



**LL.M. in United States Legal Studies
Academic Advising Guide**

Congratulations, and welcome to St. John's Law! All of us in the Office of Graduate Studies look forward to working with you. This document contains valuable instructions about how to select your courses, and about the required and elective courses for your degree. If you have any questions, please contact us at any time.

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Table of Contents

I. Requirements to complete the Degree	2
1. General Requirements	
2. English for American Law Schools	
3. Required Courses	
4. New York bar exam-tested electives	
5. Bonus New York Bar Exam Preparation Course Sets	
6. Other Elective Courses for Career Experience	
II. Additional State Requirements to Qualify for the New York Bar Exam.	7
1. Professional Skills Competency Requirements	
2. New York Bar Exam Application for Advanced Evaluation of Eligibility	
III. Sample Schedules.....	9
IV. How to Register for Your Classes	11
V. Frequently Asked Questions & Answers.....	13

I. Requirements to complete the Degree in U.S. Legal Studies

1. General Requirements

- 24 credits minimum
- 2.1 GPA minimum upon graduation
- Complete degree within 24 months of matriculation
- Students with an F-1 or J-1 visa must enroll full-time, which is a minimum of 9 credits except in the final semester or summer
- You can register in a maximum of 16 credits each fall and spring semester

Notes on General Requirements for the USLS Degree

- Although the degree requires a minimum of 24 credits of coursework; many students complete between 24-30 credits. We encourage bar exam pathway students to take about 30 credits, which includes 6 credits of a course called Applied Legal Analysis. You will complete these credits from a combination of required and elective courses.

2. English for American Law School (EALS)

EALS is a short pre-semester program designed to help foreign-trained lawyers boost their knowledge of the U.S. legal system and its vocabulary before

starting their regular LL.M. studies. If this course is required for you, we will automatically register you in the course. If it is not required for you, but you would like to take it, you will have the option to sign up during the registration process. This is a non-credit course. While students will receive feedback from the professors throughout the course, they are not assigned an official grade.

Course Modules

- Legal Writing and Argument
- Fundamentals of the American Legal System
- Reading Legal Texts

3. Required Courses

A comprehensive checklist of degree requirements was emailed to you along with this guide and will be posted to the [Online Student Center – LLM. Page](#). Please review that checklist every time you choose courses. Sample schedules are also provided in part III of this Guide.

A typical first semester course list is:

- Introduction to U.S. Law & Lawyering (required)
- Legal Research, Analysis & Writing I (required)
- Applied Legal Analysis
- Drafting: Practice Documents
- Bar tested electives (6 credits required to graduate)

A typical second semester course list is:

- Legal Research, Analysis & Writing II (required)
- Applied Legal Analysis
- Drafting: Practice Documents
- Professional Responsibility (required)
- Bar tested electives (6 credits required to graduate)
- Advanced Practice Skills Course

Professional Responsibility is a required course for the bar exam pathway and to qualify for the bar exam. You can take it in any semester. **We generally recommend students take this course in their second semester**, but a student who is already familiar with the U.S. Legal system and ethics rules could take in the first semester. Discuss with your advisor if you have questions.

4. New York Bar exam-tested electives (any semester)

You must take at least 6 credits of these UBE tested subjects. The tier chart below is a guide for choosing electives most helpful for bar preparation. Additionally, students should not take courses in topics already covered in the Applied Legal Analysis & Drafting: Practice Documents courses (see below for more information about this course set).

Tier 1: MBE Tested	Tier 2: MBE Tested	Tier 3: MEE tested
Evidence (4 credits)	Contracts (4 credits, Fall only)	Family Law (3 credits)
Trusts & Estates (4 credits)	Torts (4 credits)	Conflicts of Law (3 credits)
Business Organizations (4 credits)	Civil Procedure (4 credits)	Constitutional Law (4 credits)
	Property (4 credits)	Criminal Procedure: Adjudication (2 credits)
	Criminal Law (3 credits)	Secured Transactions (3 credits)
	Criminal Procedure: Investigation (3 credits)	

We recommend that you take more than 6 credits in bar tested subjects to increase your chances of passing the bar exam. If you want to take a class other than what is recommended here, please contact your advisor.

The full schedule of courses for the upcoming term is posted [HERE](#).

5. Bonus New York Bar Exam Preparation Course Sets (highly recommended, both semesters)

Fall Course set. Topics: Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure

- Applied Legal Analysis for LL.M. (3 credits) &
- Drafting: Practice Documents (2 credits)

Spring Course set. Topics: Property, Civil Procedure

- Applied Legal Analysis for LL.M. (3 credits) &
- Drafting Practice Documents (2 credits)

Students taking Applied Legal Analysis should not have to take separate courses in these subjects.

6. Other Elective Courses for Career Experience

There are some courses that are not tested on the bar exam, but you may want to take them because you are interested in the course, or it may help you with employment after graduation. Please let your advisors know about your plans and interests. Your degree offers the flexibility to concentrate in different areas of law, depending on the prerequisites of those additional courses, and the times they are offered. However, if your goal is to pass the New York State Bar Exam, we recommend most if not all of your courses be bar preparation courses.

Lawyering Across Borders (Experiential Course) (1 credit)

This course introduces students to the practical skills of lawyering across borders. Students will reflect and discuss challenges related to practicing law in a different country and will consider and share the differences and similarities among national legal traditions. Co-requisite: To enroll, students must have an internship or work placement in a country other than their home country (usually, their country of citizenship).

Students in the U.S. on an F-1 student visa must apply for Curricular Practical Training (“CPT”) work authorization in order to take this course.

Eligibility: Students are eligible to enroll in this course after their first semester. E.g., students starting in the fall, may participate starting in the spring; and students starting in the spring, may participate starting in the summer. Students relying on an F-1 visa will work with ISSSO and your Graduate Career Advisor Sara Drew to secure CPT work authorization. All students will work with Sara to secure an internship or work placement.

II. Additional State Requirements to Qualify for the New York Bar Exam

Note: These are state requirements for application to the bar exam and admission to the bar, not St. John's Law graduation requirements.

1. Professional Skills Competency Requirement (see [BOLE rule 520.18](#))

There are three options for satisfying this requirement:

Pathway 1: Taking classes during the St. John's Law LL.M. program that satisfy this requirement as certified by the law school under 520.18(1). To satisfy this option, follow the Pathway 1 Course checklist below.

Pathway 4: Proof of apprenticeship under the conditions specified in Rule 520.18(4). Summary of conditions: six months; full-time; paid or unpaid; under supervision of one or more attorneys who have been admitted to practice and are in good standing in the jurisdiction where the apprenticeship occurs – this can be outside the U.S.; must start after completion of foreign law degree and prior to start of St. John's Law LL.M.; must be with one employer only and completed within the 3-year application filing deadline.

Pathway 5: Proof of law practice in another jurisdiction under the conditions specified in Rule 520.18(5). Summary of conditions: authorized to practice law in another U.S. jurisdiction, territory, or any other country; applicant has been in good standing and practiced law in that jurisdiction full-time for at least one year, or part-time for two years following authorization to practice; can be with more than one employer.

Pathway 1 Course checklist: Professional Skills Competency Requirement

- 6 credits of skills coursework in total. Covering three categories of skills:
- Category A: Lawyering Requirement
 - Introduction to U.S. Law & Lawyering (3 credits) – required course
- Category B: Advanced Practice Writing
 - Drafting Practice Documents (Fall) (2 credits) – recommended elective
 - Drafting: Practice Documents (Spring) (2 credits) – recommended elective
 - Legal Research, Analysis & Writing for LL.M. III (2 credits)
 - A [J.D. course satisfying the Advanced Practice Writing Requirement](#)
- Category C: Applied Skills Requirement
 - Introduction to Advocacy for LL.M. (1 credit) – recommended elective
 - Lawyering Across Borders (1 credit) – recommended elective
 - Transnational Practice Skills – International Business Transactions (1 credit)

- LL.M. Externship Program (2 credits)
- Transnational Practice Skills – International Law (1 credit)
- A [J.D. course satisfying the Applied Skills Requirement](#)

2. New York Bar Exam Application for Advanced Evaluation of Eligibility

The St. John's Law LL.M. will help you become eligible to apply to sit for the New York bar exam. Another key, and earlier step, is the application for the New York Board of Law Examiners (BOLE) to evaluate your first law degree. This is called the advanced evaluation of eligibility application. Use these links to review the BOLE guidelines, and start the online advanced evaluation of eligibility application:

- [Foreign Legal Education page](#)
- [Foreign Legal Education Handbook](#)
- [Online Request for Foreign Evaluation of Academic Credentials](#)

III. Sample Schedules (including bonus course sets)

Full-time Sample Schedule: Fall semester start

Fall	Spring
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to U.S. Law & Lawyering (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing I (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence (4) or Torts (4) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : Contracts (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing II (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Responsibility (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence (4), Trusts & Estates (4), or Business Organizations (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to Advocacy (1) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : a bar exam tested subject
Total Credits: 15 + Audits	Total Credits: 15 + Audits

Full-time Sample Schedule: Spring semester start

Spring	Fall
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to U.S. Law & Lawyering (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing I (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Business Organizations (4) or Torts (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to Advocacy (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing II (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Responsibility (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence (4) or Torts (4) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : Contracts (4)
Total Credits: 16	Total Credits: 14 + Audits

Part-time Sample Schedule including Experiential Learning (3 semesters + summer)

Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to U.S. Law & Lawyering (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing I (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : Torts (4) or Contracts (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing II (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence (4) or Business Organizations (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lawyering Across Borders (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Responsibility (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Trusts & Estates (4), or other bar-tested course (3 or 4)
Total Credits: 11 + Audits	Total Credits: 11	Total Credits: 1	Total Credits: 7

Part-time Sample Schedule including Experiential Learning (4 semesters + summer)

Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to U.S. Law & Lawyering (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing I (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Research, Analysis & Writing II (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lawyering Across Borders (1) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : bar-tested course (3 or 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Applied Legal Analysis (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting: Practice Documents (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Torts (4) or Contracts (4) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : bar-tested course (3 or 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Responsibility (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence (4), Business Organizations (4), or Trusts & Estates (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Review ALA & Drafting courses <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Audit</u> : bar-tested course (3 or 4)
Total Credits: 6	Total Credits: 7	Total Credits: 1 + Audits	Total Credits: 9 + Audits	Total Credits: 7 + Audits

IV. How to register for your classes

1. Before you register, you will need:

- To complete the [course approval request form](#) and receive the advisor's approval to register.
- Your priority registration number (emailed to you after your courses are approved)
- The names and course registration numbers that you want to take and are approved for your degree program.
- To be able to log in to UIS through signon.stjohns.edu

2. Step-by-step instructions for registering online:

- Sign in through signon.stjohns.edu
- Click on the UIS button.



UIS

- Click on the "Student" tab
- Select "Registration"
- Select "Add/Drop Classes"
- Select the correct term for which you want to register (e.g., Fall 2022)

A screenshot of the UIS registration web interface. At the top, there are three tabs: "Personal Information", "Student", and "Financial Aid". The "Student" tab is currently selected and highlighted in blue. Below the tabs is a search bar with a "Search" label, an input field, and a "Go" button. Underneath the search bar is the heading "Select Term". A red horizontal line is drawn below this heading, followed by the text "Please choose the appropriate ter" in red. Below this text is a dropdown menu labeled "Select a Term:" with "Spring 2019" selected. At the bottom of the form is a "Submit" button.

- Enter your priority registration number. The number will not work if you try to register before the registration period opens.
- Enter the CRN (course registration number) for each approved course you want to register for and submit. Each class number goes in its own box. Double check the numbers are correct before submitting your choices.

3. Special Circumstances in registration

- **“Closed” courses:** Some classes, such as Lawyering Across Borders, are “closed courses” that require approval to register. **Please contact your advisor** to register for those courses.
- **Waitlist:** If a course is full, you will not be able to register for the course, but you may put yourself on the waitlist. That means if more space becomes available in the class later, the students on the waitlist will get an opportunity to register for it. If you are on the waitlist, **check your student email frequently**. If a space becomes available for you, you will get an email with instructions, and you will have 24 hours to register yourself for the class.
- **If you are having trouble registering**, please contact Ellen Gamber (gambere@stjohns.edu) for assistance.

4. How to confirm your enrollment, check your schedule, and pay tuition

After you have registered for your courses, please wait (about 5 business days) for any scholarship to be applied to your account. Then follow the instructions below to pay your term bill and confirm your enrollment at St. John’s.

If you receive a scholarship, it will be applied to your term bill in proportion to the credits in which you are registered. It will take approximately 5 business days for that scholarship amount to be applied to your account. Please make sure your is applied before you pay your term bill.

- Sign in to through signon.stjohns.edu
- Click on the UIS button.
- Go to **“Student”**
- Select the term you want to confirm and pay (E.g., Fall 2022)
- Click on **“Registration”**
- Click on **“View/Confirm Term Bill”** to pay your bill (after any scholarship has been applied)
- After paying tuition, scroll down and click **“Confirm Enrollment”**

For questions regarding your tuition bill, please contact Ellen Gamber, Assistant Director of Graduate Studies: gambere@stjohns.edu.

V. Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

1. How many credits should I take per semester?

It depends on when you want to finish your degree. The LL.M. degree requires 24 credits, and we highly recommend 30 credits for bar-pathway students. That means students average 15 credits per semester if they want to graduate in one year. However, you are allowed to take fewer credits in a semester if you want to take more than 2 semesters to finish your degree. **Students on a student visa must take a minimum of 9 credits per semester** (exceptions: summer semesters and the last semester of your program).

2. Where can I read descriptions of these courses, to help me choose the courses I want?

You can read the course descriptions here:

<https://www.stjohns.edu/law/academics/course-descriptions>

Click on the first letter of the name of the course, and then search for the course in the list by its name.

3. What is auditing a class?

To audit a class means to take the class but not for any academic credit. Auditing can be helpful to help you learn important concepts and vocabulary about a subject you need to know about (e.g., to prepare for the bar exam). You are required to attend every meeting of a class you are auditing, even though you will not receive a letter grade for the class, and you do not have to take the final exam. If you successfully audit a class, you can earn a mark of AU for the course on your transcript.

4. How can I find out more about the requirements for the bar exam?

You should become very familiar with the website of the [New York Board of Law Examiners \(BOLE\)](#). Here you will find important information about the bar exam, including:

- The advanced evaluation of eligibility application (Foreign Legal Education tab)
- Educational requirements for foreign-trained attorney (Foreign Legal Education tab)
- The Professional Skills Competency Requirement
- Dates of upcoming bar exams
- The 50-Hour Pro Bono Rule

5. I'm interested in applying to the J.D. program after I complete my LL.M. Who can I talk to?

Please speak with your academic advisor if you are thinking of applying to the J.D. program after you complete your LL.M. degree. It will be important to choose elective courses to help your application and to prepare you for the J.D. program. You would apply to the J.D. in the final semester of your LL.M. program.

6. Where do I find my syllabus and textbooks?

There are several places you can look for this information.

- b. Check the TWEN or Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) for your course's page. The LMS will have your syllabus. Read the syllabus to find the details for the textbooks you need to purchase and your list of homework assignments. Note that professors may not publish their course pages until a week or so before the semester begins. You should expect to have a homework assignment to complete before your first class session for each course.
- c. In UIS: from the **student** page, you can also check your schedule and textbook list by checking on **Schedule**, and from the schedule page click "**required text**" listed under each class.
- d. On the [Online Student Center](#), click on "**Registrar**" and then "**First Assignments.**"