

Boston University School of Law Plan for the New York Skills Competency Requirement and Professional Values Bar Admission Requirement

New York Rule §520.18 of the Court of Appeals for the Admission of Attorneys and Counselors at Law requires that all Juris Doctorate graduates applying to the New York bar “demonstrate that the applicant possesses the skills and values necessary to provide effective, ethical and responsible legal services in this State.” A graduate of the School of Law’s JD program makes such a demonstration by successfully fulfilling the degree requirements and learning outcomes of the Juris Doctorate program. BU School of Law only certifies graduates for bar application eligibility who have demonstrated competency in meeting our JD program’s learning outcomes, as defined and approved by our faculty.

The Boston University School of Law’s Juris Doctorate degree requirements and learning outcomes require:

1. Students possess the ability to perform:
 - a. legal analysis and reasoning
 - b. legal research
 - c. problem solving
 - d. written communication in the legal context
 - e. oral communication in the legal context
2. Students understand the exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and
3. Students demonstrate the professional skills of collaboration, counseling and negotiation needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession. All students will also demonstrate a basic understanding of business fundamentals and be able to read and understand basic financial documents.

All graduates of Boston University’s School of Law’s JD program successfully complete a minimum of 85 degree-applicable credits. No less than thirty-eight (38) credits of doctrinal and experiential credits are required of all students, as reflected in the below course list, to ensure competency for legal practice and fulfillment of the learning outcomes outlined above. These credits include at least six credits of dedicated experiential coursework, as well as a course or examination in business fundamentals. In addition to these required courses, students utilize their remaining credits to advance their proficiency and skill in their intended area of legal practice. Competency for practice is determined by a passing grade in students’ coursework, or for the Upper-class Writing Requirement, by faculty certification of the students’ proficiency in legal research, writing and analysis.

Course(s)	Learning Outcome / Professional Skill / Competency
1L Doctrinal Courses: Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law, Property Law and Torts	Legal analysis & reasoning
1L Lawyering Program, including the Lawyering Lab (experiential course) and mandatory moot court	Legal analysis & reasoning; problem solving; written and oral communication in the legal context; client counseling; collaboration and negotiation.
Professional Responsibility, or a course approved to provide a minimum of two-credits of professional responsibility instruction within an experiential program seminar	Students understand the exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system.
Experiential coursework, in addition to the 1L Lawyering Lab (a minimum of six credits) through clinics, externships with seminars, or simulation courses	Legal analysis & reasoning; problem solving; written and oral communication in the legal context.
<i>Introduction to Business Fundamentals</i> (LAWJD 605)	84% or higher grade is evidence of competency in understanding business fundamentals and comprehension of basic financial documents.
Upper-class Writing Requirement	Legal analysis and reasoning; legal research; problem solving; written communication in the legal context.

Boston University's School of Law is the only law school known to require all graduates have an understanding of business basics, corporate finance and financial accounting, including the following subjects: capital markets; the basics of financial reporting; balance sheets; income statements and cash flow; business forms and organizations; financing organizations; discounting; and calculating risk, return and valuation. This understanding is applicable to a wide range of practices, enhancing the applicability of our graduates' other learning outcomes, and is assessed through the *Introduction to Business Fundamentals* course. BU also requires students to complete 67 credits of faculty-led classes, exceeding the ABA's required 64 credits; to reduce their credit hours to 64, students must seek a specific exception demonstrating a professional or academic benefit for an alternate proposed path.

The School of Law's graduates show competency for practice in multiple ways. The [2018 ABA Bar Passage Outcomes Report](#) documented that 96.6% of Boston University's Class of 2015 successfully passed their chosen jurisdiction(s) exam – a result significantly above the national

average of 88.32%. This same class responded to an internal survey addressing their performance on the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam, reporting a mean score of 106.5 and median score of 105, with only four students reporting a score less than 86, and no one reporting a score below 81 (Law School Self-Assessment, ABA Self-Study Report 2017). Over 100 students participated in an externship placement during the 2017-18 academic year, and the School of Law's clinical programs offer more than 160 student spots annually.

Boston University School of Law graduates are competently prepared for practice through the program of study outlined above. For the purposes of bar exam eligibility in New York State, the School of Law will certify graduates who complete the degree requirements outlined above, who complete 15 credits or more of experiential education, or who complete the New York Pro Bono Scholars Program. Graduates seeking certification should contact the [Law Registrar's Office](#), who will work with Associate Dean Muir in completing the individual graduate's assessment.