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# preLaw

A National Jurist publication

Elon experiments; Lincoln Memorial gets accreditation; Marquette, Memphis among 15 most innovative clinics

WINTER 2015  
VOL. 18, NO. 3

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top 70 law schools  
for racial diversity

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## 33 MOST DIVERSE LAW SCHOOLS

Texas Southern University tops our ranking of law schools that best match the nation's mix for racial diversity. While most schools are still far below the national averages, the numbers are improving. Here's why.



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## ► 20 LAW SCHOOL GETS MURDERED

A new TV show about law school is getting failing grades for accuracy. Here is our list of the best legal TV shows ever.

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# A remarkable turnaround

Lincoln Memorial receives accreditation only a few years after most left it for dead **BY JACK CRITTENDEN**

Lincoln Memorial University — John J. Duncan Jr. School of Law has completed a remarkable turnaround, obtaining provisional accreditation from the American Bar Association just three years after it filed a lawsuit against the accrediting agency.

The small Knoxville, Tenn., school enrolled its first class in fall 2009, but quickly ran into problems. The ABA notified it in October 2011 that it would likely be denied accreditation, in part because its admissions standards were low and getting worse. The ABA said it had not shown that students would have a good chance of graduating, passing the bar exam and landing a job.

Rather than withdraw its application so it could address the ABA's concerns, the school chose to fight. It submitted a combative brief to the ABA and filed a federal lawsuit that claimed the ABA "arbitrarily and capriciously denied" accreditation to the law school in violation of antitrust laws. It also waged a battle in the media, including a front-page article in *The New York Times* that did much to further erode the value of legal education in the eyes of the public.

The dean at the time, Sydney Beckman, said the school would fail without accreditation. He said other law schools were opposed to a new school because applications were dropping. Internal documents from the ABA showed evaluators were concerned there was not a sufficient job market for graduates. But most observers felt Lincoln Memorial would close its doors before winning a lawsuit against the ABA.

One year later the school did an about-face. It replaced Beckman as dean, dropped the lawsuit against the ABA and announced it would resubmit its application.

It hired Parham Williams as interim dean and vice president in December 2012. Williams came with experience. He had been the founding dean at Chapman University Dale E. Fowler School of Law in Orange, Calif. "We had to start from scratch," Williams said. "We had to tighten



**Lincoln Memorial is the fifth law school in Tennessee to receive ABA accreditation**

our belts and be disciplined in everything we did, including having more rigorous admissions standards."

The school had the go-ahead for students to sit for the Tennessee bar, despite not having accreditation. (However, students could not sit for other state bars.) Plus, it already had efforts in place to help students prepare for the bar, and it implemented a series of programs to further prepare students for the exam, as well as the work force. The efforts paid off.

Lincoln Memorial's first graduating class reported an 81 percent passage rate on the Tennessee bar exam — higher than the national average of 78 percent. It was the same group of students the ABA had been worried would not pass the bar exam. An additional 10 percent of that class have since passed the bar, bringing the pass rate to 91 percent.

The school reported a strong bar passage rate for the Class of 2014 as well, with 77.14 percent passing.

"The adversity encountered in seeking accreditation has made the institution stronger, our program of legal education better

and our administration wiser," Williams said.

Williams said the school's employment rate for bar-exam-required jobs and JD-preferred jobs is about 87 or 88 percent. Even more importantly, he said, is where they are getting jobs.

"This relates to the mission of the university and the law school — to provide educational services to the underserved population in Appalachia," Williams said. "We have graduates practicing in 16 [of those] counties. Many [of the counties] never had a lawyer or only one or two."

Provisional approval entitles Lincoln Memorial to all the rights of a fully approved law school and allows its graduates to take the bar exam in any American jurisdiction. To gain full approval, it has five years to demonstrate it is in full compliance with all the ABA Standards of Approval of Law Schools.

Williams said the school will slowly grow its enrollment from the current 75 to 300 by 2019. It also plans to add externships and clinics to the curriculum, and will hire two additional faculty members.



## A tough road for new schools

When Lincoln Memorial University started planning for a new law school in 2007, it was one of 12 such proposals in the works. But the subsequent drop in applications killed eight of the hopeful law schools, including schools at University of New Haven in Connecticut, Husson University in Bangor, Maine, State University of New York at Binghamton and Louisiana College in Pineville, La.

Only University of California Irvine and Belmont University College of Law in Nashville, Tenn., had easy roads to accreditation. Concordia University in Boise, Idaho, still hopes to get provisional accreditation.

Four other law schools have since been proposed, with two opening — Indiana Tech Law School in Fort Wayne, Ind., which was announced in spring 2011 and enrolled

its first class in fall 2013, and University of North Texas Dallas College of Law, which

was authorized by the Texas Legislature in 2009. It enrolled its first class in fall 2014.

### Law schools proposed since 2007

University of California, Irvine (ABA accredited)	
Concordia University (Seeking ABA accreditation)	▶
Lincoln Memorial University (ABA accredited)	
St. John Fisher College, Rochester, N.Y.	
State University of New York at Binghamton	
State University of New York at Stony Brook	
Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, Penn.	
University of New Haven	
Husson University	
Belmont University College of Law (ABA accredited)	▶
University of Delaware, Newark	
The Judge Paul Pressler School of Law, Shreveport, La.	
University of North Texas Dallas College of Law (Will seek ABA accreditation)	
Indiana Tech Law School (Will seek ABA accreditation)	



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## Thomas Jefferson sells building to solidify finances

Thomas Jefferson School of Law will not be the first law school to keel over.

The stand-alone law school has struggled with enrollment, bar passage and employment rates and a suffocating debt that it had incurred by building a state-of-

the-art facility in downtown San Diego.

That led some observers to speculate that Thomas Jefferson would be the first law school to close its doors in more than 30 years.

But the school announced in November that it had worked out a new deal with its creditors. As part of that deal, it sold its three-year-old building to its creditors and



secured a lease to remain in the structure.

"The restructuring is a major step toward achieving our goals," said Thomas Guernsey, dean of Thomas Jefferson. "It puts the school

on a solid financial footing."

Guernsey said the bondholders, who now own the building, and the law school intend for a long-term relationship.

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## Albany Law hopes to affiliate with University of Albany

Albany Law School, the nation's oldest stand-alone law school, hopes to affiliate with University of Albany, ending more than 150 years of independence.

The law school and university agreed to begin negotiations in September, and the law school approved continued discussions in November, with the hope that an agreement could be finalized in early 2015.

If both schools approve an agreement it could be in place by the 2015-16 school year. But no one is sure whether it will be a loose affiliation or a merger.

"It's not a done deal," said Robert Jones, president of University of Albany, at a university senate meeting in late September. "[But] there are more compelling reasons, from my perspective, to do this than not."

The law school's governing board heard two possible options at its November meeting — remain an independent law school or affiliate with University of Albany, but keep separate its finance and governance structure.

Penelope Andrews, who had been president and dean of Albany Law School since 2012, stepped down as dean soon after the merger announcement. She will focus on strategic initiatives until her term expires in June.



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## Around the nation

■ **UC DAVIS SCHOOL OF LAW** expanded its partnership with China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing. The schools recently signed new agreements of cooperation, as China seeks to modernize and adapt its legal system to an increasingly international economy, and American attorneys seek opportunities to learn about China and its evolving legal system. The agreement supports joint research, conferences and exchanges on administrative law. It will also bring CUPL students to the LL.M. program at UC Davis.

■ **SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL** announced the single largest gift to establish a scholarship in the school's history. The new scholarship will provide financial assistance for outstanding students with a demonstrated interest in business, finance and entrepreneurship. The Lauren B. Leichtman and Arthur E.

Levine Family Foundation Scholarship Endowment Fund was started with a \$1 million pledge. In addition to receiving financial

support, the students selected for this award will be assigned a mentor at Levine Leichtman Capital Partners and may be offered an internship opportunity with the company.

■ **CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW** announced that the ABA will not consider its application for accreditation until June. That means the school's third-year law students will not be eligible to sit for the bar exam this summer. This is the law school's first graduating class, and the school, based in Boise, Idaho, had hoped to secure ABA approval by now. Idaho requires examinees to have graduated from an ABA approved law school. However, the ABA delayed its decision on accreditation in August and appointed a fact-finder to visit the school. The ABA recently announced it has not had time to collect information and will not review accreditation again until June, which will be too late for third-years to apply for the bar exam. There are approximately 25 students on pace to graduate. About 20 of their classmates have already transferred to other schools, taken the year off, or switched to part time. The remaining students will likely switch to part-time status or transfer.

■ **UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS SCHOOL OF LAW - MINNEAPOLIS** launched a new scholarship program designed to get new lawyers into practice in rural America. The Access to Justice Scholars Program is a \$75,000 scholarship program for individuals who have an interest in and commitment to pursuing legal practice in a small-town or rural setting. Through the program, UST School of Law will work with the Minnesota State Bar Association to match Access to Justice scholars with a mentor experienced in small-town or rural practice.

■ **UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LAW SCHOOL** announced that a \$3 million gift will endow a faculty post and will be awarded on an annual and competitive basis as a way to recognize productive research in a variety of areas. It will provide salary plus associated research costs. It will enable the recipient to work full-time on research and scholarship for that semester.



PHOTO BY ANDY MANIS



■ **NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW** opened the doors to its new Health Advocacy Clinic, a medical-legal partnership between Northern Illinois University College of Law; Aunt Martha's Health Center, a health care and social service agency; and Hesed House, the second largest shelter for homeless individuals in the state of Illinois. Students will interview and counsel clients, draft legal documents, advocate at public aid offices and represent clients at formal hearings.



■ **WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW** announced it would freeze tuition through 2017-18. “We are committed to providing a high quality legal education at an affordable cost,” said Dean Eric Gouvin. “Toward that end, the School of Law will hold tuition at current levels through 2017-18. With the support of alumni and other donors through scholarships, we can help keep the dream of a legal education attainable.”



■ **BOSTON UNIVERSITY** will offer an accelerated three-year J.D./MBA in Law and Management, which will allow students to attain both degrees in the same amount of time as a J.D. degree. This dual degree will cost less than if the two degrees were pursued separately, because it can be completed in seven semesters instead of 10. The program will start in Fall 2015. Students will take a mix of law and management courses. The program is designed to free students from course work during the summer following their second year, when law students traditionally complete internships in law firms and other legal settings.

■ **WILLIAM & MARY LAW SCHOOL** announced the largest one-time gift in the school's history to support construction of a major building. The building will be named after the benefactors — The James A. and Robin L. Hixon Center for Experiential Learning and Leadership. The two-story, 12,000-square-foot building is projected to cost approximately \$7 million. It will house the school's nine clinics and include offices for managing attorneys to meet individually with students enrolled in the clinics, client interview rooms, and a multipurpose conference room/clinical classroom. The building will open before the fall 2016 term.



■ **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF LAW** broke ground on a 187,500-square-foot building that will be adjacent to the state's Supreme Court and Statehouse. The new building structure will be three-story rectangular building made of limestone and brick. The interior will include 20 classrooms, two dedicated courtrooms and two flexible courtrooms. A 300-seat ceremonial courtroom will serve as an auditorium and large classroom. Students will have access to a bookstore, eatery, student services offices and 20 group-study rooms.



■ **GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW** was named national champion for its win at the 2014 William W. Daniel National Invitational Mock Trial Competition. The criminal mock jury trial competition featured 18 schools. It was Georgia State's 12th national championship in the past 20 years.



Meet Wayne Law students David Navarre, left, Cecil Roberson, Ana Victoria Campos and others at [law.wayne.edu/meet](http://law.wayne.edu/meet).

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# Elon's bold move

It wants to make law school cheaper, faster and better. Grads will get out six months earlier and complete a residency. **BY MIKE STETZ**

Like many schools, Elon University School of Law has seen its enrollment and average LSAT and GPA scores drop the past few years. Its employment rate has been even worse. Elon's full-time, long-term JD-required employment rate dropped from 55.6 percent in 2011 to 32.8 percent in 2013, the single-largest drop among law schools.

And like most schools, the Greensboro, N.C., school believes the solution to these challenges is in more practical training.

But the eight-year-old school is taking a much bolder approach than most.

It wants to get students out of school quicker and cheaper and to better prepare them for their legal careers, and it is making dramatic changes to reach that goal.

The school is moving from the traditional six-semester model by creating a seven-trimester one, allowing students to graduate in December of their third year instead of May.

This will make them eligible to take the February bar exam, helping graduates to get into the job market before the pool of new lawyers expands after the July exam is held.

"Considering the gap that exists between traditional law schools and the skill sets demanded in modern legal practice, this is not a time for incremental change in legal education," said Dean Luke Bierman, when the changes were announced.

The changes are not just focused on graduating students sooner. Elon wants graduates to be as prepared as possible. The school has created a curriculum that will offer "a highly sequenced, logical progression of learning," Bierman said.

"We don't want to waste a minute while we have them," he said.

The new curriculum will focus heavily on experiential learning and include



**FACE OF CHANGE:** Luke Bierman introduced dramatic changes to Elon University School of Law's curriculum only six months after taking over as dean.

a faculty-directed residency program that all students will be required to take during their second trimester. The student will work a full-time legal job as well as take a course related to that practice area.

Further experiential training will be incorporated into the curriculum so that it will amount to 20 percent of the program.

Elon officials believe the emphasis on practical training will make students more employable, helping to improve the school's current rate.

These changes are necessary to deal with the shifting dynamics in the law profession, Bierman noted. Summer work at law firms is not as plentiful as in the past. Since that kind of key training is waning, schools need to step up and offer alternatives to provide students with practical training. The residency program is such an example, he said.

That program and other experiential

offerings will strengthen the ties the school has with the legal community and help graduates with employment opportunities, Bierman said. Bierman knows something about what he is talking about. Before taking over as dean in June, he was associate dean for experiential education at Northeastern University School of Law, one of the top schools in the country for practical training.

The plan does have critics. Attorney Steven J. Harper, on his blog, *The Belly of the Beast*, notes how the school plans to increase class size during the coming years in part to make up for revenue that's being lost in the tuition adjustment.

"Imagine the consequences if every law school that currently places fewer than one-third of its graduates in full-time long-term JD-required jobs were to increase enrollment by 20 to 30 percent. For the profession, that would be like accelerating



in reverse gear toward a brick wall.”

However, in an email response, Harper did note that the school’s “practical training, residencies, and student development are good ideas.”

“I think that Dean Bierman is making good faith improvement efforts at a time that is challenging for Elon and many similarly situated law schools. Whether he will succeed remains to be seen.”

Bierman is confident the school has found a better method.

The changes also call for students to get considerable personal assistance. Each will have a four-person professional advising team: a faculty adviser, a working attorney mentor, an executive coach and a career consultant.



The changes will also make legal education less expensive. The new model, which begins with the Fall 2015 class, will be \$14,000 cheaper because it’s shorter. While other schools offer two-year models, most merely cram three years’ worth of credit into two, Bierman said.

Elon Law will have to change the academic calendar in order to make the new curriculum work, he noted, but not to the extent of law schools offering two-year

programs. Summer breaks will be shorter, but the school will be flexible if a student wants to take part in a study abroad program on some other type of legal work that may go beyond the scheduled time off, he said.

Samuel Estreicher, a law professor at New York University School of Law, said Elon’s move to reduce the time

frame — as well as tuition — “is a step in the right direction.”

He’s a proponent of allowing law students to take the bar after two years of law school and having the third year be optional. In addition to making law school more affordable, it would pressure law schools to make the third year more focused on practical training and more attractive to students, he argues.

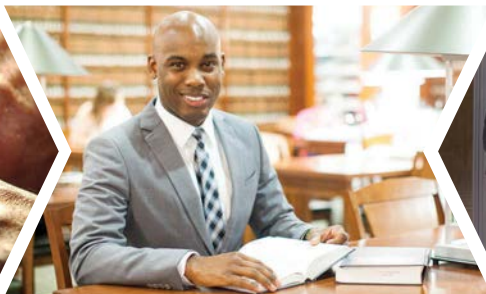
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DOWNTOWN FORT WORTH

# Is law school getting affordable?

Debt is dropping at some schools, but the jury is still out as to why

BY JACK CRITTENDEN

Law school tuition has been on an unrelenting journey upward, but the crash in law school applications may be affecting graduate debt loads for the better.

While law school net tuition was flat for the Class of 2013, experts believe that subsequent classes could see drops because some law schools have lowered tuition and offered more lucrative scholarships to students.

The National Jurist crunched numbers from the American Bar Association to get insight on debt trends. Large debt is one of the biggest problems facing new law graduates. Net tuition is a good barometer because it is the average tuition rate minus grants and scholarships and is adjusted for inflation as well.

Brian Tamanaha, a law professor at Washington University School of Law and author of the book “Failing Law Schools,”

said law schools are competing more than ever to guard their LSAT and GPA profiles. That means many have expanded the use of scholarships — even to

less-than-stellar students.

“Schools are offering scholarships deeper into the class,” he said. “Before [the

Law schools increased grants and scholarships significantly in the years leading up to the application drop as a way to attract better students. In 2009-2010, schools discounted tuition by an average of \$5,616 per student. That number increased to \$6,085 in 2010-2011, \$7,048 in 2011-2012 and \$7,764 in 2012-2013. Comparing that with tuition data and adjusting for inflation, net tuition was flat from 2009-2010 to 2012-2013.

Experts say the amount of discounting increased even more the last two years, but that data is not yet available. If true, the net tuition, adjusted for inflation, could drop during the next three years.

The average debt for a law school graduate increased from \$107,371 for the Class of 2012 to \$109,142 for the Class of 2013, according to U.S. News & World Report, which collects debt information from law schools.

But 49 law schools have already reported lower debt numbers. The John Marshall Law School in Chicago reported the largest drop from 2012 to 2013, shrinking from \$142,587 to \$121,700. In 2011, it

## Schools where debt has dropped the most

Law school	Debt 2012	Debt 2013	
The John Marshall	\$142,587	\$121,700	\$-20,887
Pace University	\$120,315	\$100,439	\$-19,876
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	\$64,207	\$52,205	\$-12,002
University of Illinois	\$95,830	\$84,665	\$-11,165
Baylor University	\$99,852	\$89,252	\$-10,600
California Western School of Law	\$167,867	\$157,748	\$-10,119
Vanderbilt University	\$124,493	\$114,411	\$-10,082
Capital University	\$120,471	\$110,603	\$-9,868
Quinnipiac University	\$111,952	\$102,135	\$-9,817
Michigan State University	\$114,438	\$105,184	\$-9,254
University of Cincinnati	\$84,140	\$75,656	\$-8,484
Washington University	\$117,964	\$109,978	\$-7,986
University of Maryland	\$122,349	\$114,909	\$-7,440
St. John's University	\$119,203	\$112,117	\$-7,086
Elon University	\$115,289	\$108,290	\$-6,999
Syracuse University	\$138,073	\$131,185	\$-6,888
Duke University	\$131,092	\$124,549	\$-6,543
William Mitchell College of Law	\$116,575	\$110,177	\$-6,398
Texas A&M	\$107,571	\$101,544	\$-6,027
North Carolina Central University	\$87,671	\$81,944	\$-5,727

drop in applications] you had to be above the median to get a scholarship.”

Tamanaha predicted that law student debt loads will drop by 2016, if not sooner.



Brian Tamanaha



reported a debt of \$165,178, meaning it has dropped 26 percent in two years.

School officials said the drop is partly related to a financial literacy program that has helped students be financially responsible.

"Along with scholarship amounts increasing, the Financial Aid Office implemented a mandatory financial literacy 90-minute session to our entering students," said Yara Santana, director of financial aid at The John Marshall Law School. "The effect of the sessions had students emailing our offices, visiting our offices and calling my staff asking them to reduce their loan disbursements or to return a portion or the entire refund amount to the Department of Education."

Pace University School of Law dropped its debt from \$139,007 in 2011 to \$100,439 in 2013, the second-largest drop during the two-year span.

Twenty-nine of the 49 law schools that reported lower debt loads were private schools.

Tuition did not drop at any of the schools during the time period, however. It's unclear whether the drops in debt are related to increased scholarships or other

factors, such as better financial literacy. "It's tough to tell whether it is just statistic noise or something more meaningful," said Kyle McEntee, executive director of Law School Transparency, which tracks law school data. "It could be that law schools were targeting people with greater means, and so they had to borrow

less."

McEntee also said averages can be misleading.

"You could have more people paying full freight [on tuition] and other people paying a lot less," he said.

Tamanaha said many schools will not be able to maintain the current level of scholarships.

"At some point the schools won't be able to afford to give scholarships deeper into the class, and finances will normalize," he said. "As schools run out of money, offers will settle down to levels we saw before this [enrollment] collapse hit us."

Lower debt loads helped six private schools make The National Jurist's Best Value law school ranking this year, an unprecedented number. Normally, only one or two make the list.

The Best Value rankings assess tuition, debt, and cost of living, percent employed and bar passage rates. Fourteen of the

top 20 Best Value Private Law Schools reported lower debts for the Class of 2013 compared to the prior year's class.

Comparing only schools that submitted debt information in all three years, private law schools increased debt from an average of \$115,283 in 2011, to \$121,744 in 2012, to \$124,578 in 2013.



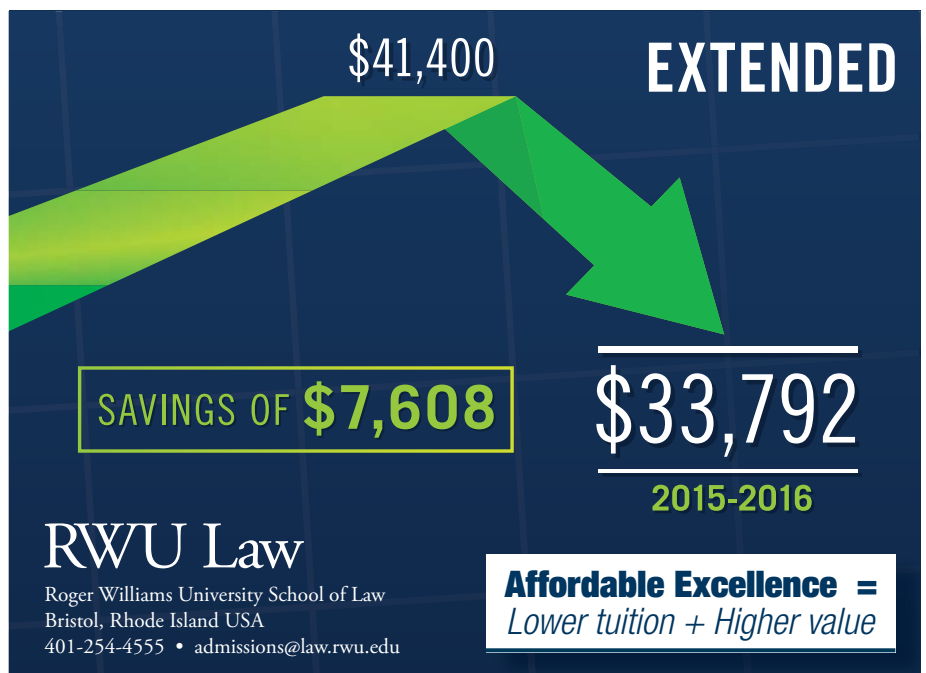
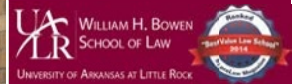
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# THE MOST INNOVATIVE CLINICS

Law schools have launched creative clinics to prepare students for the competitive job market. Here are the clinics that are doing something different to make students practice-ready.

BY LAIRA MARTIN

**E**xperiential training is the buzzword of the moment in legal education, and law schools are scrambling to ramp up practical offerings in order to prepare students to hit the ground running upon graduation.

“One of the biggest complaints from law firms, corporations or any employer is that recent law grads are simply not practice ready,” said James Berles, a professor at **Indiana Tech Law School**. “The goal is to make students understand how the process works and what is expected of a newly minted attorney.”

Berles said clinics are the best way to deliver on that goal.

While law schools have long offered clinics, the breadth of clinics has grown in recent years. In the process, law schools have been more innovative in what clinics address.

“Innovation can take a lot of forms, [such as] providing clinical services in an area of law that hasn’t been addressed,” said David Morrison, a professor who has

served as director of the Indie Film Clinic at **Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University** since its inception in 2011. “Entertainment law is one of those areas. We’re trying to meet policy goals connected to interests outside of the typical clinical model.”

To identify the most innovative clinics,

preLaw magazine invited law schools to nominate clinics unique in subject matter, structure or communities served. We received nominations from 76 law schools and narrowed them down to 25. They are grouped by their missions: low-income, veterans, justice system, health and others.





## LOW-INCOME

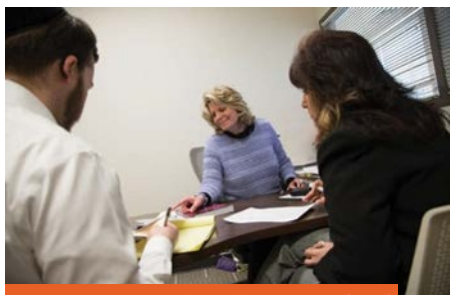
**1. Marquette University Law School,** Mobile Legal Clinic creates access for low-income clients who lack transportation. The clinic on wheels, donated by alumni attorneys from Quarles & Brady LLP, connects with local Milwaukee institutions such as churches and shelters to provide general legal advice on issues related to family law, landlord/tenant law and personal injury.



Marquette University Law School

“Students get a chance to work alongside people whose daily lives consist of IP or tax law,” said Angela Schultz, assistant dean for pro bono and public service at Marquette University Law School. “They’re seeing how these lawyers tackle questions, do on-the-spot legal research and effectively communicate with clients.”

**2. Wayne State University Law School’s** Legal Advocacy for People With Cancer Clinic isn’t the only cancer clinic in the country, but its focus on low-income patients made it stand out as innovative. The law school partners with Karmanos Cancer Center to help onsite with legal matters related to insurance, housing, employment, public benefits and long-term life planning. In two years of operation, participants have advised or represented 172 individuals and conducted legal education workshops for more than 600 people.



Wayne State University Law School

“This is a great opportunity to assist someone in writing a will, in securing benefits or in just gaining a better understanding of his or her rights,” said Kathryn Smolinski, clinic director.



University of Memphis

**3. The University of Memphis – Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law’s,** Housing Adjudication Clinic offers students a unique standpoint — that of an administrative hearing officer. Students do fieldwork involving research, investigation and drafting written opinion rulings on administrative appeals filed in the Memphis Housing Authority’s Housing Choice Voucher Program, which provides housing for low-income people. Students present workshops and training sessions for Section 8 participants. The clinic exposes students to the complex administrative regulations and procedures while helping them develop client rapport.

**4. The University of Akron School of Law’s** Reentry Clinic is four clinics in one. Approximately 100 students a year are trained in four legal areas: human trafficking, expungement, clemency and acquiring a certificate of qualification for employment. The clinic, which is held monthly at a church, works to assist low-income clients with misdemeanor or felony convictions, which is one in every six Ohioans, while preparing students for public sector careers. Students work to combat the hurdles faced by those with criminal convictions, which often prevent clients from working, supporting families and contributing in society.

### HONORABLE MENTION:

**Villanova University School of Law’s** Farmworker Legal Aid Clinic provides legal representation to agricultural workers

in areas of employment, immigration and child protection.

## JUSTICE SYSTEM

**5. University of California, Berkeley, School of Law** students in the Death Penalty Clinic represent clients at all stages: trial, appeal and post-conviction proceedings, in five states. In 2013, two years’ worth of investigation by clinical participants was crucial in the sentencing of a Texas man who was found guilty of murdering a sheriff. His legal team was able to negotiate a life sentence. Though the majority of the law school’s graduates work in private firms, 60 percent of the clinic’s alumni were inspired to seek public interest positions.



University of California, Berkeley

“The experience of working on a complex, cutting-edge Public Records Act request on behalf of a death sentence client reaffirmed why I came to Berkeley Law,” 2014 graduate Paul Meyer said. “Winning a favorable, published opinion also shows the direct importance of clinics in the world. The client’s victory, while very small in the grand scheme of things, is really a testament to the impact clinics can have in shaping the law.”

**6. The Incarcerated Parents Advocacy Clinic at Seattle University School of Law** connects moms and dads in prison with their children, with a focus on domestic violence survivors and parents with a history of substance abuse.

“This is a critical area of social justice, and it serves a real need,” said Professor Lisa Brodoff. “We’ll be representing people who are sometimes scorned by society and deemed not worthy of representation. These kids and parents have a right to each

other, and they deserve to have those rights protected.”

#### HONORABLE MENTION:

Students in **Quinnipiac University School of Law's** Juvenile Sentencing Clinic respond to recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions and provide a second look at long prison sentences imposed on children ages 14 to 17, who can be automatically tried as adults in Connecticut depending on the crime.

Students in the Federal Commutations

Clinic at **University of St. Thomas School of Law - Minneapolis** petition the President of the United States for a pardon or a commutation for clients on the federal level, a relatively underdeveloped area of law, especially within the private sector.

**7.** A clinical course is required of every student at the **University of California Irvine School of Law**, and those with interest in international law often turn to the International Justice Clinic for practical experience.

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Students support United Nations Special Rapporteur David Kaye, who is also the clinic's director. They work on the protection of First Amendment rights for journalists, artists, academics and the legally undeveloped area of blogging. Exploring topics of hate speech, surveillance of free expression and human rights law, students develop and implement advocacy strategies.

“We developed the International Justice Clinic in order to provide students with hands-on experience working on accountability for serious human rights abuses,” Kaye said. “Students get a chance to work with human rights defenders around the world, officials at the United Nations, activists at international and grassroots non-governmental organizations and even government representatives.”

Students such as Skyler Gray, a 2014 graduate, get to see their work come to fruition firsthand.

“I worked on a project exploring civilian protection and civilian participation during the Northern Ireland conflict from the late 1960s to late 1990s,” Gray said. “My classmates and I had the opportunity to research this topic firsthand by traveling to Belfast to conduct interviews with individuals about their personal experiences living amidst the struggle.”

#### HONORABLE MENTION:

The Ninth Circuit Appellate Project gives **Boston College Law School** students the opportunity to argue immigration cases on the other side of the country in the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

## VETERANS

**8.** Nine law schools nominated veterans clinics, many of which help veterans navigate the complex bureaucratic nature of the Veteran's Administration. But it was **Duquesne University School of Law's** Veterans Clinic that stood out because of



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its focus on assisting veterans with criminal offenses. Students receive “hearing voices training” to help them understand the challenges of psychiatric disabilities. The American Bar Association House of Delegates recently passed Resolution 104A encouraging law schools to create veteran-focused clinics, leading to an influx in clinics of this kind.

#### HONORABLE MENTION:

The Veterans Law Clinic at **Widener University School of Law**, Delaware Campus has recovered more than \$6 million for clients since the clinic started 17 years ago.

## HEALTH

**9.** **Washington and Lee University School of Law’s** Black Lung Legal Clinic represents physically disabled coal miners and their survivors pursuing federal black lung benefits — with a success rate five times the national average. Student attorneys form relationships with clients

from start to finish through retaining clients, collecting medical evidence and representing clients at hearings. A clinic participant’s research on representing miners was used for John Grisham’s newest book, “Gray Mountain.”

#### HONORABLE MENTION:

The Health Law Partnership Clinic at **Georgia State University** brings law students and medical students together to address the socioeconomic detriments of health care issues.

## OTHERS

**10.** Samantha Schonfeld represented the New York Health Department in 40 cases in 10 weeks when she was a law student, and that was only a third of her time in **New York Law School’s** Clinical Year.

“It was a topic of conversation at every one of my job interviews,” said Schonfeld, who has since returned to work as a gradu-

ate fellow at the health department after graduating in 2014.

The clinic is a full-time job. Students work 40 hours a week and typically take one evening course. It draws on the strengths of the medical school model to give students a segmented, year-long program.

“We saw an opportunity to give students a diverse experience with roles in the public sector, non-profit or general legal services,” said Anthony W. Crowell, dean of New York Law School. “These are three very different kinds of legal work and audiences. It really gave them a sense of what it would be like to be a functioning attorney.”

Third-year students earn 24 credits to spend the year in three nine-week clinical rotations, each focused on distinct kinds of lawyering, including community and government work. Each rotation is preceded by one week of intensive preparation with related seminars.

**11.** The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund recently **Cardozo School of**



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Cardozo School of Law

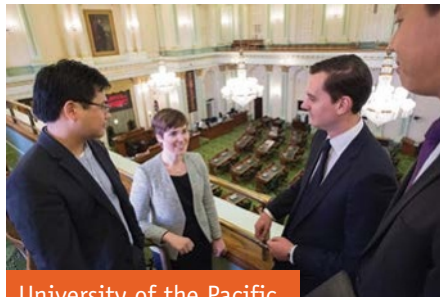
**Law's** Indie Film Clinic to help Morrison expand enrollment, increase client services and initiate panel discussions.

"We're supporting a part of the cultural economy of New York that we consider to be crucial," Morrison said. "The kinds of clients we work with are not necessarily what people may typically think of as the ordinary clinic client population."

Students are addressing topics that are typical to clinics, such as immigration, through entertainment or what Morrison calls a "key part of the character of the city." Last year, students drafted fair use

letters and license agreements for the documentary "Evaporating Borders," which examines the refugee situation on the island of Cyprus. This is one of 50 films served by the clinic.

**12.** The students in the Legislative and Public Policy Clinic at **University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law** have not yet added "esquire" to the end of their email signatures, but California Gov. Jerry Brown has already signed four of their bills.



University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law

Students seeking public sector careers get to advocate for change in state proceedings and interact with elected and appointed officials, lobbyists and media members. It's the only California clinic of its kind, and the law school is located just minutes from the state Capitol.

**13.** The 18 students in the inaugural group at **Georgetown University Law Center's** Social Enterprise & Nonprofit Law Clinic have donated 5,477 hours of their time toward establishing nonprofit organizations and helping social entrepreneurs earn benefit corporation status, an undeveloped area of law and clinical education. The clinic is one year old, yet students incorporated the first benefit corporation to form in Washington, D.C., and drafted the company's first set of legal documents. A benefit corporation is a for-profit company that exists to benefit the public.

"In my previous legal experiences, I had mostly conducted work on a

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The Human Trafficking Clinic at **Boston University School of Law** is one of two clinics nationwide that focus solely on human trafficking, an issue that affects as many as 27 million people worldwide.

**Pennsylvania State University, Penn State Law's** Rural Economic Development Clinic provides students with the skills needed to become lawyers while encouraging sustainable rural economic development.

**The University of Mississippi School of Law** Pro Bono Initiative is an annual series of day-long "mini-clinics." About 100 law students participate to help 500 clients in areas such as family law, expungement and LGBT rights.

piecemeal basis for supervising attorneys," said Casey O'Brien, who graduated in 2014. "[Here], we were accountable for ensuring that we met our clients' goals and our own goals, and we were ultimately able to foster our own professional relationships with our clients."

**14.** The Animal Law Clinic at **Lewis & Clark Law School** is the only year-long clinic devoted to the protection of animals, a clinical focus taught at very few schools. Students have the chance to gain practical knowledge in animal protection litigation, legislation, policy work and transactional work. Students also conduct fieldwork to better understand the problems facing animals.

**15.** **Indiana Tech Law School**, established in September 2013, has only one clinic: the Law Clerk Clinic. It combines experiential training with an underserved area of law, as many judges can't budget for a clerk. Students draft orders and bench memorandums in state and federal jurisdictions.

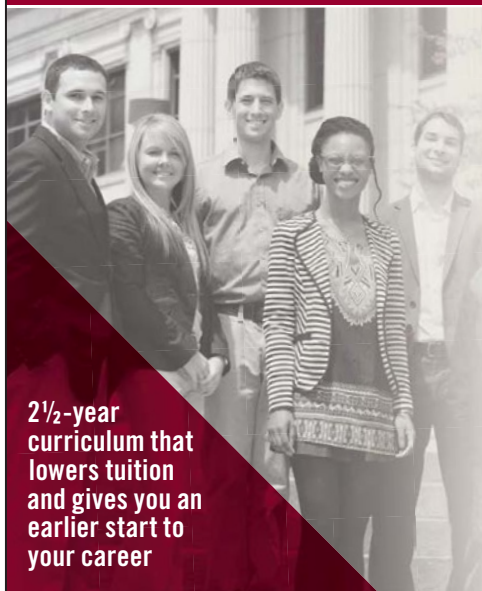
"We train them to be excellent writers, but if they don't understand how their work fits into the entire litigation process, then they're missing out on something crucial," said Professor James Berles.

Berles, who was a law clerk for 11 years, said students are currently assisting with Indiana state legislative research and preparing proposed litigation to improve efficiency and cut costs for Indiana's adoption process.

#### HONORABLE MENTION:

**University of Miami's** Children & Youth Law Clinic is one of the few clinics that focuses on young adults in the foster care

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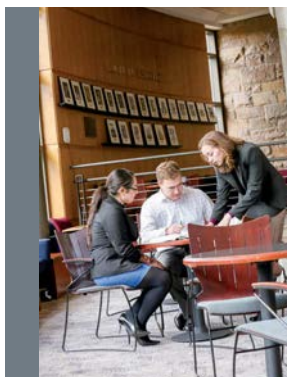
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# Law school gets murdered

A new TV show about law school is getting a failing grade for accuracy

BY MIKE STETZ

There's a new hit TV show about law school called "How to Get Away with Murder." However, some say the most egregious murder being committed is the weekly butchering of the depiction of law school.

Students do all kinds of ethically questionable things, such as having sex to get key information and spying on trial witnesses from a bathroom stall. They also drink, ditch classes and rarely seem to crack open a law book.

Well, yes, they all should make excellent attorneys ...

Their professor, a high-profile criminal defense attorney, recruits these students, considered her best, to help with cases. The plot twists are many. The professor is cheating with a (buff) police detective. Her husband, meanwhile, has cheated on her with a (hot) undergrad. First, the undergrad is murdered. Then the profes-

sor's husband is murdered. Some of the law students — remember, her best — end up burning his body in the woods.

Yep. Typical law school.

And the reviews by people who know law and film?

"Liberties are taken with just about everything," said Robert Jarvis, co-editor of a book on legal-related TV shows, "Prime Time Law." "Indeed, the show is so outlandish, convoluted and, at times, just plain silly, that it's really hard to point out just one or two things that are inaccurate."

"I watched only the initial episode of this show," said Paul Bergman, co-author of the book "Reel Justice," which focuses on movies about the law profession. "Perhaps I didn't give it a fair chance, because that first show was probably the pilot episode, but I found it so unwatchable that I have not watched it since."

Tough verdicts, no question.

Part of the problem seems to be the concept itself. The law professors say it's out there in left field. The main character, Annalise (Analyze?) Keating, teaches first-year law students criminal justice at a fictional Philadelphia law school, and both Jarvis and Bergman say it's unlikely that first years would be recruited to work actual cases. They have enough on their plates.

That sort of thing also happened in the movie "Legally Blonde." But at least it "had the decency to be a comedy," said Bergman, a law professor emeritus at UCLA School of Law.

"The premise simply makes no sense: No tenured law professor would be allowed to run the sort of law firm that Keating is running," agreed Jarvis, a professor of law at Nova Southeastern University — Shepard Broad Law Center.

However, he did add: "It's not accurate at all. But, of course, it's television, so it's



not supposed to be accurate. Instead, it's supposed to be entertaining and keep viewers tuning in, and it's definitely doing both those things."

True. The ABC show is doing very well in the ratings, particularly among the coveted 18 to 49 demographic. When it premiered Sept. 25, it set a record for the most DVR recordings — 6 million.

So what's the secret to its popularity? Well, there is a lot of sex. And — this is a shock — all the characters are way hot.

The show is also considered bold because an African-American actress, Viola Davis, plays the law professor and lead character. It's rare in American TV for a black actress to have such a commanding role and a complex character.

And, arguably, there's a little bit of Professor Charles Kingsfield in her. He's the iconic, fictional Harvard Law School professor in "The Paper Chase" movie and TV show — considered by many to be one of the more accurate portrayals of law school. Keating, like Kingsfield, is formidable. She snaps at her students, who are clearly intimidated by her. She bristles when they don't know answers. However, she wears very tight dresses, not bow ties.

One reviewer called the show, "The Paper Chase on steroids."

Adding to the show's appeal is the suspense. Not only is there one new mystery per episode, there are several running mysteries that are revisited in each show, and clues — through fast-forwarded scenes — are shown. Who killed the professor's husband? Why did the students whisk the body away in a rolled-up rug? Many of these plot points have been resolved, but we don't want to play spoiler.

Shonda Rhimes is the executive producer and is best known for being the force behind the hit show, "Grey's Anatomy," a medical drama. Now she's going all law and disorder on us.

She's hardly the first. Law has always been fodder for TV, movies and books, and many of the depictions have been anything but accurate — except for the film "The Trial of the Incredible Hulk," which is universally considered a classic.

We joke, we joke ...

Even well-received productions have their flaws. Many distort how courts and

# Best legal TV shows

## Grab a law book and some popcorn

"How to Get Away With Murder" joins a crowded courtroom. TV loves lawyers — good ones, dark ones, serious ones, funny ones ... We asked legal and film experts to give quick reviews of the best offerings over the years. We rank them in order:

### 1. **L.A. Law** (1986-1994)

"L.A. Law" broke away from the tired primetime lawyer series that always featured a white, male solo practitioner doing criminal defense work for innocent clients, and instead portrayed a lively firm with significant degrees of diversity. —*David Papke*

### 2. **Law & Order** (1990-2010)

While "L.A. Law" built upon critique and character, subterfuge and comedy, "Law & Order" played it straight and linear. Meticulous and well-researched plots. The structure of the program itself was a profound innovation. The core characters were compelling, and the details of the courtroom procedure nicely presented. —*Philip Meyer*



### 3. **The Defenders** (1961-1965)

This is probably the finest legal drama of all time, but sadly unavailable on DVD and rarely shown on cable. Each show tackled an important social problem from a legal point of view, and many were far ahead of their time.

—*Michael Asimow*

### 4. **Damages** (2007)

"Damages" is a thriller about big-ticket litigation in New York, and Glenn Close's portrayal of Patty Hewes is superb. —*David Papke*



### 5. **Suits** (2011 to present)

Suits clearly gets the nod as the best of the (new legal) shows. —*Bob Jarvis*

### 6. **JAG** (1995-2005)

Dispelled the myth that lawyers aren't macho. —*Bob Jarvis*

### 7. **Perry Mason** (1957-1966)

When you call someone a "Perry Mason" even years after the show left the airwaves, everyone still knows exactly what you mean. —*Bob Jarvis*

### 8. **Murder One** (1995-1997)

"Murder One" gave a deep analysis of a single case, and in the process provided a critique of specific aspects of our criminal justice system. It was innovative, and often riveting and heartfelt. —*Philip Meyer*

### 9. **Night Court** (1984-1992)

"Night Court" was society in microcosm. All sorts of crazy characters come out at night, and they end up looking for law and love in a courtroom presided over by a lawyer/magician. It can't get better than that.

—*Christine Corcos*

### 10. **Paper Chase** (1978-1986)

For better or worse, it gave law schools and professors their public persona. —*Bob Jarvis*

### 11. **Judging Amy** (1999-2005)

It was nice to see a television version of juvenile court and a fully developed judicial character, one with a complicated family and human flaw of her own. —*David Papke*

### 12. **Boston Legal** (2004-2008)

Transforms a premise somewhat akin to "Ally McBeal" and spins it cleverly into a law program for another generation. Students also find "Boston Legal" wonderfully entertaining. —*Philip Meyer*

### 13. **Benched** (2014 to present)

(Of the new legal shows) "Bench" could turn out to be a sleeper hit. —*Bob Jarvis*

#### 14. Law & Order: Criminal Intent

(2001-2011)



The series is interesting as a study of the human psyche, and both the perpetrators and the detectives give the viewer lots to think about. However, the legal themes are

wimpy.

—David Papke

#### 15. Judd for the Defense (1967-1969)

The show provides a reasonable and pretty accu-

rate portrayal of legal controversies of its era.

—Taunya Banks

#### 16. The Practice (1997-2004)

A great portrait of a bottom-feeding law firm that would take most any case to meet the payroll. Did a great job of portraying the personal life of the lawyers, which was often as unsuccessful as the lawyers were successful in court.

—Michael Asimow

#### 17. The Good Wife (2009-Present)

The Good Wife herself takes and wins her share



of cases, but what makes the show especially engaging is her complicated relationship with her ex and her constant battles to overcome the pain and mortification it caused her. —David Papke

#### 18. Matlock (1986-1995)

“Matlock” portrays straightforward depictions of the criminal justice system with reputable lawyers. —Taunya Banks

#### 19. Made in New Jersey (2012)

A number of shows that were cancelled after just one season never got the time to develop, and might have become good if given more of a chance to find their footing. This is especially true of Made in Jersey. —Bob Jarvis



#### 20. Shark (2006-2008)

Very well acted picture of how an unethical prosecutor functions. There's a lot to hate about the Shark, but the stories were always well written and acted. —Michael Asimow



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#### THE JUDGES:

\*The judges below also contributed to the book “Lawyers in Your Living Room: Law on Television,” published by the American Bar Association.

**Bob Jarvis**, professor of law at Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center, and the co-editor of “Prime Time Law: Fictional Television as Legal Narrative.”

**David Papke**, professor of law at Marquette University Law School, where he teaches a range of courses and seminars relating to law and the humanities.

**Taunya Banks**, Jacob A. France Professor of Equality Jurisprudence at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, where she teaches and writes about law and popular culture.

**Michael Asimow** professor of law emeritus at UCLA School of Law and the editor of “Lawyers in Your Living Room: Law on Television.”

**Christine Corcos**, Richard C. Cadwallader Associate Professor of Law at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, where she teaches media law, entertainment law, advanced torts, and gender and the law.

**Philip Meyer**, professor of law at Vermont Law School, where he teaches torts, criminal law, and law and popular culture.





**Shouldn't they be studying and not figuring out what to do with a dead body? Just saying.**

wash. For every viewer who comes away thinking, 'Hey, law school is cool, maybe I should apply,' there's another viewer who is going to be turned off by the show's depiction of law school. So, I doubt very much that law schools are going to see an applications bounce from the show."

Oh well, back to the drawing board.

lawyers really work and ignore how tedious the process can be. In the movie "The Verdict," the hard-drinking lawyer played by Paul Newman doesn't tell his client there's been a settlement offer. (Her sister is comatose, and Newman is convinced the doctors messed up.) According to "Reel Justice," a lawyer is supposed to tell a client about a settlement offer. That's misconduct.

However, Bergman argues that streamlining the legal process and giving writers some dramatic license is necessary to keep the suspense flowing.

"Legal thrillers, crimes and courts are a natural setting for drama," Bergman said. "Writers can keep the forms that add authenticity (robed judges, juries, question-and-answer dialogs, legal jargon), and disregard unnecessary distractions that get in the way of drama, like foundational evidence and evidence rules."

But he says there must be some level of accuracy.

"Every law-related movie and TV show has to take liberties with legal rules and processes; I have no trouble with that," he said. "But quality control still matters and I didn't see it in that first episode (of 'How to Get Away With Murder')."

Still, the show is getting eyeballs. And we all know about the problems with legal education and dropping enrollment. Could this show help turn things around?

It's happened before.

A 1989 story in The Los Angeles Times said a single law firm was the reason for law school attendance to skyrocket at the time. That was McKenzie, Brackman, Chaney & Kuzak — the fictional firm in the hit TV show, "L.A. Law."

(And how quaint: Tuition at UCLA at the time was \$832.25 per semester.)

Jarvis has his doubts: "At best, it's a



## SUNY Buffalo Law School

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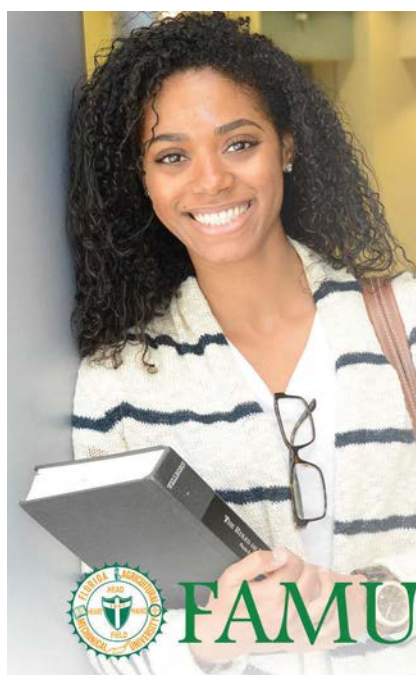
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# Where the jobs are

Law schools in Nebraska, Oklahoma and Kansas offer friendly confines and the best combined employment rate in the nation **BY MIKE STETZ**

When it comes to jobs, few think about the states of Nebraska, Oklahoma and Kansas as employment meccas. In fact, the region's biggest city is Oklahoma City, the nation's 29th largest.

But the school's are small and employment opportunities are plentiful throughout the small cities of the Great Plains. That helped the plains rank No. 1 out of 24 regions when it comes to percent of law school graduates employed.

The seven schools averaged 78.6 percent employment for the class of 2013, based on a weighted employment rate. The figure has improved in each of the last two years, and the region has only one school below the national median.

The Great Plains offers more than good employment prospects. The law schools are affordable and offer excellent value, led by University of Nebraska College of Law, which finished second in the 2014 ranking of preLaw magazine's Best Value Law

Schools.

Several of the schools have strong and renowned energy and Native American law programs, given where they are based.

Just because many of these schools are affordable and not located on the coasts doesn't mean they are no-frills or offer little legal education opportunities outside the classroom. They highlight experiential training in a number of progressive and intensive forms.

## Nebraska

### UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF LAW

**LSAT:** 155-161

**GPA:** 3.31-3.83

**Enrollment:** 389

University of Nebraska is top school in the region when it comes to entering credentials



and rankings. Its median GPA is 3.63 and median LSAT is 158. It supports that with a strong bar passage rate, employment rate and one of the best law school buildings in the U.S.

It's bar passage rate is 88 percent, compared to the state's average of 84 percent. Its employment rate was 81.8 percent, also best in the region. Those figures, combined with the lowest tuition and debt in the region, helped it rank No. 2 in preLaw's list of the



Best Value law schools.

The school also finished 14th in preLaw's ranking of law schools with the Best Facilities.

"Nebraska Law offers a wide variety of courses, clinics, and externships and is home to the only Space, Cyber and Telecommunications program in the country where students can be on the forefront of emerging areas of the law," said Dean Susan Poser.

The school's curriculum has recently been updated to include, among other things, a required class in International Law in the first year, she said. Also new is a program to focus students on their professional and career development. A new Entrepreneurship Clinic is another new offering.

"Students have the option to specialize in an area of the law through our programs of concentrated study," Poser said. "The faculty publish and present widely and pride themselves on the quality of their teaching and the welcoming community at the school."

The school is also based in Lincoln, the state capital, which offers much opportunity for students to work in the legislature, state agencies and courts.

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## CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

**LSAT:** 150-156  
**GPA:** 2.92-3.52  
**Enrollment:** 395

Go to Creighton University School of Law and the only significant pressure you will likely face is, well, law school.

The school is based in Omaha, Neb., which is safe, has little traffic and offers ample, affordable housing near campus, said Dean Marianne Culhane. She calls it, "a lovely city." The school is also located downtown, where there are "lots of courts and law offices," offering opportunity to broaden students' academic pursuits, she added.

Come here and you can also find three ways to get through law school, she said. Creighton University offers a two-year accelerated program, a part-time one and a traditional three-year version. As many as 10 percent of the students take the two-year route, allowing them to begin practicing law sooner. The trick is you start earlier — in May, instead of the fall — and take classes in summer.



Creighton also has, according to preLaw magazine, one of the Top 20 Most Unique Joint-Degree Programs. That would be Government, Organization and Leadership (JD/MS). As part of that, students go to Washington, D.C., for a full semester and are immersed in challenging legal work.

The private Jesuit school was also lauded by preLaw for being one of the Most Devout Law Schools, coming in 2nd for schools for Mormon students. The school's strong commitment to acceptance of students of all faiths was a factor.

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## Oklahoma

### UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF LAW

**LSAT:** 155-159  
**GPA:** 3.24 - 3.73  
**Enrollment:** 462

When the leaders of the University of Oklahoma College of Law were confronted with the troubling trends in legal education, they decided to see the glass as half-full. The challenges presented a "huge opportunity" for the school to be creative and on the forefront of legal education reforms, said Dean Joseph Harroz.

Based in Norman — "a quintessential college town," as Harroz describes it — the school has pushed forward with new, innovative courses and strengthened its recruit-



ment efforts, he said.

The school also remains affordable and doesn't load students with huge debt. It received an A-minus in the most recent preLaw ranking of Best Value Law Schools. It also received an A-minus for preLaw's ranking of Best Facilities.

Harroz said he likes to look at the medical school model when it comes to educating law students. That means more hands-on, real-life training. For instance, one course focuses on the legal and business aspects of how to drill a well. It goes from the very start — acquiring the land — and includes the handling of thorny issues such as the regulatory process, the creation of pipelines, the use of underground storage, etc.

Energy companies have complained they can't find lawyers who know such intricacies, he said.

Lastly, the school focuses on putting students in the real world, to connect with real people.

"To be a great lawyer, you have to understand the human condition," he said.

For instance, the school has an International Human Rights Clinic, where students study the condition of native people in developing countries, he said. Students are also strongly encouraged to participate in pro bono work.

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## OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

**LSAT:** 145-153  
**GPA:** 2.83 - 3.52  
**Enrollment:** 489

Oklahoma City University School of Law has embarked on a new era. It's moved to a new location downtown, in the historic and architecturally praised former Central High School.

Yes, it adds a serious dash of class. But, more importantly, it puts the school in the heart of the city, the state capital.

"Our home in downtown Oklahoma City is a prime location for building the leaders of tomorrow by offering our students of today ready access to the experiences that will make them marketable and employable," said Dean Valerie K. Couch. "We are a capitol city law school and no one else in the state can offer our proximity to the middle of the action."

The landmark building is within walking distance to downtown law firms, energy



Oklahoma City University School of Law

companies, the county and federal courthouses, government agencies and other key players in the business world, school officials note. The location is ideal for blending law with government, business and civic engagement.

The change in venue will help with the school's emphasis on practical experience, officials say. Full-time faculty and working practitioners teach skills integration classes, which demonstrate the pragmatic application of the law for first-year students. Clinical opportunities, including the only Innocence Clinic in the state, provide a window into the world of legal practice, and the law school's more than 80 externship placement sites give students a real-world, hands-on experience before graduation.

The school already reports the second highest employment rate in the region at 81.2 percent. It also offers the only part-

time program in the region.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA COLLEGE OF LAW

**LSAT:** 152-158

**GPA:** 3.08- 3.74

**Enrollment:** 287

The University of Tulsa College of Law has the smallest enrollment of all the region's law schools. So if you prize personal attention, here you'll find it. The faculty-to-student ratio is 10.54 to 1, the second lowest in the region.

It's also finished No. 3 on the 2014 pre-Law list of Best Value Private Law Schools, and received a B+ in the overall ranking. That is thanks, in part, to an overall debt that is dropping.

The school's most significant innovation is the Access to Legal Education Scholarship

(ALES) program, she noted. Funded by alumni donations and the University, the ALES program awards an \$18,000 annual scholarship to all first-year students who are residents of or who have graduated from a degree-granting institution from a 12-state region.

"With this scholarship, we are granting more students access to an exceptional and highly personalized legal education for less than the cost of attending other private and most public law schools in the region," said Dean Janet K. Levit

The school also has a strong employment rate at 78.4 percent

"TU Law continues to make enormous strides in its experiential learning curriculum, clinical offerings, faculty resources, and job placement," Levit said. "These initiatives compliment longstanding, renowned programs in Energy Law and Native American Law. Our law student faculty ratio creates a family-like, nurturing atmosphere that is optimal for learning and performance."

## Kansas

### THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS SCHOOL OF LAW

**LSAT:** 153 -159

**GPA:** 3.10 - 3.69

**Enrollment:** 370

Go small.

That was the strategy devised by the leadership at the University of Kansas School of Law when legal education went south. The school didn't want standards to go south with it or place more students into a weakened job market.

So it began downsizing class sizes, dropping from 175 a few years ago to around 120 students in the 2013 class.

"We view this as an opportunity to right-size the law school," Dean Stephen Mazza told the Kansas City Business Journal in 2013. "If and when applications do turn around, it's also an opportunity for KU to be more selective."

And the results? The school is thrilled with them. For one thing, the school jumped 18 spots in the recent U.S. News & World Report rankings to No. 68.

"Four years ago, KU Law the made the decision to reduce the size of our incoming classes to reflect the realities of a challenging legal market," Mazza said. "The smaller classes are now beginning to graduate, and our employment outcomes have improved considerably. In addition, a lower student-



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faculty ratio ensures that students get even more face time with professors whose hallmark has always been accessibility.”

The University of Kansas is also a bargain. It ranked 18th in preLaw’s 2014 ranking of Best Value Law Schools. The average debt is below \$80,000. The school is based in Lawrence, a happening college town.

The school has placed much emphasis on helping students get jobs — and not just in the courthouse down the street. (Even though those jobs are more than welcome, too.)

“Our Career Services Office is second to none at getting to know our students and their passions and then carefully matching them with employers in the region and across the country,” Mazza said. “Our innovative, new Traveling ‘On-Campus’ Interview Program takes students to interview in some of the most dynamic legal markets in the nation, with all travel costs covered by the law school.”

## WASHBURN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

**LSAT:** 149 – 155

**GPA:** 2.97 – 3.62

**Enrollment:** 339

Many law schools boast of their practical training additions, but Washburn University School of Law has a long commitment of providing it, school leaders say. Topeka, its location, is the state capital and full of legal opportunities for students.

“Practical training is nothing new to

Washburn Law,” said Dean Thomas J. Romig. “Preparing students to practice law upon graduation is something we have been doing for 100-plus years. Our Law Clinic has eight clinical practice areas and students enrolled in the clinic have been serving clients for more than 40 years. Our newest clinic recently started serving United States veterans.”

PreLaw magazines ranked it the highest in the region for practical training, giving it an A-minus.

School professors get to know students personally and make themselves readily accessible by encouraging students to stop by and ask questions, school officials say. Its faculty-to-student ratio is the lowest in the region, at 9.64 to 1.

“At Washburn Law, we believe a high-quality legal education is possible only when our law students are at the center of all law school endeavors and decisions. The great success of our graduates is a testament to the tremendous quality and practicality of the education they receive while students here at Washburn Law,” Romig said.

The school’s in-state tuition price of \$19,204 per year has been expanded to include residents of Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. Students from other states can apply for resident tuition after living in Kansas for six months.

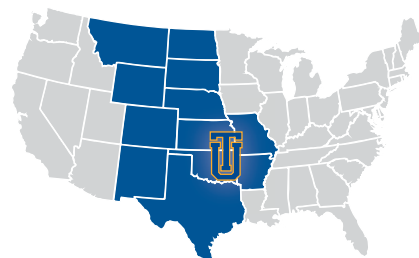
The school also prides itself on its scholarship offerings. Each year, it distributes on average \$2.2 million in scholarships to more than half the entering students. Overall, more than 40 percent of Washburn University students receive scholarships.

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### #3 Best Value Private Law School

*PreLaw Magazine, 2014*

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The New York Giants and Pittsburgh Steelers warm up on the field before their game at Heinz Field

# Huddle up

The law schools in Western Pennsylvania and Upper New York offer variety, value, tradition and blocking sleds **BY MIKE STETZ**

Grab your law books and playbook if you go to Western Pennsylvania or Upper New York for law school. This is football country. Old school, tradition-rich football. Think Steelers, Bills, Panthers, Nittany Lions and the Orange. (The what?)

Don't know Jim Brown? The Immaculate Reception? Wide right? Well, you better bone up because football knowledge accounts for one-third of your grades at these law schools. It's more important than torts.

Yes, of course, we embellish. This region is much more than about football. The schools are based both in metropolitan areas — such as a rejuvenated and sparkling Pittsburgh — and college towns such as aptly named State College, Pa. Others are based in thriving legal communities, giving students a wide array of experiential learning opportunities.

However, it's not far off the mark to say the schools do reflect gridiron values. They boast of hands-on faculty, of fostering teamwork and graduating students ready to hit the field — the legal field, that is — running.

Choices are ample, so let's kick-off.

## Upper New York

### CORNELL LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 165-167

GPA: 3.52-3.73

Enrollment: 604

Cornell is the top ranked law school in the region, finishing 13th in the latest U.S. News & World Report rankings. It rocks the house when it comes to bar passage — 92 percent of test-takers pass the New York bar on the first try compared to the state average of 81 percent. Nearly 90 percent of its 2013



graduates were employed in long-term, full-time legal jobs, much higher than all other schools in the region.

Cornell also fared well in the recent ranking of preLaw magazine's Most Diverse law schools, receiving an A-minus. It recently hired one of the only Hispanic law deans in the country— Eduardo Penalver.

When it comes to class size, it ranks No. 2 in the region, with a 10.32 to 1 teacher-to-student ratio.

So, yes, it can boast of some pretty heady accomplishments. However, you get what you pay for. The school is the most expensive in the region, with yearly tuition of \$57,351. It is also the most difficult to get into, as it competes with other top school across the country for students.

The law school is part of Ithaca-based Cornell University, which produced a certain football player named Glen Warner. Yes, "Pop" Warner. History here does abound, as the law school was founded in 1887.

On the school website, Dean Penalver describes the school this way: "Cornell Law School offers an intimate, collegial, and diverse environment in which students grow through their interactions with one another

DANIEL M. SILVA/SHUTTERSTOCK



and with our dedicated and interdisciplinary faculty. After their time at Cornell, they leave able to think about the law systematically and prepared to practice at the highest levels of the profession.”

## ALBANY LAW SCHOOL

**LSAT:** 150-156

**GPA:** 3.13-3.59

**Enrollment:** 585

Founded in 1851, Albany Law School is the oldest independent law school in the nation. Located in the capital of New York, the Empire State, it's only 90 miles from the Big Apple. And the Jets and the Giants ...

That means the school offers many opportunities for students to broaden their legal education beyond the campus. Albany is home to New York's many courts and, of course, the state legislature, which the school notes is “a laboratory for the study of law.”

“There are more opportunities for hands-on learning than we have students,” said Penelope Andrews, who will step down in June as president and dean. “The assembly, the senate, the federal court, the state's highest court, and a vibrant private sector all provide internships, summer positions and full-time employment.”

As the only law school within 90 miles of the capital, students have more than 120 internships to choose from in any area of the law, including an opportunity to immerse themselves in judicial, governmental and public interest offices for an intense semester-long placement experience. In 2014, Albany ranked 10th in preLaw's ranking of Best Public Interest law schools. It also has the third highest employment rate in the region, with 72.8 percent of grads landing jobs within nine months of graduation.

## SUNY BUFFALO LAW SCHOOL

**LSAT:** 150-158

**GPA:** 3.21-3.66

**Enrollment:** 610

SUNY Buffalo Law is New York State's only public law school, with a mission to develop students from all walks of life into skilled, practice-ready attorneys.

And it does so with an emphasis on affordability. It received an A-minus in the

2014 listing of preLaw magazine's Best Value Law Schools. Students graduate with one of the lowest average debt loads in the nation — \$73,346. Because they are not saddled with debt, they can seek a legal job that suits their passions, the school says.

Students also qualify for lower in-state tuition rates after a year's residence. In-state tuition is less than \$24,000 a year, the least expensive of any school in this region.

Experiential learning is another key focus. The school notched a B-plus in the first-ever ranking of Best Schools for Practical Training done last year by preLaw magazine.

A newly established Advocacy Institute is designed to maximize students' legal skills. A long-established and growing program of legal clinics also gives students the chance to serve real-life clients and provides legal services to the Western New York community. And students who opt for SUNY Buffalo's New York City Program in Finance and Law spend a semester in the world's financial capital.

Buffalo's location near the U.S. border with Canada also leads to opportunities to study international law in action.

Plus, the much-improved Buffalo Bills play nearby. Rookie Sammy Watkins is someone to watch out for. We won't mention the Super Bowls. The four of them. (They lost all four).

## SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

**LSAT:** 152-156

**GPA:** 3.06-3.45

**Enrollment:** 609

Dineen Hall, the new home of Syracuse University College of Law, is a symbol that something different is going on at this law school, says Dean Hannah Arterian.

“We needed a whole new kind of place to reflect the fact that it's a whole new day, a whole new game in legal education,” she said.

Syracuse Law School combines a rigor-

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ous legal education with the development of what Arterian calls a “professional identity” for law students.

“We tried to think of all the details that would matter to a developing attorney, such as big lockers where they could hang professional clothing, and building in all kinds of opportunities where students could get integrated with each other and start building networks,” she said.

Syracuse University has also devoted significant academic resources to the belief a legal education has never been more



important, and that law degrees offer opportunities beyond traditional legal practice, Arterian said.

The law school boasts interdisciplin-

ary programs such as the Institute for National Security and Counter Terrorism and the Technology Law Commercialization Program and dual degree opportunities with other highly ranked master’s programs within Syracuse University.

The college has nine law clinics and extensive externship placement opportunities. That commitment earned it a B in preLaw magazine’s ranking of Best Schools for Practical Training.

And football? Jim Brown, Larry Csonka, Art Monk and John Mackey all went to the law school’s affiliated university. That’s an A roster.

## Western Pennsylvania

### PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY, DICKINSON LAW

**LSAT:** 154-160

**GPA:** 3.28-3.78

**Enrollment:** 75

Founded in 1834, Penn State’s Dickinson School of Law is the oldest law school in Pennsylvania, and the fifth oldest in the country. Yet it is still evolving.

Since 2006, Penn State’s Dickinson School of Law has operated as a unified law school on two campuses. The American Bar Association recently approved Penn State’s proposal to operate its two campuses as two separate schools: Penn State Law in University Park and Dickinson Law in Carlisle. The two schools will admit separate first-year classes starting in fall 2015.

With a fresh start, comes change. From day one through graduation, students will pair experiential learning with foundational understanding of national and transnational law, putting their training to use in real-world situations. Interim Dean Gary Gildin believes this curriculum will distinguish Dickinson Law:



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"The first year of law school has been essentially the same for more than 150 years. With our new curriculum we plan to change that model, offering a fresh, cutting-edge alternative for career-minded students," he said.

Because of this approach, Penn State's Dickinson Law chose to limit entering first-year classes to 75 students to ensure individual instruction and provide hands-on training to each student.

Dickinson Law also offers opportunities for in-house clinics, as well as internships and semesters-in-practice thanks to its close proximity to key legal markets, including Harrisburg, PA, Washington, DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York.

## PENN STATE LAW AT UNIVERSITY PARK

**LSAT:** 154-160

**GPA:** 3.28-3.78

**Enrollment:** N/A

As noted in the Dickinson Law profile, Penn State Law at University Park will soon be a law school unto itself.

The Penn State campus — with its many academic and research offerings — makes the law school all that more attractive, administrators say.

"With our location on Penn State's University Park campus, Penn State Law students get the best of both worlds — the personal attention of a close-knit, student-centered law school, plus the vast resources of a major public research institution, including all of the educational, cultural, recreational, and social opportunities that accompany the Penn State experience," said Interim Dean James Houck.

The school is the second-most difficult to get into in the region, with a median LSAT score at 158. It also has the best student-to-faculty ratio at 9.3-to-1. Finally, it boasts the second highest bar pass rate at 90.67 percent.

"There is a trend in legal education right now to focus curricula on getting students 'practice ready,' but, at Penn State Law, we are really focused on helping our students gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed not only in their first job, but over their entire career," he said. "In the classroom, in our clinics and externships, in student organizations, and in everyday interactions with our faculty, we are centered on

equipping our students with an education that they will draw on for years and years after they graduate."

And if you don't know Penn State football, well ... You don't know football.

## WIDENER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, HARRISBURG

**LSAT:** 145-151

**GPA:** 2.92-3.45

**Enrollment:** 286

Widener University School of Law, Harrisburg campus was founded 25 years ago and is the only law school in the Pennsylvania capital. The school offers a full-time day division and a part-time evening division, which is popular with working professionals.

The Law & Government Institute is the school's signature program, and it is dedicated to exploring law that defines the structure and operation of government, and to the relationship between individuals and government.

The school places an emphasis on experiential learning — an approach that leads to practice-ready graduates. The Harrisburg Civil Clinic, in operation since 1991, provides opportunities for students to advocate for indigent clients in family law, administrative law and bankruptcy cases.

The school also provides multiple outlets for students to support pro bono attorneys



**Widener University School of Law**

with non-credit hands-on assistance that pays in experience. Programs like Wills For Heroes and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts expose them to client relations, and a myriad of small business, intellectual property and estate planning legal needs.

Interim Dean Robyn Meadows said Widener Law's Harrisburg campus is a place where students learn in a collegial and supportive atmosphere.

"Civic engagement is part of the culture at our school," Meadows said. "Students learn very early that giving back to the community is not only a core principle at Widener, but it can provide a wealth of learning opportunities in addition to the satisfaction of making a difference."

## DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

**LSAT:** 150 — 155

**GPA:** 3.21 — 3.64

**Enrollment:** 484

Duquesne University School of Law began as a night school in 1911, and that history is

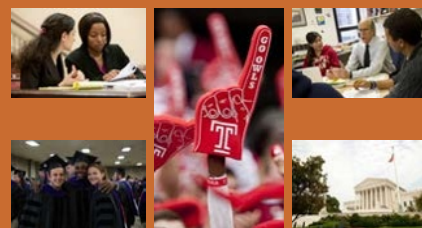
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- Distinguished faculty of teacher-scholars who embody the law school's philosophical diversity
- Focus on experiential learning
- DC Law & Public Policy Program



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still carried on today. The evening program runs alongside the day program, giving students a chance to work and go to school. Duquesne University strategically honors the three rules of real estate: Location, location, location — the school's easy proximity to downtown Pittsburgh makes it a cinch for students to become immersed in the legal hub of the city. It also opened a clinic in a nearby neighborhood.

"We are in uptown trying to serve the underserved right in our community, and two blocks away is the courthouse — you can't get any better than this," said Dean Ken Gormley.

What else close by, you ask? Why Heinz Field, home to the Steelers, is just two miles away. And the Steelers have the most Super Bowl wins — six — of any NFL team.

A small, intimate setting and a fierce loyalty among students and alumni is another salient feature of the school. The trial moot court team was a national semi-finalist, reflecting Duquesne's response

to turning out practice-ready attorneys. The legal writing program is consistently ranked in the top in the U.S., Gormley said.

"We pride ourselves on having more judges than most law schools in the state, and legislators and public service of all kinds," he said. "We produce prominent public servants."

The school also earned a B+ in preLaw magazine's Best Value ranking, placing it sixth among private law schools in the nation.

## UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 154 — 161

GPA: 3.16 — 3.61

Enrollment: 593

University of Pittsburgh is located in a safe and vibrant neighborhood with easy connectivity to the heart of the Pittsburgh legal community. The school also takes

advantage of its university research programs, said Dean William Carter.

"There is no question that our health law program distinguishes us from every other school in the region based on its depth and breadth," he said.

Seven permanent clinics prepare students for real-life, while the Innovation Practice Institute is a first-of-its-kind collaboration with local business and legal leaders that intersects law, technology and entrepreneurship. It offers more clinic positions than any other school in the region.

Students have a unique opportunity to work on Jurist, a magazine allowing students to "...do intensive writing on quite complicated legal topics that are delivered to a nonacademic audience. We have a huge international readership," Carter said.

It also received a B+ in preLaw magazine's Best Value ranking.

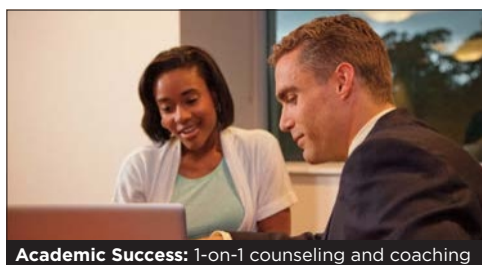
Pitt has also won nine football national titles, the most in the East. Dan Marino, Tony Dorsett and Larry Fitzgerald are all grads. So is "Iron" Mike Ditka. Da Bears!



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CUNY School of Law ranks 6th in the nation in diversity.

# Most Diverse Law Schools

Texas Southern University tops our ranking of law schools that best match the nation's mix for racial diversity. But while most schools are still far below the national averages, the numbers are improving. Here's why.

BY MIKE STETZ

Texas Southern University - Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston enrolls a class that is as diverse as you will find. While African-Americans still make up the largest percent of the student body at the historically black college, more than 30 percent of the student body is Hispanic. The school is also home to white (14 per-

cent) and Asian students (5.8 percent). When a student runs into a classmate, there is a 64.9 percent chance that the other student will be a different race.

Ironically, Texas Southern was created to be anything but diverse.

It was founded as Texas State University for Negroes in 1946, in an effort to thwart

a lawsuit filed by a black postal worker who wanted to go to the University of Texas School of Law. The new school was deemed "separate but equal."

"The irony is that the school was started as a byproduct to keep racial segregation going," said Dean Dannye Holley. "The courts later said, no, you can't do that."



“The irony is that the school was started as a byproduct to keep racial segregation going.”

—DEAN DANNYE HOLLEY,  
TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

## Best law schools for diversity

	Law school	Minority faculty Fall 2014	Hispanics	American Indian	Asian & Hawaiian	Black	2014 Grade	2012 grade
1	Texas Southern University	78.9%	31.1%	1.1%	5.8%	48.1%	A+	A+
2	University of the District of Columbia	46.8%	8.2%	0.0%	7.5%	38.1%	A+	A+
3	University of La Verne	33.3%	28.4%	0.7%	11.2%	6.0%	A+	A
4	Atlanta's John Marshall Law School	31.5%	4.8%	1.9%	9.6%	32.2%	A+	A
5	Florida A&M University	57.1%	13.4%	0.8%	2.9%	53.0%	A+	A+
6	CUNY School of Law	31.6%	19.4%	0.0%	13.4%	8.8%	A+	A+
7	Arizona Summit	31.6%	16.3%	1.3%	5.7%	14.5%	A+	A
8	North Carolina Central University	62.0%	4.8%	3.0%	1.8%	50.0%	A+	A
9	Barry University	19.4%	22.6%	1.6%	5.7%	15.5%	A+	B+
10	Florida International University	45.9%	47.0%	0.8%	2.0%	8.6%	A+	A+
11	Southwestern Law School	25.8%	22.7%	0.4%	11.9%	4.9%	A	A
12	Western State College of Law	21.3%	21.4%	1.4%	15.4%	6.7%	A	A
13	University of San Francisco	25.0%	18.3%	0.6%	15.8%	7.9%	A	A+
14	Rutgers—Newark Law	19.1%	12.2%	0.3%	13.4%	13.4%	A	A
15	Thomas Jefferson School of Law	13.8%	19.1%	2.0%	14.2%	8.7%	A	A-
16	UC Davis Law	39.7%	9.9%	0.0%	27.6%	1.7%	A	A-
17	Northeastern University	19.5%	14.5%	1.2%	10.1%	9.1%	A	A
18	University of Hawaii	48.2%	13.9%	0.0%	53.9%	0.6%	A	A+
19	NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center	21.2%	27.7%	0.2%	4.7%	10.1%	A	A
20	Southern University	65.7%	2.2%	0.9%	1.2%	58.2%	A	A
21	Stanford Law School	18.2%	13.8%	0.6%	13.6%	8.6%	A	A
22	University of New Mexico	29.2%	37.1%	9.5%	2.9%	1.3%	A	A
23	University of Maryland	15.8%	10.7%	0.3%	13.2%	11.6%	A	A-
24	American University	15.7%	14.3%	0.3%	12.4%	9.0%	A	A
25	California Western School of Law	14.6%	17.0%	2.9%	15.5%	2.9%	A	A-
26	Charlotte School of Law	21.4%	5.1%	2.6%	3.4%	29.7%	A	A
27	Howard University School of Law	80.4%	5.6%	1.3%	3.0%	86.9%	A	A-
28	South Texas College of Law	13.2%	17.3%	0.5%	9.9%	5.7%	A	A-



\* U.S. News and World Report 2015; \*\* Princeton Review, 2013

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Leading the charge was a young African-American attorney named Thurgood Marshall, the school's name-sake. Just four years after Texas Southern was founded, the Supreme Court forced the University of Texas to accept black students.

But Texas Southern survived and evolved. It still produces more black law graduates than any other school in the state. In fact, from 2007 to 2012, 43 percent of the newly licensed African-American attorneys in Texas were graduates, despite the school enrolling only 5 percent of the state's law students.

Texas Southern also has evolved to become an attractive school for Latino students, given the growth of the Hispanic population in the state. Holley also notes that students for all races find it attractive, given how society is becoming more diverse.

That breadth of diversity helped the school rank as the most diverse law school in the nation, according to a preLaw magazine ranking that rewards schools based on each race's comparison to the national average. It also factors in faculty diversity.

**Asians make up 5% or more of the student body at 86 law schools. The median for law schools is 5.2%.**



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Law school	A-	Minority faculty Fall 2014	Hispanics	American Indian	Asian & Hawaiian	Black	2014 Grade	2012 grade
Cornell Law School		14.4%	12.5%	2.3%	16.3%	7.7%	A-	A
Florida Coastal School of Law		9.1%	12.4%	1.7%	4.2%	22.3%	A-	B+
Georgia State University		21.6%	2.3%	1.3%	8.2%	11.9%	A-	B-
Golden Gate University		23.0%	12.1%	2.0%	22.1%	3.0%	A-	B+
Hofstra University		10.0%	8.8%	0.3%	8.8%	11.7%	A-	A
Loyola Law School, Los Angeles		15.9%	21.5%	0.2%	18.4%	3.6%	A-	B
New York Law School		13.9%	17.1%	0.1%	8.6%	8.3%	A-	C+
Northern Illinois University		25.6%	8.3%	1.0%	5.6%	6.3%	A-	A-
Seattle University		19.1%	9.7%	0.5%	14.1%	3.6%	A-	A
St. Mary's University		22.3%	33.5%	1.6%	3.1%	3.9%	A-	B+
St. Thomas University		29.3%	51.7%	0.8%	2.2%	9.8%	A-	A+
Temple University		16.4%	8.7%	0.3%	8.6%	8.5%	A-	A-
The John Marshall		11.8%	11.1%	0.7%	7.4%	10.5%	A-	B-
Touro Law Center		6.8%	14.8%	0.8%	7.6%	11.8%	A-	B-
UC - Irvine		24.6%	17.5%	0.0%	23.4%	4.1%	A-	
UC Berkeley School of Law		13.8%	15.8%	0.7%	16.9%	6.0%	A-	B+
University of Chicago		17.6%	10.0%	0.0%	10.9%	7.2%	A-	A-
University of Houston		13.2%	12.0%	1.2%	13.1%	6.6%	A-	B+
University of Illinois		15.4%	13.0%	0.0%	11.3%	10.0%	A-	A-
University of Miami		20.7%	26.5%	0.7%	3.2%	7.9%	A-	A-
University of Nevada, Las Vegas		12.7%	10.9%	1.8%	13.2%	6.4%	A-	B+
USC Gould School of Law		19.2%	12.9%	0.0%	21.2%	6.7%	A-	A-
Whittier Law School		14.7%	19.8%	1.2%	21.2%	5.8%	A-	B+

PreLaw's study was not designed to identify the best schools for blacks, Hispanics or any other single race. Neither was it designed to rank the schools with the most minorities. Instead, it seeks to identify the schools that do the best job of enrolling students of all races, thereby increasing the likelihood of different voices in the classroom.

Gilbert Holmes, dean of University of La Verne College of Law in Ontario, Calif. said diversity is vitally important because it enriches the law school experience. The nation is becoming more diverse, and students need to experience these changes.

"It provides for richer discussion," he said.

Anthony Varona, associate dean at the American University Washington College of Law, in a recent law review article explained how important diversity is to creating a well-rounded attorney in today's world.

"In legal education, diversity among students is indispensable. We train law students, after all, to be 'social architects' — to serve as ministers of justice among the nation's very diverse communities.

Western New England University School of Law has a long and proud history of collegiality and inclusiveness, celebrating the differing perspectives our students bring to the classroom. Our emphasis on practical learning includes many diversity programs, generous scholarship aid, and curriculum and experiential learning opportunities designed to help all students succeed.

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Unsurprisingly then, an awareness of and comfort with the diversity of races, ethnicities and backgrounds that make up our society—and that are dependent upon our legal system—help law students become better and more effective lawyers.”

To determine the most diverse law schools, we broke down each school into six categories — percentage of minority faculty; percentage of black students; percentage of Asian and Hawaiian students; percentage of Hispanic students; percentage of American Indian students; and percentage of Caucasian students.

We assigned each school a score from one to 10 for all categories, except for American Indians. We assigned each school a score from one to five for that category, given the much smaller number of students.

A school that matched the U.S. national average for any race received a seven (or 3.5 for American Indian), and a school that was 30 percent or greater than the national average received a 10 (or 5 for American Indian). We then weighted the student categories as 75 percent of the final diversity score and faculty at 25 percent.

The final outcome is a list of schools that have a breadth of races both in student bodies and faculties. Texas Southern University has a final score of 7.1, followed by University of the District of Columbia at 6.52 and University of La Verne at 6.35.



“[Diversity] should surpass all the other priorities.”

—DEAN LEROY PERNELL, FLORIDA A&M  
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We also looked at the probability that a student at each school would run into someone of a different race. These numbers are different from our ranking, as they do not include faculty and measure a different factor. Still, the numbers closely correlate with our diversity grades, and provide another unit of measurement for a school’s diversity achievement.

Texas Southern ranks second with 64.9 percent, and University of California – Hastings College of Law ranks first with 68.5 percent. That is, a UC Hastings law student has a 68.5 percent chance of running into someone of a different race. The

median law school’s diversity index is 38 percent. The national average is 62.6 percent.

### What the most diverse schools have in common

Schools making our list aren’t necessarily some of the top performing schools academically in the nation. Some struggle with poor bar passage and employment rates. A number were created to serve students who were unable to gain access to existing law schools.

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School, fourth on our list. It was the first law school in the South to integrate its student body and women have been represented in the student body since the school's first graduating class.

Take Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. It opened its doors in 1869 as a way to train lawyers who would help blacks secure and protect their newly established rights. Talk about humble beginnings: The first students — all six of them — didn't go to class. They were taught at the homes and offices of their teachers.

Florida A&M University College of Law, like Texas Southern University, was created by the state legislature after a black student tried to get into the law school at the University of Florida. When integration was realized, the school was shuttered. It opened again in 2002 with a mission to serve historically unrepresented communities.

Dean LeRoy Pernell takes that mission seriously. Some schools say diversity is important, but it's not the No.1 priority, he said.

"[Diversity] should surpass all the



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other priorities,” he said.

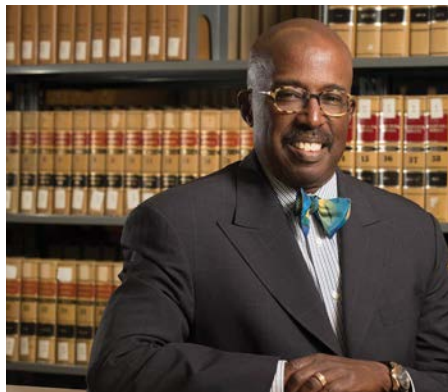
Why? Without experiencing diversity, a law student will be ill equipped for the real world, he said. And the world is changing quickly because of our nation’s growing diversity and what’s happening beyond our borders via globalization.

It’s no shock that corporations are embracing diversity, Pernell said. Their customers are growing more diverse. And they have markets throughout the world. His Orlando school is a melting pot, where students’ ideas, visions and backgrounds are varied. That provides incalculable benefit, he said.

“We provide a better legal education than those schools that don’t provide diversity,” Pernell said.

While Stanford Law School ranks at No. 21, none of the nation’s other prestigious law schools rank in the top 40 for diversity.

That should not be a shock, some say. Blacks and Hispanics do not score as well on the LSAT and most schools are reluctant to do something that will damage their ranking in U.S. News & World Report. Schools seeking to climb in rankings don’t take students with lower grades



“Schools, in general, are digging deeper into their application pools. And they’re finding more minority students.”

—DEAN GILBERT HOLMES, UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE



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and LSAT scores.

To this day, the diverse schools remain something of a haven for the underdog. And that should be rewarded, some argue.

“It is easy to see how schools that trade student diversity for higher numbers tend to move up in the U.S. News ranks,” wrote Varona, associate dean at the American University. “By contrast, schools that refuse to sacrifice diversity pay a big U.S. News price for pursuing what most educators agree is best for all our students. U.S. News actually rewards less diverse schools for admitting less diverse classes, and altogether ignores the clear learning advantages at the more diverse schools.”

### Why the number of black and Hispanic law students is up

But law schools, overall, are growing more diverse, at least when it comes to black and Hispanic students.

The drop in law school enrollment — caused by the souring job market for new law grads — has not been consistent among races. While the number of law students has fallen about 15 percent from

Law school	Minority faculty Fall 2014	Hispanics	American Indian	Asian & Hawaiian	Black	2014 Grade	2012 grade
<b>B+</b>							
Duke University	11.1%	6.6%	0.3%	14.5%	7.9%	B+	C-
Fordham Law School	15.6%	8.9%	0.0%	12.6%	4.5%	B+	B-
George Washington University	12.1%	6.1%	0.8%	13.9%	9.1%	B+	C+
Harvard Law School	13.6%	11.0%	0.4%	13.2%	11.1%	B+	A-
Lewis & Clark Law School	10.3%	10.6%	3.1%	9.5%	2.9%	B+	A-
Pacific McGeorge School of Law	13.6%	11.1%	2.3%	17.3%	2.1%	B+	B-
Pepperdine University	12.1%	11.4%	0.2%	11.2%	4.7%	B+	B
Santa Clara University	19.5%	13.7%	0.1%	24.9%	2.0%	B+	A-
Seton Hall University	15.3%	8.3%	0.4%	6.9%	5.7%	B+	C+
St. John's University	13.7%	11.7%	0.0%	10.1%	5.6%	B+	B+
Texas Tech University	18.6%	15.3%	1.2%	5.8%	2.4%	B+	B+
UCLA	16.6%	11.5%	1.0%	19.1%	3.4%	B+	A-
University of Arizona	12.6%	9.9%	3.6%	9.6%	2.4%	B+	A-
University of Florida	15.0%	12.6%	1.5%	4.8%	7.4%	B+	B-
University of Pennsylvania	14.1%	6.8%	0.3%	15.3%	8.0%	B+	A-
University of Texas	11.1%	17.7%	0.3%	6.8%	4.9%	B+	B+
University of Washington	15.7%	6.5%	2.2%	15.7%	4.1%	B+	B
Valparaiso University	6.5%	13.6%	0.8%	3.5%	17.5%	B+	B+
WMU-Cooley	12.2%	6.4%	0.5%	4.1%	19.7%	B+	A-

2011 to 2013, the number of minority law students did not match that decline, falling only 4.2 percent.

The number of black law students fell just 1.6 percent, and Hispanics held steady. A consistent number of these

minorities still apparently see law school as a viable option. And since applications continue to drop, they are getting into law school.

Earlier, when competition for law school seats was steeper, they might not

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have, particularly if they fared poorly or marginally on the LSAT, a test on which whites traditionally score better and one that schools put much emphasis on.

“Schools, in general, are digging deeper into their application pools,” said Holmes, dean of University of La Verne. “And they’re finding more minority students.”

Two years ago, his school finished 19th in our ranking of Most Diverse Law Schools. This year, it rose to No. 3. Hispanics made up 20 percent of the school’s student body in 2011. In 2013, it was 26 percent.

The number of law schools with a black population at or higher than the national average increased from 11 to 18 in the past two years. The number of law schools with a Hispanic population at or higher than the average increased from 14 to 18.

Asians went in the opposite direction — dropping 16 percent. The number of schools with an Asian population at or above the national average dropped from 107 to 86.

**Blacks** make up 13% or more of the student body at only 18 law schools. The median for law schools is 6.6%.



The number of law schools with 20 percent or more minority faculty increased from 28 to 31. And the number with 10 percent or more increased from 120 to 136.

The number of law professors fell by 7.4 percent, but minorities made up a greater percentage of the pie, growing from 13 percent to 14.3 percent. So law school faculty is becoming more diverse too.

University of La Verne saw a jump from 22.7 percent to 33 percent in its faculty diversity, for instance, helping it climb in the ranking.

## Why the right people are headed to law school

Experts who study LSAT scores had predicted a change in law school enrollment. The percentage of top scorers was going down in greater numbers than the percentage of poorer scorers. In short, the best students were shying away from the LSAT because they didn’t think a law degree had good value.

Jerry Organ, a professor at University of St. Thomas School of Law - Minneapolis, was one of those studying these trends. In a story for *The National Jurist* in February, he said he did not



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think the trend was worrisome, even though he believed the Class of 2013 to be the weakest of any class since 2002.

"In my view, the real quality of a lawyer has much or more to do with capa-

bilities and competencies not measured by the LSAT and [undergraduate GPA]," he said at the time. "Practical wisdom, a client-centered attitude, a fiduciary disposition, initiative and perseverance, integ-

rity and trustworthiness are not captured in this set of objective criteria."

He continued: "Even if we have fewer students with high LSATs and UGPs, we may have more students with those capabilities and competencies that will enhance the quality of the legal profession."

He likened the change to law schools becoming less "blue bloods" and more "blue collar," even if by slight margins.

Others, however, were troubled by the trend. The Atlantic magazine published an article in 2012 titled, "The Wrong People Have Stopped Applying to Law School." The author, an editor at the publication, was concerned that "many [poorer performing students] will likely be heading to J.D. mills that offer them a coin-flip's chance of getting a job after graduation."

Dean Holley of Texas Southern University is not surprised by the white flight of students from law schools today. They are more likely to have the perception that a law degree is no longer worth it, particularly when it comes to the financial reward.

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*“I decided to come to TMSL because, of the many schools I was accepted to, something about TMSL just felt right. In addition to its location in Texas, the affordable tuition was a major factor in my decision to attend TMSL. I did not intend to stay at TMSL beyond my first year, but because of the incredible professors, great intern/externship opportunities, and the historic significance of the founding of the school, I made the choice to stay. I am glad that I decided to attend TMSL.” — Gaven Norris, '14*

## 1. Our Vision

We are committed to Thurgood Marshall's legacy of excellence and equality for our diverse students.

## 2. Our Mission

Our Mission is to prepare our students for leadership roles in the legal profession, business, and government.

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## 8. Our Faculty

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learning conversations. Many faculty are highly engaged and productive scholars. The Faculty is dedicated to the pursuit of ensuring that each student has the opportunity to make meaningful progress in acquiring and employing the knowledge, skills, and values that provide the foundation for success in the legal profession.

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We also provide opportunities for students to participate in—Institutes, such as The Earl Carl Institute for Legal & Social Policy, and Clinics, which provide opportunities for experiencing an array of legal practices and focus on developing skills; Externship Placements for Credit; and Certificates of Specialization in Immigration and International Law, Sports and Entertainment Law, and Government Law.

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Many minority students, in general, go to his law school looking to work in the public sector, he said. They are aware that the jobs are generally lower paying, but they are attracted to that type of work.

Holmes, dean at University of La Verne, noted that he graduated from law

school in 1972, an era of much social upheaval when a growing number of lawyers entered the field hoping to make a difference rather than to make money.

In the 1990s, he noticed a shift among some minorities, and that was toward making money.

"I have no data to conclude that," he said. "I just think the expectations were raised."

Now, he senses the pendulum shifting back toward more public-service-oriented work.

"I think it's fairly even," he said.

Even the Atlantic magazine writer who was suspicious of the dropping LSAT scores noted the importance of public sector work and that students who do not rock the LSAT are needed: "Now, some of these students probably need to go to law school for the good of society. I mean that sincerely. A lot of them likely come from less affluent backgrounds and will likely be willing to work for small firms and government offices that provide services for people who cannot afford to hire Williams & Connolly every time they need legal help. These are your small town lawyers, your inner city lawyers."

Varona, professor at American University, said law school remains popular with students of color.

"We always will have a need for smart and culturally attuned lawyers in working class communities, communities of color, and in entire geographic areas of the nation that remain underserved by affordable, good lawyers," he said. "It's often the young members of these communities that perceive the need for accessible lawyers and opt for a career in law with the hopes of filling that need."

**Hispanics make up 16% or more of the student body at only 18 law schools. The median for law schools is 7.5%.**





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# How to choose a school for: TRIAL ADVOCACY

BY MIKE STETZ

The art of the duel — that's what Trial Advocacy teaches. It's one thing to know the law, it's another thing to bring it to life in a courtroom setting, framing arguments, challenging witnesses, convincing a jury.

For the first time, a student is taking knowledge gleaned from the classroom and putting it in action, said David Erickson, director of the Trial Advocacy Program at Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Institute of Technology, which boasts one of the top such programs in the nation.

"You're seeing why it actually means something," he said.

For some law students, this is what law is all about. Yes, some students are more scholarly oriented, but some want action.

"Most of what lawyers do is grinding work," Erickson said. "This is fun."

And some schools place a lot of emphasis on it. One of the best ways to determine this is to see which schools routinely com-



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pete in mock trial competitions, such as the National Trial Competition, he said. Chicago-Kent College of Law has won

three National Championships by teams under Erickson's guidance.

It's no small investment. It takes time to

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
Albany Law			✓	✓
American University		✓		✓
Baylor University	✓		✓	✓
Brooklyn Law School			✓	✓
California Western	✓		✓	✓
Campbell Law School				✓
Catholic University				✓
Chapman School of Law	✓			✓
Creighton University	✓		✓	✓
Drake University				✓
Duke University			✓	✓
Elon University				✓
Emory University		✓		✓
George Washington U.		✓	✓	✓
Georgia State University			✓	✓
Golden Gate University				✓
Hamline University			✓	✓
Louisiana State University				✓
Loyola, Los Angeles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Loyola Chicago	✓	✓		✓
Marquette University		✓	✓	✓
Mass. School of Law	✓		✓	✓
Mississippi College		✓		✓
New England Law		✓	✓	✓
New York Law School			✓	✓

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
New York University			✓	
Northeastern University			✓	✓
Ohio Northern University			✓	✓
Pacific McGeorge	✓	✓	✓	✓
Penn State Law	✓			✓
Penn State's Dickinson	✓			✓
Quinnipiac University			✓	✓
Regent University			✓	✓
Saint Louis University			✓	✓
Southern Illinois U.				✓
St. John's University		✓		✓
St. Thomas University			✓	✓
Stanford Law School			✓	✓
Stetson University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Suffolk University			✓	✓
Syracuse University				✓
Temple University	✓		✓	
Texas Tech University			✓	✓
UMKC School of Law			✓	✓
University of Akron			✓	✓
University of Alabama			✓	
U. of Arkansas, Little Rock				✓
University of Cincinnati		✓	✓	✓
University of Connecticut			✓	✓
University of Denver				✓

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
University of Houston		✓		✓
University of Iowa				✓
University of Maine			✓	✓
University of Memphis	✓		✓	✓
University of Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Mississippi			✓	✓
University of Montana			✓	✓
Univ. of New Hampshire			✓	✓
University of New Mexico				✓
University of Pittsburgh	✓			✓
University of Richmond			✓	✓
University of San Diego			✓	✓
Univ. of San Francisco				✓
University of Tennessee		✓	✓	✓
University of Utah			✓	✓
Valparaiso University			✓	✓
Washburn University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Washington and Lee U.			✓	✓
Washington University			✓	✓
Whittier Law School	✓	✓		✓
Widener Law, Delaware	✓	✓		✓
Widener Law, Harrisburg	✓		✓	✓
William and Mary				✓
William Mitchell			✓	✓
WMU-Cooley			✓	✓

coach and train students. Travel is involved. If schools are doing all of that, it shows they are committed to trial advocacy, he said.

Also, look for schools that are being innovative, he said. His school, for instance, has a litigation technology course, which teaches students how to “use our most modern gizmos to enhance legal arguments.” Simulations can be projected onto

a screen, for instance, giving juries a better understanding of the case. In 10 years, it will be the norm, he predicts.

Students also learn by doing, so look for schools that have strong relationships with state’s attorneys and public defenders’ offices, said Dean Harold Krent. Clinics are key too. Chicago-Kent College of Law has many, including a Clinical Defense

Litigation Clinic.

Also, look for a school that has a strong alumni volunteer base, he said. At his school, many alumni come to the school on weekends and weeknights to help train students in trial advocacy.

“It’s a very intense program,” he said. “They’ve been through it. They want to give back.”

## How to choose a school for: INTERNATIONAL LAW

Thanks to globalization, international law continues to grow in importance. Think of any large corporation. Likely, it is operating in just about every corner of the globe, so it needs to comply with the laws and regulations of a vast array of governments.

Broader — or public — international law refers to how nations interact, such as through treaties.

When considering international law, it’s important for a law student to look for a school that has a long history of having such a program, said Jaya Ramji-Nogales, co-director of the Institute for International Law and Public Policy at Temple University — James Beasley School of Law.

For instance, this year marks the school’s 20th anniversary of its Law Program in Japan, a study abroad program held at its Tokyo campus. Its Rome summer study abroad program, more than 30 years old, is one of the oldest in the nation. Not only does that mean the school has expertise in the field, it also has created a vast alumni network that can help students and new graduates get a start in the field, she said.

Just recently, Greenpeace contacted her, looking for a student to help with a project, Rami-Nogales noted. Those kinds of connections are vitally important for students.

The school’s location is also important. Look for schools where international agencies and international law firms are nearby. Getting a summer associate’s position can bring invaluable experience, she said.

Students should look at a school’s study abroad options, she added. A stu-

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
Albany Law				✓
American University		✓	✓	✓
Boston University				✓
Brooklyn Law School	✓	✓		✓
California Western	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cardozo School of Law			✓	✓
Case Western University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Catholic University	✓			✓
Cleveland-Marshall				✓
Creighton University	✓			✓
DePaul University	✓			✓
Duke University		✓	✓	✓
Emory University		✓	✓	✓
Florida A&M University	✓	✓		✓
Florida State University	✓		✓	
Fordham Law School		✓	✓	✓
George Washington U.			✓	✓
Georgetown University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Georgia State University				✓
Golden Gate University	✓	✓		✓
Hamline University	✓		✓	✓
Indiana Tech Law School				✓
IU McKinney	✓	✓		✓
Lewis & Clark Law School	✓		✓	✓
Loyola, Los Angeles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Loyola Chicago	✓			✓
Michigan State University				✓
New England Law		✓		✓
New York Law School		✓		✓
New York University		✓	✓	
Northeastern University				✓
Pace University	✓	✓		✓
Pacific McGeorge	✓	✓		✓
Penn State Law				✓
Penn State’s Dickinson				✓
Pepperdine University	✓			✓
Regent University		✓		✓
Santa Clara University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Seattle University			✓	✓
Southern Illinois University	✓			✓
St. John’s University		✓		✓
St. Mary’s University		✓	✓	✓

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
Stanford Law School		✓	✓	✓
Stetson University	✓	✓		✓
Suffolk University			✓	✓
SUNY Buffalo Law School	✓			✓
Syracuse University		✓		✓
Temple University			✓	✓
Thomas Jefferson	✓	✓		✓
UC Berkeley School of Law	✓	✓	✓	✓
UC Davis Law		✓		✓
UCLA		✓	✓	✓
UMKC School of Law				✓
University of Cincinnati		✓		✓
University of Connecticut			✓	✓
University of Denver	✓	✓		✓
University of Florida	✓			✓
University of Georgia		✓		✓
University of Idaho			✓	✓
University of Iowa				✓
University of Maine				✓
University of Miami	✓			✓
University of Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Mississippi				✓
University of Oregon				✓
University of Pennsylvania	✓		✓	
University of Pittsburgh	✓	✓		✓
University of San Diego				✓
Univ. of San Francisco	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Utah		✓		✓
University of Virginia		✓	✓	
Valparaiso University				✓
Vermont Law School	✓	✓		✓
Washburn University	✓	✓		✓
Washington and Lee U.		✓	✓	✓
Washington University		✓		✓
Wayne State University		✓	✓	✓
Western New England U.				✓
Whittier Law School	✓	✓		✓
Willamette University	✓			✓
William and Mary		✓		✓
William Mitchell		✓		✓
WMU-Cooley				✓



dent should strongly consider taking one to see if they do indeed enjoy cultural differences, which can be stark.

"It's a good idea to get a taste of it," she said.

Students should also see what kind of experiential learning opportunities are present. Temple University, for instance, offers practicum programs in international law. In the practicum setting, students work up to 12 hours a week with a client or agency. Temple has placed students in the International Office of Migration, for instance.

Lastly, one should look at the school's faculty to see what kind of experience law professors have with the specialty. At Temple University — considered one of the nation's top schools for international law — nearly half have taught or worked abroad, helping shape the laudable curriculum.

Chances are a lawyer will deal with international law in some capacity in his or her career given the current trends,

Ramji-Nogales said.

"It's definitely a growing field," she said.



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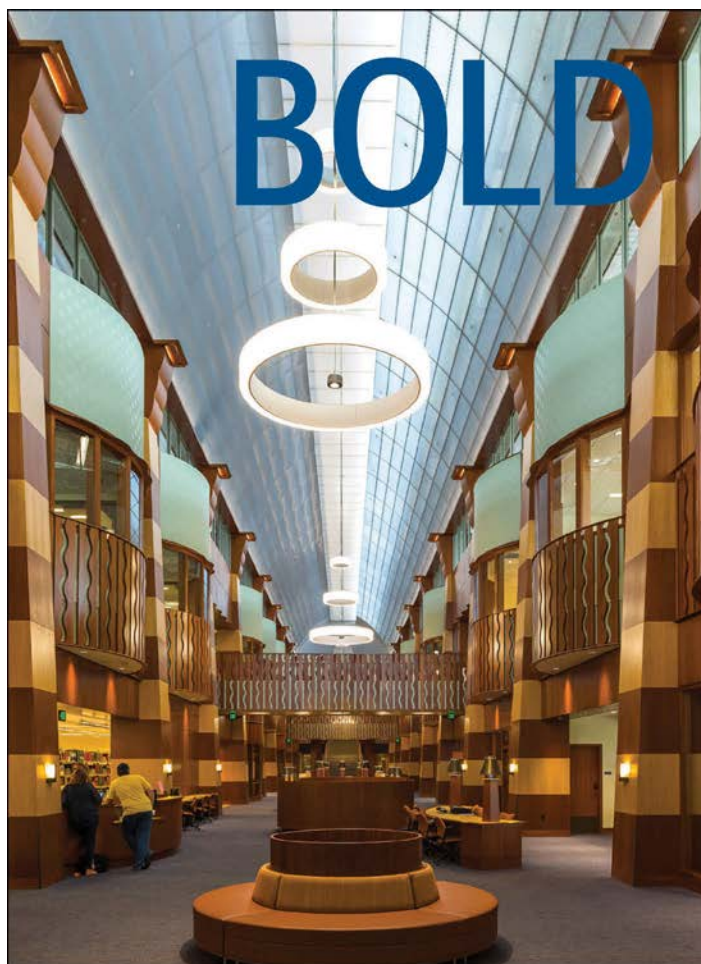
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## How to choose a school for: ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The art of lawyering doesn't always take place in the courtroom. Indeed, it rarely does. That's why having a firm understanding of Alternative Dispute Resolution is critical.

"ADR is an essential element of 21st century law practice, and attorneys that had not developed the necessary insights and strategies will be left behind," said Thomas Stipanowich, director of the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at Pepperdine University School of Law, which has one of the best ADR programs in the nation.

After all, only about two percent of civil court cases ever get to trial — the rest are

settled or dismissed along the way, he notes.

"Thus, negotiation and mediation advocacy skills are at least as important for most lawyers than trial skills," he said.

ADR refers to a range of strategies for managing conflict and resolving disputes of all kinds, he said. Areas of emphasis include negotiation, mediation, arbitration, consensus building, expert evaluation and other approaches.

Realizing the importance of this kind of law, more schools are creating programs in it. However, the depth of these programs vary, he said. If a student is looking for an elevated program, he or she needs

to research different schools and see what they offer.

"A growing number [of law schools] have developed more extensive programs," he said. "Some of these have a particular focus, such as international commercial arbitration. A very few, like Pepperdine's Straus Institute, have ADR programs with established reputations that draw students from all over the United States and from other countries."

As with other specialties, experiential learning is critical, Stipanowich said.

"Our own program features clinics in which students have the opportunity to mediate actual court cases," he said. "In our securities arbitration clinic, students represent investors and may take cases all the way through binding arbitration. In addition, most of our classes are built around



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role-playing exercises designed to simulate real-life situations.”

To learn more about ADR, you might want to consider broadening your research

beyond law schools, he noted.

“There may be faculty at your undergraduate institution that have sufficient experience to provide guidance regarding

ADR and modern law practice,” he said.

“At the same time, you should reach out to others, including practicing lawyers, to learn more about the subject.”

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
Appalachian School of Law				✓
Baylor University				✓
California Western	✓	✓	✓	✓
Case Western University	✓		✓	
Chapman School of Law	✓		✓	✓
Creighton University	✓	✓		✓
Emory University		✓		✓
Faulkner University	✓		✓	
Fordham Law School		✓	✓	✓
George Washington U.				✓
Georgetown University	✓			✓
Hamline University		✓	✓	
Hofstra University			✓	
The John Marshall	✓	✓		✓
Loyola, Los Angeles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Loyola Chicago				✓
Marquette University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michigan State University				✓

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
New England Law				✓
New York Law School		✓	✓	✓
New York University			✓	
North Carolina Central	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northeastern University				✓
Ohio State University	✓		✓	
Penn State Law	✓			✓
Penn State's Dickinson	✓			✓
Pepperdine University	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quinnipiac University		✓	✓	✓
St. John's University		✓	✓	✓
Stanford Law School		✓	✓	✓
UCLA		✓	✓	
University of Alabama			✓	
U. Arkansas, Little Rock			✓	✓
University of Cincinnati		✓		✓
University of Dayton				✓
University of Houston		✓	✓	✓

Law school	Certificate	Center	Extern	Clinic
University of Idaho				✓
University of Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Missouri	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Montana	✓		✓	✓
University of Nebraska	✓			✓
University of New Mexico			✓	✓
University of Oregon		✓	✓	✓
University of San Diego				✓
Univ. of San Francisco			✓	
University of Texas	✓	✓		✓
University of Utah		✓		✓
University of Washington			✓	
USC Gould School of Law	✓		✓	
Washburn University				✓
Washington and Lee U.				✓
Washington University			✓	✓



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# 3 most pressing questions answered

BY HILLARY MANTIS

Your excitement and anxiety about applying to law school are probably at an all-time high. There are certain questions I hear over and over that produce the most anxiety in applicants. The good news is that many great resources are available to help you answer these questions.

Here are answers to the most-often-asked questions:

## 1. Do I need to go to law school in the state in which I plan to practice?

Unlike college, where it might be fun to spend some time in, say Hawaii, it is often wiser to attend law school in the state in which you plan to practice. The internships you do through your school, the alumni contacts you make and the job listings will often be geared to the region in which the school is located.

But that does not mean you should never consider a school outside your preferred region. There are roughly 14 highly ranked national law schools that pull in recruiters from across the nation and provide ample employment opportunities wherever you want to work.

Also, several other schools have connections outside their geographic regions, but it will likely require more work on your part.

You can look for yourself to see what percentage of a particular law school's recent graduating class stayed in state. Check out the American Bar Association employment summary report for the law schools you are interested in at: <http://employmentsummary.abaquestionnaire.org>. It will tell you how many recent graduates stayed in state and what other states they work in.

It is also filled with valuable information about what types of jobs recent graduates took and the overall employment rate of the recent graduating class. I highly recommend it as you research law schools.

## 2. How do I find a law school that specializes in the practice area I'm interested in?

You may want to become an entertainment lawyer or a criminal lawyer and prefer a school that supports such aspirations. Law

schools do not have majors, nor do they require you to choose a specialty before graduating. But several schools do offer concentrations, and some provide certificates in specific practice areas.

If your heart is set on a specific practice area, you should do research to identify the schools that focus resources in that area. PreLaw magazine includes a section (just prior to this column)

that identifies the schools that offer concentrations and experiential opportunities. You can search by specialty at [www.nationaljurist.com/law-schools](http://www.nationaljurist.com/law-schools).

## 3. I didn't do well on the LSAT. Should I still apply to law school now and hope to transfer?

Relatively few students are able to transfer to a different law school, so I wouldn't count on it. Law schools tend to be smaller than colleges, so there's not that much room to move around. Generally you would need to achieve high first-year grades to transfer to a different school.

Although February is on the late side for the LSAT, you could retake the exam in February and still possibly start law school in this admission cycle. Or, you could work for a year, retake the LSAT when you have more time and apply next year.

It gives you a chance to study for the LSAT without so much time pressure. If you are applying now, make sure to apply to several schools for which your LSAT score will be within an acceptance range.

You can see for yourself what the median LSAT score and GPA is for various law schools by linking to the LSAC Official Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools through the Law School Admission Council ([www.lsac.org](http://www.lsac.org)) or through individual law schools' websites.



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RUDY STRUMMER/SHUTTERSTOCK



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Additionally, Lincoln Memorial University - Duncan School of Law is approved by the Tennessee Board of Law Examiners.