

LAW

What can I do with this graduate degree?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

PRIVATE PRACTICE

Attorney (See following pages for practice areas):

- Partnership track
- Non-partnership track
- Contract
- Document review
- Administration

- Firms of variety of sizes
- Sole practitioners
- Legal clinics
- Other private legal services

- Acquire excellent research and writing skills.
- Obtain clerkships or internships during law school.
- Focus on grades, class rank, and law review and moot court experiences if desiring to work at a large or medium-size firms as they value them
- Gain experience in management and marketing to be able to support practice profitably.
- Diversify law experience to support tasks in office management (e.g. work flow), business development, clerk and attorney recruitment, clerkship programs, finances, and human resources.

PUBLIC INTEREST

- Counsel
- Legal aid services
- Public defense
- Civil rights law
- Indigent services
- Advocacy
- Community outreach
- Law reform

- Legal Services Corporation
- Legal aid societies
- Federal, state, and local government
- Public defender offices
- Private public interest law firms
- Nonprofit and public interest organizations (e.g., ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund)
- Unions
- Foundations

- Gain supervised work experience in an area through internships.
- Demonstrate a desire to help the marginalized / disadvantaged and show an interest in law as a means of change.
- Volunteer for nonprofit organizations that serve a wide range of people.
- Learn to communicate and interact with a diverse clientele.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

- Private practice
- In-house counsel:
 - Transactional
 - Litigatory
- Law-related areas:
 - Compliance, procurement, contracts, and human resources
- Securities law
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Tax law
- Legislative compliance
- Liability issues

- Law firms with corporate law and related business practice areas
- Any large corporation (largest number of attorneys are at corporate headquarters):
 - Accounting firms
 - Financial institutions
 - Insurance companies
 - Hospitals
 - Retailers
 - Consulting firms

- Seek internships or entry level positions in compliance, procurement, or other law related departments as corporate clerkships and entry level in-house counsel positions usually require more experience.
- Develop tolerance for bureaucratic procedure.
- Consider an undergraduate major in business, especially accounting or finance, is helpful.
- A joint MBA/JD degree may open additional opportunities.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Litigation
Advisory/Counsel
Regulatory
Public policy
Judicial clerkships

Most government branches have legal counsel; some of the largest employers of lawyers are:
Department of Justice
Department of Defense
Department of Commerce
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Environmental Protection Agency
Central Intelligence Agency
Federal Trade Commission
Internal Revenue Service
Securities and Exchange Commission
Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps for all branches of the military
Federal courts of appeal and district court (trial) judges and magistrates
Bankruptcy and administrative law judges
State courts of appeal and trial level judges
Federal and state court clerkships for collective judges in a court

Complete an internship program with the federal government to build connections and get experience.
Research the Presidential Management Fellows Program.
Strive to achieve high GPA and class rank as it is often preferred for State and Federal judges; Federal judges are usually in the top 10%-15%.
Seek out clerkships as stepping-stones to other legal areas, providing many benefits for future career opportunities.
Work towards lower Federal Courts if desiring to join the U.S. Supreme Court as applicants must have this experience and be top law graduates.
Participating in Moot Court in regional and national competitions can be helpful experience.
Develop writing skills and maintain Law review membership, as writing is highly valued and emphasized at all court levels.
Know that government opportunities are a variety of practice opportunities from criminal to contracts.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Litigation
Advisory/Counsel
Regulatory
Public policy
Criminal prosecution
Public defense

District Attorneys' offices
Attorneys General's offices
Governors' offices
State agencies
State legislatures
Cities, municipalities, counties, school districts, boards of education, and state universities
Public Defenders' offices

Take all available courses related to criminal law, criminal procedure, constitutional law, and evidence.
Participate in a criminal law clinical program.
Obtain summer positions in a prosecutor's office or a criminal litigation office or firm.
Gain experiences in litigation as this is often valued.
Understand that civil law deals with a broad range of subjects other than criminal matters and provides for diverse functions including the opportunity to work with private lawyers and public officials.
Demonstrate an interest in public issues and complete related internships.
Consider earning a joint Masters of Public Administration/JD degree.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	INFORMATION/STRATEGIES
<p>EDUCATION Teaching Student affairs: Law schools Universities/Colleges Higher education administration Pre-Law advising Law librarianship General counsel</p>	<p>Law schools: Career services Admissions Student services Law libraries Business schools Undergraduate departments of History and Political Science Paralegal schools Universities and colleges: Judicial affairs/Student conduct office Dean of Students Human Resources</p>	<p>Obtain several years of experience in private practice or government agency if desiring to teach. Pursue a Masters of Law (LLM) or PhD as a post-JD degree while maintaining a strong academic record to be involved in teaching. Consider pursuing adjunct roles to gain experience. Earning a master's degree in College Student Affairs, Higher Education Administration, or related area can be beneficial if desiring to work in administration. Participate in campus leadership roles throughout school if desiring to be involved with administration. In law school, secure a graduate assistantship in an office of interest. Gain a master's in library or information science in addition to the law degree if desiring to work in a law library.</p>

MANY LAW SPECIALTIES EXIST INCLUDING:

<p>CRIMINAL LAW</p>	<p>District Attorneys' offices Law firms Sole practitioners Public Defenders' offices</p>	<p>Determine and seek experiences based on the type of law you want to practice: criminal defense attorneys (e.g. public defenders) and prosecutors (e.g. district attorneys). Develop outstanding oral and written communication skills and the ability to persuade others. Understand federal, state, and local laws and court procedures as well as how they intersect.</p>
<p>PATENT, COPYRIGHT, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW</p>	<p>Law firms (specialized) Corporations U.S. Patent and Trademark Office</p>	<p>Develop strong critical thinking, writing skills, and reading comprehension. Consider majoring in highly specialized area such as technical, science, or engineering degrees to support reviewing patent/copyright claims.</p>

AREAS

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INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Law firms
Corporations
Federal agencies (e.g., Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency)
State agencies
Environmental compliance services companies
Regulatory commissions
Advocacy organizations and public interest groups

Gain a working understanding of rights to resources (e.g. mining, energy production) as well as transportation, taxation, patents, clean air, clean water, and government regulation.
Pursue an undergraduate major in environmental science, agriculture, engineering, or science can provide a basis to build knowledge in these areas.

FAMILY AND JUVENILE LAW

Law firms
Sole practitioners
Government agencies
Nonprofit organizations
Adoption agencies

Work with families and individuals on matters such as divorce, adoption, and juvenile justice.

HEALTH LAW

Law firms
Insurance companies
Health Maintenance Organizations
Hospitals and nursing homes
Government agencies
Pharmaceutical companies

Represent all parties in healthcare such as hospitals, physician groups, health maintenance organizations, individual doctors, insurance companies, and patients.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Public:
Relations between governments and citizens
Private:
Interactions of private citizens, corporations or other organizations

Governments
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
United Nations
World Bank
Law firms
Large corporations

Practicing law in this area deals with a myriad of issues faced by governments, corporations, or non-profits in an international arena.
Become fluent in another language and familiar with other cultures will help prepare one for this field.
Seek international experience by studying, volunteering, or working abroad.
Intern with an international law organization or firm.
Look for law jobs with transferable skills as international law jobs are competitive immediately after law school.

IMMIGRATION LAW

Law firms
Nonprofit organizations assisting immigrants or refugees
Legal Aid
Government agencies (e.g., Immigration and Customs Enforcement)
Corporations employing international employees

Assist individuals or organizations dealing with issues of immigration, citizenship, naturalization, VISA/employment status, deportation, or asylum.
Developing fluency in another language, may increase opportunities in this field.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR LAW

Law firms
Large corporations
Government
Unions
Special interest groups

Represent workers and employers on employment issues: wages, discrimination, harassment, unlawful termination, benefits and pensions, etc.

SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LAW

Law firms
Sports teams
Universities/Colleges
Studios
Record labels
Production companies
Other employers in the radio, television, movie, and video game industries

Work with individual athletes or artists, as well as the sports and entertainment companies that hire them, on a range of issues: contracts, intellectual property, royalties, or disputes.
Be willing to move to a large city such as Los Angeles, New York City, or Nashville as many firms that specialize are located in these areas.

PROPERTY/REAL ESTATE LAW

Law firms
Large corporations
Financial institutions
Government
Property management firms

Deal with individuals or organizations on matters related to land or property. Lawyers may focus on contractual work or litigation.

EDUCATION LAW

Law firms
Educational institutions:
 K-12 school districts
 Universities/colleges
Government

Represent educational institutions, students, or parents on issues related to the educational process: special education rights, student discipline, teacher/administration selection/retention, etc.

FINANCIAL PLANNING, ESTATE PLANNING, INVESTMENT BANKING

Law firms
Bank trust departments
Brokerage firms
Insurance companies
Development offices for preparatory schools, hospitals, and universities

Insurance "Estate Planning" positions require interest and ability in sales.
Bank trust department positions are good for those who do not want to litigate or be confrontational.
An undergraduate major in accounting or finance may be helpful.

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POLITICS

Lobbying/Government relations
Elected office

Corporations
Trade and professional associations
Political action committees
Law firms
Public interest advocacy groups
Government

Clerkship or summer associate positions with law firms providing lobbying services provide good experience.
Demonstrate an interest in politics through your undergraduate major, active campaigning, or research papers/articles.
Obtain full-time law firm experience as a stepping stone into field.
Acquire superior writing skills.
Develop a pleasing personality, enthusiasm, and high energy level. Demonstrate a service-oriented attitude.
Show ability to work with people and good communication and organizational skills.
Learn to enlist the help of others.
Consider earning a joint Masters of Public Administration/JD degree.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- Students planning to attend law school may choose any major of interest. Some undergraduate majors can help prepare students for a particular area of law (e.g., a B.S. in environmental science for a career in environmental law). Select courses that prepare you for the rigors of law school.
- Develop strong research and writing skills. Enhance communication skills through public speaking courses, debate team, or Toast Masters (a public speaking organization).
- Maintain a high GPA to increase chances of gaining admission to law school and thoroughly prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test).
- Visit the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) website to learn about the admissions process, law school, and the field of law.
- Join Phi Alpha Delta professional association.
- Secure strong personal recommendations from professors.
- Find part-time jobs or internships in law firms or government agencies to reality test your interest in law and to gain relevant experience.
- Participate in mock trial, student government, student judiciary boards, and other related organizations.
- Completing the law degree, Juris Doctor or JD, typically takes three years of full-time coursework. After completion, one must pass a state bar examination in order to practice law in that state.
- New law specialties are always emerging and the fields included here are not exhaustive. Consider your interests and skills when choosing an area of practice and research fields more thoroughly to learn how to effectively plan for a career in that area.
- Law school graduates may also find job opportunities outside the field of law if interested in pursuing alternatives.