

# DEGREE REQUIREMENTS



The Juris Doctor (JD) program requires 90 total credit hours of coursework, typically completed over a course of three years. After completing the highly structured first-year curriculum, students use their upper-level years to explore areas of interest, fine-tune their practical skills and refine their professional goals.

**Brandeis Law does not offer a Masters in Law (LLM) degree or an accelerated JD program for foreign-trained lawyers.**

## First-Year Curriculum

The required foundational curriculum for first-year students is pre-determined for both the Fall and Spring semesters, with all first-year students matriculating in the Fall semester. Students who feel they are unable to take on the full standard first-year course load may be able to take a slightly reduced first-year course load (<https://louisville.edu/law/admissions/how-to-apply/reduced-course-load/>) in which they take one or two of the standard first-year courses during their *second* year in the JD program.

### Fall Semester

- Civil Procedure (4 hours)
- Contracts (4 hours)
- Torts (4 hours)
- Lawyering Skills I (3 hours)

### Spring Semester

- Constitutional Law I (4 hours)
- Property (4 hours)
- Criminal Law (3 hours)
- Lawyering Skills II (3 hours)
- Professional Identity (1 hour)

## Upper-Level Curriculum

Beyond the first year of study, Brandeis Law offers a range of upper-level courses designed to provide students with a well-rounded education, including opportunities for interdisciplinary study and concentration in particular areas of interest. Upper-level students may customize their curriculum with a range of lectures, seminars and experiential courses, including up to 6 credits of approved graduate coursework outside of the law school, but must fulfill the following graduation requirements.

### Core Courses

Students must complete at least 18 credit hours of coursework from the following list of core courses, which represent the subject matter tested on the bar exam:

- Advanced Civil Procedure (3 hours)
- Constitutional Law II (3 hours)
- Business Organizations (4 hours)
- Commercial Law (3 hours)
- Criminal Procedure: Constitutional Issues (3 hours)
- Criminal Procedure: Judicial Process (3 hours)
- Decedents' Estates & Trusts (3-4 hours)
- Evidence (4 hours)
- Family Law (3 hours)
- Products Liability (3 hours)
- Real Estate Transactions (3 hours)

### Professional Responsibility

The only specific upper-level course required for all Brandeis Law students is Professional Responsibility, which focuses on preparing future lawyers for the ethical obligations of the profession. In addition to the Professional Responsibility course, students must pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (<https://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/>) (MPRE) to be eligible to take the bar exam.

### Perspective Course

Each student is also required to take a *perspective course*, intended to ensure that students encounter an "outsider" perspective on the American legal system, whether that perspective comes from the past, from abroad, from other academic disciplines or from non-dominant perspectives within contemporary American society. Courses that fulfill the perspective requirement vary from semester to semester.

### Upper-Level Writing & Research

The upper-level writing requirement can be satisfied in conjunction with a writing-eligible course, by participation in a Brandeis Law journal or as part of an approved independent study. Writing-eligible courses vary from semester to semester. To meet the requirement, a student must prepare a single, substantial written product of at least 6,250 words (exclusive of footnotes and endnotes) that demonstrates sound legal analysis and reasoning, is supported by significant legal research and appropriate citations to authorities, has not been prepared for any other course or publication and earns a grade of C or higher.

### Experiential Learning

All students must complete at least 6 credit hours of experiential learning opportunities ([https://louisville.edu/law/academics/copy\\_of\\_experiential-learning/](https://louisville.edu/law/academics/copy_of_experiential-learning/)), at least 2 of which must be earned in "live-client courses," i.e., clinics or externships. Participating in a live-client course allows students to assume responsibility related to real-world cases and clients. The nature of the experience varies from course to course as students develop a suite of legal and professional skills applicable to their future careers.

### Public Service

Prior to graduation, students must complete at least 30 hours of law-related public service (<https://louisville.edu/law/careers/public-service/>) at approved placements. Failure to complete their public service hours and submit all required documentation by the published deadline will result in delayed graduation.