

Duke Law School Mission and Learning Outcomes

Duke Law School is an ambitious and innovative institution whose mission is to prepare students for responsible and productive lives in the legal profession by providing a rigorous legal education within a collaborative, supportive, and diverse environment. As a community of scholars, the Law School also provides leadership at the national and international levels in enhancing the understanding of law, and in improving the law and legal institutions through public service, research, and scholarship of the highest caliber, reflecting, where appropriate, contributions from scholars in other disciplines within Duke University.

At Duke Law School, students and faculty experience and contribute to academic rigor in an interdisciplinary environment that supports and values creativity and innovation. Strategic investment in faculty, clinics, interdisciplinary centers, law journals and other student development opportunities, and in technology, as well as support for initiatives and opportunities to serve the public interest, ensure that the Law School remains on the cutting edge of legal scholarship, service, and education. These commitments are memorialized in the Duke Blueprint to LEAD, a set of principles for leadership growth that informs the development of committed, ethical lawyers, well-equipped for the 21st century.

As a reflection of its commitment to providing a rigorous legal education, the Law School's faculty has established the following learning outcomes, with the expectation that our JD students will demonstrate competence in each area by the time of graduation. Competence will be measured by the identified methods of assessment, as indicators of overall achievement of each learning outcome.

(1) Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law.

- (a) Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of core substantive law doctrine and procedure in foundational subject matter areas such as civil procedure, constitutional law, contracts, criminal law, property, and torts.
- (b) Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key principles of law and their application in advanced legal topics, such as administrative and regulatory law, business and corporate law, civil litigation, constitutional law and civil rights, criminal law and procedure, environmental law, family law, health law, innovation and entrepreneurship, intellectual property, international and comparative law, labor and employment law, national security law, science and technology law, and society, democracy, and law.
- (c) Students will demonstrate an informed and critical understanding of the role of law and legal institutions in society and in influencing societal change.
- (d) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of law.
- (e) Students will be well prepared to take and pass state bar examinations.

Methods of assessment include the following: Class preparedness and participation; written and oral assignments; group/team exercises; final exams, papers, and projects; state bar exam passage rates; employment placement rates.

(2) Legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context.

- (a) Students will demonstrate the ability to perform effective legal analysis, including synthesizing rules and principles from various sources, and applying legal reasoning to issues and problems.
- (b) Students will demonstrate the ability to perform effective and efficient legal research.
- (c) Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate critically arguments, assumptions, and data.
- (d) Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of legal problem-solving, including abilities to identify facts and legal issues, to understand and analyze legal documents and instruments, and to research policies, regulations, or other information that is relevant to a client or situation.
- (e) Students will demonstrate the ability to deliver useful work product, including evidencing an understanding of the question being asked and the purpose for which the answer is sought.
- (f) Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate complex legal concepts effectively, both orally and in writing.
- (g) Students will demonstrate an understanding of appropriate tone in communications, including how to tailor a message to different constituencies.

Methods of assessment include the following: Class preparedness and participation; written and oral assignments; group/team exercises; final exams, papers, and projects; passage of first-year LARW course; fulfillment of Substantial Research and Writing Project (SRWP) requirement; fulfillment of the Experiential Learning Requirement; fulfillment of the Professional Development Requirement; state bar exam passage rates; employment placement rates.

(3) Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system.

- (a) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the laws, rules, and norms governing the legal profession, and a commitment to ethical practice.

- (b) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the responsibility of the lawyer as a public citizen, through pro bono activities, public service, or other work intended to improve the law and legal institutions in service to society.
- (c) Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to think, perform, and conduct themselves as professionals.
- (d) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the personal challenges that can affect legal professionals and an awareness of how to manage these challenges.

Methods of assessment include the following: Class preparedness and participation; written and oral assignments; group/team exercises; final exams, papers, and projects; passage of the first-year LARW course; fulfillment of the ethics/professional responsibility course requirement; fulfillment of the Experiential Learning Requirement; fulfillment of the Professional Development Requirement; pro bono participation rates; MPRE passage rates.

(4) Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

- (a) Students will learn and practice skills integral to professional practice, including interviewing, counseling, negotiation, fact development and analysis, trial practice, document drafting, conflict resolution, collaboration, and cultural competency.
- (b) Students will demonstrate the ability to use technology efficiently and effectively.
- (c) Students will demonstrate the ability to master new concepts or subject matters.
- (d) Students will demonstrate the capacity to make presentations or otherwise engage in public speaking, such as running a meeting or speaking in court.
- (e) Students will demonstrate abilities to prioritize tasks and assignments, to work under pressure and meet deadlines, and to manage time and projects effectively and efficiently.
- (f) Students will demonstrate the ability to take initiative and responsibility for their work, working alone and as part of a team.
- (g) Students will demonstrate attention to detail and professional quality, including proofreading, grammar, and punctuation.
- (h) Students will demonstrate openness and responsiveness to constructive feedback, and the ability to engage in self-evaluation, self-critique, and improvement.

Methods of assessment include the following: Class preparedness and participation; group/team exercises; written and oral assignments; final papers and projects; passage

of the first-year LARW course; fulfillment of the Significant Research and Writing Project (SRWP) requirement; fulfillment of the Experiential Learning Requirement; fulfillment of the Professional Development Requirement; student portfolios; participation in student groups and extracurricular activities, including journals and moot court; pro bono participation rates; employment placement rates.