At the intersection of law, business, and innovation.

Duke Law
Program in Law and Entrepreneurship
“Working with entrepreneurial companies requires a very specialized mindset and skill set. You need to have the foundation of legal knowledge and experience as well as a second-nature understanding of how to apply innovation to business problems.”

Kip Frey, Director of the Law and Entrepreneurship Program
Through two degree options, the JD/LLM and LLM in Law and Entrepreneurship, the Law and Entrepreneurship Program at Duke Law integrates rigorous course work, real-world experience, and high-level networking opportunities to position you to advise, create, and lead the innovative ventures that will drive tomorrow’s global economy.

Entrepreneurs and innovators do things differently. This program will help you develop the specialized legal knowledge and professional skills you need to counsel leaders in the innovation economy. By fusing law and business, Duke’s Law and Entrepreneurship Program builds knowledge in areas that are crucial to entrepreneurial ventures and instills a deep understanding of what it means to create and advise an entrepreneurial business. You’ll learn how businesspeople approach business problems – adding value to both your skill set and your résumé.
When you combine a top-flight university with talent from the medical school, business school, and law school — and then add the innovation happening at Duke, in the Research Triangle, and in Durham — you get a really exciting and dynamic place to work. I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.

Senior Lecturing Fellow Erika Buell was in-house counsel at Revolution Money before joining the Duke faculty to teach in the Law and Entrepreneurship Program.
THE DUKE ADVANTAGE
Known for interdisciplinary strength, faculty who are leaders in their fields, and ambitious research, Duke is home to leading programs in business, finance and tax law, intellectual property law, environmental law, and public law. And the University’s strong ties with institutions in the Research Triangle and relationships with alumni and business leaders who are successful entrepreneurs and mentors are the foundations for a dynamic learning and teaching environment. The Law and Entrepreneurship Program builds on — and adds to — these strengths.

WHY DUKE, WHY NOW

Research Triangle and relationships with alumni and business leaders who are successful entrepreneurs and mentors are the foundations for a dynamic learning and teaching environment. The Law and Entrepreneurship Program builds on — and adds to — these strengths.

Entrepreneurship at Duke
The DUKE INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE works to create a robust culture across the entire university to inspire and prepare students and faculty for innovative leadership and actively support and celebrate the translation of knowledge into the service of society.

DUHATCH is an on-campus incubation space for new, student-led ventures that brings together entrepreneurs from all areas of campus, including law, technology, business, and medicine.

PROGRAM FOR ENTREPRENEURS, also known as P4E, is a program at Duke's Fuqua Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation that combines academic research, courses, and a community of practitioners to help entrepreneurs define, plan, establish, and finance new ventures, all while receiving course credit.

THE DUKE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEUR NETWORK connects Duke entrepreneurs through its Start-Up Matchmaker Directory and creates dialogue on campus and across the world with networking events from RTP to Mumbai.

The DUKE START-UP CHALLENGE is a year-long entrepreneurship competition that helps students take ideas to market. Teams compete in the Elevator Pitch, Executive Summary, and Business Plan Competitions, winning prizes and feedback from entrepreneurs. The grand prize of $25,000 comes with office space and an MBA intern for a year.

INNOVATION IN THE TRIANGLE
North Carolina’s Research Triangle area is widely recognized as a global hub of innovation. Since its inception, the Research Triangle Park (RTP) has been home to some of the brightest minds at the forefront of science, technology, and business. Today, entrepreneurs regularly gather here for programs such as the Innovation in RTP speaker series and the Governor’s Entrepreneurship Summit, where entrepreneurs and leaders from across the state meet to brainstorm new products and services that will create jobs and boost growth. Just a mile from Duke in the heart of downtown Durham is American Underground. This award-winning historic district is home to some of the most influential and instrumental start-ups, incubators, and thought leaders in the Southeast. It was recently selected by Google as one of seven technology hubs in North America as part of the Google for Entrepreneurs tech hub network.
The Law and Entrepreneurship Program offers two distinct degrees. The JD/LLM in Law and Entrepreneurship is a three-year dual-degree program. The LLM in Law and Entrepreneurship is a two-semester program designed for lawyers who have received either a JD or an LLM in the United States. Both provide students with a deep understanding of the historical and current perspectives on entrepreneurship and the law, as well as the ability to understand the business, institutional, and strategic considerations applicable to entrepreneurs.

JD/LLMLE in Law and Entrepreneurship

Duke Law JD/LLMLE students complete the requirements for both the JD degree and the LLM degree in Law & Entrepreneurship in just six semesters and two summers, earning 87 credits for the JD and 20 for the LLMLE for a total of 107 credits.

JD/LLMLE students take two core courses in the summer before the first year. The summer start helps to create a long-lasting network of classmates who share an interest in entrepreneurship, and it opens up the first-year schedule for two additional courses.
THE JD/LLMLE

JD/LLMLE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

First-Year Requirements
- Business Associations
- Civil Procedure
- Constitutional Law
- Contracts
- Criminal Law
- Foundations of Law
- Intellectual Property
- Legal Analysis, Research & Writing
- Property
- Torts

*Two courses are taken during the summer prior to the start of the 1L year.

Upper-Level Curriculum

JD CURRICULUM
- Legal Ethics (at least 2 credits)
- JD Upper-Level Writing (2 credits)
- Professional Skills Requirement

JD/LLMLE CURRICULUM
- Advising the Entrepreneurial Client
- Law and Entrepreneurship
- Analytical Methods
- Business Strategy
- Venture Capital Financing

JD/LLMLE ELECTIVES

Students are encouraged to select electives to complement the LLMLE curriculum from an array of courses, including Corporate Finance, Financial Information, Intellectual Capital and Competitive Strategy, Mergers & Acquisitions, Patent Law & Policy, and Securities Regulation.

START-UP VENTURES CLINIC

The JD/LLMLE program is completed by participation in the Duke Law School Start-Up Ventures Clinic during spring of the 3L year. Students provide legal advice and assistance to seed- and early-stage entrepreneurial ventures that have not yet raised significant amounts of outside capital. The clinic assists clients in a wide variety of legal matters, including formation, intellectual property protection, commercialization strategies, and operational issues.

“The Start-Up Ventures Clinic places students right in the center of the area’s booming start-up community. While providing counsel to early-stage companies, they work directly with entrepreneurs, venture attorneys, and fellow professionals, often handling some of the most important matters facing their clients,” says Jeff Ward ’09, director of the Start-Up Ventures Clinic. “Invariably students emerge from the experience more confident in their lawyering skills and thrilled about having been such an important part of a growing company.”

POST-1L SUMMER: Students participate in a 1-month, intensive “start-up company” case study experience that models the entrepreneurial process.

WINTERSESSION: Students attend Wintersession during both the 2L and 3L years, taking courses focusing on innovation and entrepreneurship.

PRACTICUM: During the 3L year, students will participate in a non-law firm internship at a local start-up company in conjunction with an academic course.

START-UP VENTURES CLINIC:

Students participate in the clinic during the 3L year.

Additional JD/LLMLE Requirements
The Law and Entrepreneurship LLM Program is a two-semester, 23-credit program. Admission is limited to applicants who hold a JD or an LLM from an ABA-approved U.S. law school, or who are admitted to practice in a U.S. jurisdiction.

The LLMLE curriculum focuses intensely on the entrepreneurial landscape, regulatory issues, and experiential learning through team problem-solving and the spring practicum.
THE PRACTICUM

The practicum is the centerpiece of the Law and Entrepreneurship LLM Program. During the spring semester, students intern in start-up companies, venture capital firms, regulatory agencies, law firms with entrepreneurial practices, and similar organizations. The practicum allows students to address the intersection of legal principles and practical business applications in the context of entrepreneurship and early-stage enterprise. Each student joins a legal or leadership team and works under the supervision of a mentor who is committed to guiding his or her professional development. The practicum prepares students to be highly competent legal practitioners, savvy business people, and effective problem solvers.

“The practicum is an opportunity to apply the skills you’ve learned in an actual, real-life environment,” said Brandon Bartee LLMLE ’11. “You may be working with a start-up, it may be a venture capital fund — really the opportunities are just limited by what you want to do. I picked SciQuest, a smaller company that grew so rapidly that it went public in fall 2010.”

LLMLE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Fall Semester Core Courses

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE LAW: Develop a deep understanding of the relationship between entrepreneurship and law. Course features regular visits and discussions with entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial lawyers.

ADVISING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL CLIENT: Learn how to handle the legal issues inherent in the life cycle of a typical start-up.

BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR LAWYERS: Learn a variety of strategy methodologies, including methods for assessing the strength of competition, understanding relative bargaining power, anticipating competitors’ actions, and analyzing cost and value structures and their relevance. (Students may place out of this requirement and instead take an additional elective.)

Spring Semester Core Courses

VENTURE CAPITAL FINANCING: Focus on the legal economic structure of venture capital transactions and become familiar with the legal agreements used to document these transactions. Throughout the semester, students will work on a simulated transaction to gain experience in negotiating and drafting documents with an emphasis on meeting client objectives.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE LAW PRACTICUM: Work in a start-up company, venture capital firm, government agency, trade association, private law firm, general counsel’s office, or similar setting. Interact with LLMLE classmates in debriefing practicum experiences.

ELECTIVES

Options at the Law School include:

- Bankruptcy and Corporate Reorganization
- Copyright Law
- Corporate Finance
- Corporate Taxation
- Fixed Income Markets and Quantitative Methods
- Intellectual Capital and Competitive Strategy
- Intellectual Property Law
- Partnership Taxation
- Patent Law and Policy
- Securities Regulation
- Sports and the Law
- Trademark Law and Unfair Competition
LAW AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP FACULTY

DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM IN LAW AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

KIP FREY ’85
Professor of the Practice of Law

Has led a number of start-up companies as CEO, board member, or investor. Was previously a partner at venture capital firm Intersouth Partners.

JAMES COX
Brainerd Currie Professor of Law

Expert in corporate and securities law, market regulation, corporate governance, insider trading, class actions, and market reform issues. Member of the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Credit Rating Agency Task Force. Serves as faculty director for the LLMLE program.

LAWRENCE BAXTER
William B. McGuire Professor of the Practice of Law

Expert in domestic and international bank regulation. Former special counsel for strategic development, corporate executive vice president, founder of emerging businesses and insurance group and eBusiness group at Wachovia.

STUART BENJAMIN
Douglas B. Maggs Chair in Law and Associate Dean for Research

Expert in telecommunications law and innovation policy. Recently served as the Federal Communications Commission’s first Distinguished Scholar in Residence studying spectrum policy and the First Amendment. Co-director of the Center for Innovation Policy at Duke Law.
ERIKA J.S. BUELL
Senior Lecturing Fellow
Practitioner with expertise in entrepreneurial business. Served as in-house corporate counsel for Revolution Money, leading the company’s early preferred stock financings through its sale in 2010 to American Express.

JOHN DE FIGUEIREDO
Edward and Ellen Marie Schwarzman Professor of Law and Professor of Strategy and Economics
Expert in competitive strategy, political and legal strategy, law and economics, and the management of innovation. Previously was professor of strategic management at the UCLA Anderson School of Business.

ANDREW FOSTER
Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Community Enterprise Clinic

PAUL HAAGEN
Professor of Law

KIP JOHNSON
Senior Lecturing Fellow
Founding partner of Morningstar Law Group, where he specializes in securities and technology law, working with clients from seed-stage start-ups to mature operating companies.

DAVID LANGE
Melvin G. Shimm Professor of Law
Expert in intellectual property, copyright, trademarks and unfair competition, and entertainment law. Has practiced media and entertainment law and intellectual property law. Served on the Board of Trustees of the Copyright Society of the United States.

ARTI RAI
Elvin R. Latty Professor of Law

JEFF WARD ’09
Lecturing Fellow, Director of Start-Up Ventures Clinic
Supervises the Start-Up Ventures Clinic, providing legal advice and assistance to seed- and early-stage entrepreneurial ventures in a wide variety of legal matters including formation, intellectual property protection, commercialization strategies, and operational issues.

JOHN WEISTART ’68
Professor of Law
Expert in commercial paper, secured transactions, contracts, credit transactions, antitrust, athletics and the legal process, and labor law. Served as consultant to the Federal Trade Commission.

More faculty at law.duke.edu/fac
COLLABORATIVE, PROFESSIONAL

One of the defining features of the Law and Entrepreneurship Program is the focus on professional development and collaboration. Whether you are working with a team on a class project, discussing a work assignment for your practicum, or taking advantage of networking opportunities in the community, you will develop the ability to work efficiently and productively with others as you solve problems and move your projects forward.

RECENT PRACTICUM HOSTS:

AI Patents
Altometrics
Automated Insights
Bandwidth.com
Blackstone Entrepreneurs Network
Bull City Forward
Capital Broadcasting Co.
CBC New Media Group, LLC
Charleston Digital Corridor
Cherokee Investment Partners
CleanHatch
Clinipace
Community Empowerment Fund
Council for Entrepreneurial Development (CED)
Duke Athletics Department
Hatteras Venture Partners
Hexagon Securities
Hub Raleigh
Joystick Labs
Morningstar Law Group
Morris, Manning & Martin
Polyglot Systems
Red Hat
ReverbNation
SAS
SciQuest
Sports Endeavors
Tethis
Triangle Community Foundation
WedPix
Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice
Xinray Systems
Zenph Sound Innovations
GETTING AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION

“I chose to come to Duke Law and to pursue the LLMLE in addition to the JD because I come from a family of businessmen and women and entrepreneurs. With this immersion into the business culture, coupled with my leadership skills honed by the National Guard, entering into the corporate law world was a logical step in the pursuit of my legal education. In addition, the ability to take upper-level courses as a 1L provides me with an early start on learning about my future career.”

Michael Herrera JD/LLMLE ’16 is the son of Cuban immigrants who attended Johns Hopkins University. He serves in the Army National Guard as a Cavalry Platoon Leader.

APPLYING SKILLS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

“While in law school, I developed interests in corporate law, intellectual property law, and venture capital and private equity investments. Upon graduating, I realized that I had developed a vast amount of knowledge in these areas but had not figured out how to pursue those interests in the form of an actual career. I was attracted to the LLMLE program at Duke because it is not a fourth year of law school. The LLMLE program is providing me the opportunity to not only explore my interests further in the classroom, but to apply those interests during the practicum in a real working environment. When I graduate, instead of a set of interests, I will have acquired a set of skills which I will use for the rest of my career.”

Megan Pirooz LLMLE ’14 came to Duke after practicing law and clerking in the general counsel’s office for retailer Meijer in Michigan.

LEARNING FROM SHARED EXPERIENCES

“I had the ability to take [my practicum] experiences back to Duke Law and discuss those experiences with both my professors and, just as importantly, with an extremely talented group of classmates. We were able to learn not only from our own experiences, but from what everyone else was doing as well. A big part of the educational experience at the Law & Entrepreneurship Program is the fact that there is a group of students that has come together who have similar interests and want to experience the entrepreneurial community. And the ability to learn from your classmates is in many ways as valuable as the academic experience.”

Vinny Asaro JD ’07 LLMLE ’12 was associate counsel for a technology company before he returned to Duke; he credits the Law and Entrepreneurship Program’s networking opportunities with helping him obtain a position as managing director at Rock Creek Capital.

EXPLORING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITY

“While I still have plenty to learn, the instruction and quick pace of the program lead to a base understanding of entrepreneurship in a relatively short period of time. This base provides some basic tools to have meaningful conversations out in the entrepreneurial community. The community is very open and supportive of people who show enthusiasm, a sense of curiosity, and a willingness to work. Pick an interest and get out in the community, because it will embrace you.”

Eb Bernazard LLMLE ’13 worked in the City of Philadelphia’s Intellectual Property Division and as a commercial litigator for a law firm after graduating from law school. After earning his LLMLE at Duke Law, Eb helped create a position within an existing company to explore new initiatives and opportunities in new markets.
Christy Schaffer is a venture partner at Hatteras Venture Partners, a venture capital firm based in Research Triangle Park with a focus on biopharmaceuticals, medical devices, diagnostics, and related opportunities in human medicine.

"(The Duke Law student’s) practicum work at Hatteras was extremely valuable to us, so much so that we were excited to recommend him for an associate position at one of the major entrepreneurial law firms in the Triangle region."

WORK AND CAREERS

Thanks to the LLMLE program’s emphasis on professional skills development, graduates are well prepared for high-level legal practice — and employers know it. Graduates of the LLMLE program have found work in firms and organizations around the country, including:

- Bowles Rice
- Clinipace
- Cree, Inc.
- DiscoverReady
- DLA Piper
- ESO Solutions
- ExxonMobil
- Hellman Yates
- Human Performance Consulting
- Impulsonic
- L Star Management
- Lowenstein Sandler
- McGlinchey Stafford
- Mercy College
- Moore & Van Allen
- Morgan, Lewis & Bockius
- Morningstar Law Group
- Parsons Behle & Latimer
- Proskauer Rose
- Rock Creek Capital
- Seward & Kissel
- Smith Anderson
- Smith Moore Leatherwood
- Snell Wylie & Tibbals
- Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati
- Winstead PC
- Wyrick Robbins Yates & Ponton
- 8 Rivers Capital

In addition, LLMLE graduates have been founders or members of initial management teams of more than half a dozen start-ups.
ACCOMPLISHING PROFESSIONAL GOALS

“Attending Duke Law’s LLM in Law and Entrepreneurship Program enabled me to propel my legal career forward over the course of relatively brief period of time. My goals for attending the program were to expand my knowledge of entrepreneurial law, to broaden the scope of my legal knowledge, and eventually to secure an in-house counsel position. Instead I received an immersive experience which not only offered exceptional legal and business courses, but which developed other invaluable professional skills.”

Jean Michel LMLE ’14 senior commercial counsel, Cree, Inc.

MAKING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

“The LLM in Law and Entrepreneurship was by far the best thing I’ve ever done for my career. Obviously, I learned a lot in class, but that isn’t even a fourth of what is so great about the program. The number of meaningful connections in my network increased exponentially from all the networking opportunities that existed for us. I also had several great practical experiences that were direct results of the LLM program: I worked with an uber-promising start-up that ‘face-planted’ pretty quick. That was a great learning experience. I also helped form a start-up that has since taken off, and I still participate on its board of directors. I learned, and continue to learn, boatloads from my participation in that company. And the practicum was simply phenomenal and continues to pay enormous dividends to this day, both from the connections made and the experience gained there. Simply put, my two semesters in the LLMLE program were worth every penny.”

Dan Roberts LMLE ’12 attorney, Wyrick Robbins

BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

“The program has helped me understand the needs of entrepreneurs and small companies. This knowledge is of immense value to me because I work for a young, but growing company. I can say that I have directly used and applied the information I learned in the program in my current job on a daily basis. The contacts I have made, not only in the LLMLE program but also throughout the Duke community, have helped build my professional network and have been very useful to me after graduation. Due to the program’s director, Kip Frey, I was fortunate enough to coordinate my practicum with Clinipace, Inc., an RTP-based contract research organization that provides clinical research services to pharmaceutical companies. Through that connection, my practicum transitioned into a full-time attorney position with the company.”

Elizabeth Youngkin LMLE ’12 attorney, Clinipace Worldwide

GAINING A SUBSTANTIAL ADVANTAGE

“The Entrepreneurship LLM experience gave me a substantial and noticeable leg up on other first-year associates practicing corporate law in general and particularly those working in my firm’s tech group. I had a primer on corporate finance, IP protection, M&A transactions, term sheet negotiation, deal documents, preferred securities, anti-dilution measures, and numerous other sub-fields that enabled me to do much higher-level work right off the bat.”

Colin Kirby LMLE ’11 associate, Lowenstein Sandler
See videos, bios, and much more at law.duke.edu/LLMLE