

Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) Program

Duke Law's SJD program is a rigorous doctoral program designed to prepare students for high-level governmental or academic careers. The program is overseen by an annually-appointed Faculty Committee consisting of four governing faculty and the Associate Dean for International Studies, *ex officio*. This committee, together with the individual student's dissertation advisor, guide each student's participation in the program. Because SJD students at Duke Law hold not only undergraduate degrees in law but also an LLM degree and often an additional master's degree in law, the program can be largely-individualized with significant input from the student. Each student is assigned a dissertation supervisor from the Duke Law faculty upon admission, and the dissertation supervisor helps shape—and must approve—the student's course of study.

The SJD degree requires completion of 48 credits in law. To be eligible for admission to the SJD degree, an applicant must have successfully completed an LLM degree. Because admission to an LLM program requires a first degree in law, most SJD students will have completed at least four years of law courses before beginning the SJD.

The formal requirements for the SJD program are as follows (see Rule 2-5):

- (1) payment of four semesters of full-time tuition;
- (2) completion of 48 credits in law; with approval of the Faculty SJD Committee, up to 24 credits earned through a qualifying LLM program may be counted toward the SJD degree;
- (3) all coursework must be approved by the dissertation supervisor; coursework must include 12 credits earned through coursework at the 300 level or above, except as approved by the dissertation supervisor, and 12 credits earned through the mentored study for the dissertation.
- (4) coursework or approved training in academic research and writing;
- (5) formation of a dissertation committee;
- (6) adherence to the Duke Law Honor Code;
- (7) residency of at least one year;
- (8) passing a qualifying examination;
- (9) proposing a dissertation topic acceptable to the dissertation committee;
- (10) completing a book-length dissertation of publishable quality, submitted no later than three years after the dissertation proposal is approved, unless this deadline is extended by the Faculty SJD Committee for good cause shown.;
- (11) passing an oral dissertation defense; and
- (12) submitting the dissertation to the Duke Law Library.

Most Duke Law SJD students also serve as Law School faculty member research assistants or tutors to LLM students and/or enter interdisciplinary projects in which they teach or direct undergraduates. They attend faculty workshops and are encouraged to present their research to faculty, other students, or at conferences in the United States or abroad.

Dissertation supervisors are required to make students aware of conferences or other academic gatherings relevant to the student's research. They are also required to counsel students about the legal academic job market and on techniques for getting their work accepted for publication in prominent law journals. Supervisors must also report the student's progress to the Law School International Studies Office on a semi-annual basis. The International Studies Office maintains records of each SJD student's status. An SJD Committee of faculty members with doctoral degrees or familiar with supervising SJD students makes all SJD admission and programmatic decisions. As noted above, the Associate Dean for

International Studies is an ex officio member the SJD Committee and provides administrative information and counsel to the Committee.