD graduation requirements for graduate-level courses taken in other departments at Penn upon establishing that these courses will contribute to their legal educations.

The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2023 and later. Students should consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.