University of Louisville's Brandeis School of Law

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Introduction

Founded in 1846, the University of Louisville’s Brandeis School of Law is Kentucky’s oldest law school and America’s fifth oldest law school in continuous operation. Heir to the legacy of Justice Louis D. Brandeis, the school is distinguished by a rich history, national outreach, and profound dedication to public service. It is an integral part of the University of Louisville, a public institution and major research center founded in 1798. The metropolitan area, with a population of approximately one million, combines the gracious ambience of southern hospitality with cultural, aesthetic, and recreational attractions (including historic Churchill Downs, the Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Speed Art Museum, and the Muhammad Ali Peace Center).

Enrollment/Student Body

The School of Law enrolls first-year students beginning in the fall semester, which starts in August. Candidates may apply for admission to either the full-time (three-year) division or the part-time (four- to five-year) division.

Candidates must have completed a bachelor’s degree at an accredited college or university prior to enrollment. All undergraduate majors are acceptable, with courses that emphasize critical reasoning, writing, and communication skills recognized as good preparation for the study of law.

With an entering class numbering about 140 each fall, first-year class size seldom exceeds 60. Basic Legal Skills (the first-year writing course) has classes of approximately 20 students each.

The entire student body, composed of almost as many women as men, numbers about 400, enabling every student to be a name, not just a number, and presenting students with the opportunity to develop close relationships with their professors.

Faculty

With 31 full-time faculty members (including 13 women and 4 faculty members of color) and numerous part-time or adjunct teachers, the faculty-to-student ratio is at 1 to 14.8.

The faculty gives a high priority to excellence in teaching and accessibility to students. They are also a community of active scholars.

Curriculum

The law school’s full-time and part-time division share the same curriculum, faculty, and academic standards. As of fall 2009, full-time and part-time students will enroll in the same sections of courses rather than being separated into day and evening divisions. After completing the foundational first-year curriculum, students choose from core courses in doctrinal subjects, advanced research and writing, and professional responsibility. Students also may take advantage of a rich variety of specialized and interdisciplinary electives. The School of Law conducts a Summer Enrichment Program for a limited number of newly admitted students.

A highly successful Academic Support Program provides tutoring groups in all first-year courses and guidance in study and test-taking skills, as well as individual advising and counseling.

Samuel L. Greenebaum Public Service Program

Reflecting the spirit of Justice Louis D. Brandeis, the School of Law was one of America’s first five law schools to adopt public service as part of the prescribed course of study. Through this public service work, students develop practical skills, serve their communities, and establish professional values. All students are required to complete 30 hours of pro bono services as a condition of graduation.

Library and Physical Facilities

The law school is housed in Wilson W. Wyatt Hall, a gracious colonial-style building overlooking the formal entrance to the University of Louisville’s Belknap Campus—a traditional college campus located in an urban setting. The University of Louisville also includes two other campuses: the Health Sciences Center (housing the medical, dental, public health, and nursing schools) and the Shelby Campus, which offers continuing education classes.

The school’s law library houses a collection of more than 400,000 volumes and microform volume equivalents, carefully selected to aid student instruction and promote research. The library still receives original briefs of the US Supreme Court—a rare distinction for a law school and a practice originated by Justice Brandeis that continues today.

State-of-the-art instructional and research technologies; two computer labs; the Allen Courtroom’s contemporary litigation environment; wireless access in the library, classrooms, and common areas; and a full-time technology staff provide a wealth of services to every law student. The school’s website serves as our community bulletin board. Students can download course syllabi, assignments, handouts, old exams, and other materials; browse job listings from the Career Services Office; review the Academic Support Program’s catalog of study aids; and get news, calendars, schedules, and more. Technology is increasingly part of law teaching and learning as the faculty incorporate presentations and Internet resources into the classroom experience.

Special Programs

The School of Law offers several dual-degree programs designed to enhance the student’s understanding, skills, and career opportunities in both areas of study. Each requires application and admission to both participating schools: Master of Business Administration/Juris Doctor, Master of Science in Social Work/Juris Doctor, Juris Doctor/Master of Arts in Humanities, Juris Doctor/Master of Divinity—at the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Juris Doctor/Master of Arts in Political Science, Juris Doctor/Master of Urban Planning, and Juris Doctor/Master of Arts in Bioethics.

The school also operates clinical externship programs in which upper-class students, with supervision, represent clients and appear in court. A third-year student may receive credit by
working in the criminal arena (DA or PD), the tax arena (IRS),
the judicial branch (various judges), family law (Center for
Women and Families or Legal Aid Society), or technology
(University of Louisville Office of Technology Transfer).

In spring 2009, the law school opened its first live-client
clinic, housed in the same building as the Legal Aid Society.
Under the direction and supervision of faculty, students in the
clinic gain experience interacting with and representing clients.

International experience is another unique opportunity. The
Brandeis School offers faculty or student exchanges with law
schools in France, England, Germany, Finland, Australia, and
South Africa.

Practical Success

Participating annually in about a dozen moot court and skills
competitions, the law school has won several regional and
national championships; most recently the 2008 ABA National
Negotiations Competition.

Applicant Profile

University of Louisville’s Brandeis School of Law

This grid includes only applicants who earned 120–180 LSAT scores under standard administrations.

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Apps = Number of Applicants
Adm = Number Admitted
Reflects 99% of the total applicant pool.

Students are also actively involved in writing for and
publishing the University of Louisville Law Review and the
Journal of Law and Education. Graduates of the University of
Louisville’s Brandeis School of Law consistently achieve high
employment rates.

Admission

Applicants are urged to apply beginning October 1 and before
March 1 of the year they intend to enter law school. However,
aplications received prior to May 1 will be given consideration
on a space-available basis. Both full-time and part-time
first-year students must start classes in the fall semester.

For the best chance of consideration, it is recommended that
the LSAT be taken no later than December. LSAT scores taken
in June, prior to the first semester of enrollment, will be
considered only under extraordinary circumstances.

The faculty admission committee reads all files very carefully. Beyond numerical indicators (LSAT scores and grade-point averages), the committee looks for
individuals with unique attributes who will bring diversity to the entering class and good character to the legal profession. Numerical quantifiers are not automatic
grounds for admission or denial.