UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO LAW SCHOOL, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (SUNY)

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New York State’s Law School

The University at Buffalo Law School is the only law school in the State University of New York (SUNY) system. Since 1887, our law school has prepared lawyers to practice in New York City; Washington, DC; and other major cities across the country and around the world. The University at Buffalo campus provides its 30,000 students access to vast resources in world-class undergraduate and graduate fields of study that include medicine, engineering, pharmaceutical sciences, and business management. Each year, we graduate over 200 well-educated and diverse lawyers who are ready to practice law in fields such as corporate law, tax law, public service, criminal law, and intellectual property.

Located in Amherst, New York—a suburb of Buffalo—the Law School has a small-school feel with all the advantages of a large university, including access to other professional and graduate departments, Division I sports, a fine arts center, a concert hall, and numerous other academic, social, and cultural opportunities. The greater Buffalo area offers a wide variety of social and cultural activities such as downhill skiing, water sports, professional sports, a world-class symphony orchestra, professional theaters, nightlife, and access to Canada, all within minutes of the Law School. You can live comfortably, not to mention affordably, in Buffalo, the second largest city in New York.

Library and Physical Facilities

The Law School is housed in John Lord O’Brien Hall, a seven-story building including a state-of-the-art courtroom that provides students with an opportunity to watch judges and lawyers in action. The library is the core of the Law School, occupying six of the seven floors, including a law-student-only reading room with space for 84 students.

Like the Law School, the law library is committed to providing students with exceptional research and writing instructors. This enables first-year law students to gain one-on-one instruction in various research methods.

In January 2011, the Law School unveiled a newly renovated student lounge and classrooms. The Law School has also added state-of-the-art technology to enhance faculty teaching and student learning.

Curriculum

The Law School provides a flexible curriculum that affords students a broad range of curricular options, practical coursework, and special programs. Our curriculum emphasizes the study of law as well as the practical application of law to prepare our students to practice their profession upon graduation. The Law School offers a large number of interdisciplinary courses and programs in a variety of concentrations that include Family Law, Finance Translations, Tax Law, Environmental Law, Civil Litigation, Criminal Law, Health Law, International Law, and an Intellectual Property Concentration and Technology Transfer Certification.

Instruction is offered in two semesters from early September to May, including a January bridge term and a summer session from mid-May to mid-July. Six full-time semesters or five full-time semesters plus two summer sessions are required for graduation.

Beyond the first year, students are required to complete 60 semester credit hours, including at least one seminar. The upper-division program is wholly elective.

The Law School also offers the LLM degree in Criminal Law and a general LLM for international and domestic students. For international students, there are special courses designed to introduce them to American law and to prepare them for the New York State bar exam. All students benefit from our small-group personalized approach that allows them to design their own curriculum.

Dual-Degree Programs—The State University of New York at Buffalo is New York State’s largest campus in its university system. The campus includes nationally recognized schools of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and Engineering and Applied Sciences. Access to these and many other graduate and professional schools within the campus offer unparalleled access to dual-degree programs, which permit students to earn credit toward a master’s or PhD degree jointly with the JD. In recent years, the most active dual-degree programs have been with management, political science, philosophy, public health, legal information management and analysis, social work, sociology, and economics.

Legal Skills

The University at Buffalo Law School’s Legal Skills initiative is the cornerstone of the school’s curriculum. The initiative focuses on developing and producing practice-ready lawyers who are able to meet the challenges of the legal profession. A key component of the initiative is the Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research (LAWR) program. The three semesters of required LAWR coursework allow every student to receive the necessary training in these skills broken into manageable segments.

Another integral part of the Legal Skills Initiative is the Trial Technique Program, which includes our Buffalo-Niagara Trial Tournament, Trial Teams, and Trial Technique classes. Each year, UB Law hosts the Buffalo-Niagara Trial Tournament that draws over 125 students from over 30 law schools around the nation. In recent years UB Law’s Trial Team has won more awards than any other school at the American Bar Association regional competition. Our Trial Technique classes culminate each semester with a mock trial in a downtown Buffalo courtroom.

Special Programs

Clinical Programs—Skills training in the clinical program is coordinated with substantive law courses to give students a theoretical understanding of practical issues. Students serve clients and conduct research and fieldwork in areas such as economic development, affordable housing, mediation, family violence, elder law, and environmental and development law.

New York City Program in Finance and Law—Provides University at Buffalo law students with an introduction to New York City’s financial markets and a gateway to its highly competitive financial-sector job market. Each year, approximately 25 students are selected to participate in this unique program, which is located in New York City.
Externships

Each semester over 50 law school students are placed in supervised externships and another 20 or more students are placed in judicial clerkships. Externships and judicial clerkships provide law students with unique legal and public service experience as they work in a variety of government and nonprofit organizations, and get credit for doing so. Students learn how to work with a client and address the client’s specific needs and goals—something that’s difficult to teach in a classroom.

Our students help judges, attorneys, and legislators with pressing legal questions that arise in ongoing cases, in the development of public policy or legislation, and in response to citizen inquiries or problems.

Law School Culture and Student Activities

University at Buffalo Law School students experience a relaxed, friendly, and collaborative atmosphere. There are ample extracurricular activities. The Student Bar Association, an elected representative body, oversees all law school student organizations. Our Moot Court Board sponsors mock appellate practice competitions, the Opinion is the student newspaper, the Buffalo Law Review is a professional journal edited by students, and there are specialty journals in environmental law, affordable housing and community development law, intellectual property, criminal law, human rights law, and social policy concerning women.

Admission

Each year the University at Buffalo Law School enrolls just over 200 first-year students. All first-year students start in the fall semester. Transfer and visiting students can start in either the fall or spring semesters. Our application priority deadline is March 1. LSAT and LSAC Credential Assembly Service are required.

Although we have a limited number of seats for each incoming class, we do consider qualitative factors in addition to the traditional quantitative factors (GPA and LSAT). These factors include, but are not limited to, academic achievement, personal statements, character traits, writing ability, recommendations, and work experience. If an application reveals that the applicant has been educationally, socially, economically, or otherwise disadvantaged, the Admissions Committee will review the application for signs of achievement that should lead to success in law school.

Expenses and Financial Aid

UB is able to offer state-subsidized tuition to New York residents and a reasonable out-of-state tuition charge. In-state tuition—$17,450; out-of-state tuition—$29,110; estimated additional expenses—$22,000. (Tuition and living expenses are subject to change without notice.)

This results in overall educational expenses that are less than half the cost of many law schools. Dean’s tuition waivers and scholarships are available to students demonstrating high academic achievement, and state aid is offered on a need basis to qualified students. Additional alumni-sponsored scholarships are offered to second- and third-year students.

Career Services

The ultimate goal of nearly every law student is establishing their career upon graduation. Ninety-six percent of the University at Buffalo Law School graduates find positions or enter advanced degree programs within months of their graduation. Our Career Services Office (CSO) provides job search and résumé services for third-year and LLM students, and helps first- and second-year students conduct their summer job searches. As products of New York State’s Law School, many UB Law graduates find employment in New York City and Buffalo; however, a number of our graduates find positions in other regions of the country.

For more information about career services, contact the office: telephone, 716.645.2056; fax, 716.645.7336; e-mail, law-careers@buffalo.edu.
University at Buffalo Law School, The State University of New York (SUNY)

This grid includes only fall 2010 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; highest LSAT data reported.