ACADEMIC ADVISING at Denver Law

2/1/2016
Moving out of your 1L year

As you transition out of your first year of law school, big changes are in store. We chose your 1Ls courses. There are still some requirements ahead, but, generally speaking, from now on, decisions on what classes to take are yours to make.

This Academic Advising PPT is designed to help you begin thinking about how you want to use your future years at Denver Law to shape your legal education.
Charting your path at Denver Law: Balancing advice and choice

The decisions are yours, but you don’t have to make them on your own.

Get advice from Faculty members, Administrators and Staff at Denver Law, from fellow students and from members of the Bar.

Ahead...

First, the requirements to earn your J.D.

Next, using your course selection at Denver Law to chart your own professional path.
The Big Picture: What does it take to graduate?

90 semester credits to earn your JD
  30 credits comprise the 1L curriculum
  10 credits are from 3 more required courses
     (Admin Law, Evidence, Legal Profession)
  50 credits are left – you choose how to use them

More requirements to graduate
  Upper Level Legal Writing requirement
  Public Service requirement
  Professional Skills requirement (if you entered Denver Law prior to Summer 2015)
  Experiential Coursework Requirement (if you entered Denver Law Summer 2015 or later)
When should you take the three required courses?

These are foundational courses, so think about taking them early. In addition:

Take **Administrative Law** early if you are interested in
- Environmental & Natural Resources Law
- Workplace Law
- Immigration Law
- Any kind of compliance with government regulations

Take **Evidence** and **Legal Profession** early if you are thinking about
- Specializing in litigation and taking Trial Advocacy courses
- Doing a judicial externship
- Applying for the clinics

**Legal Profession** is valuable for
- Any Externships you take
- The MPRE, which you must pass prior to admission to the Bar
What is the MPRE and when do you take it?

Admission to state bars typically requires a minimum passing score on the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE). It is a two-hour, 60-question test covering standards of professional conduct.

Find Colorado’s standard for passing [here](#).

Bar admission information for all states, as well as MPRE registration information are available [here](#).

Many students find that the semester they take the required Legal Profession course is a good time to get the MPRE test prep book and begin studying for the exam. Also, talk with Bar Prep course representatives about MPRE prep.
What about the other requirements to graduate?

Each of these can be met in sundry ways:

**The Upper Level Legal Writing requirement**
- The Registrar’s [course listings](#) show which classes qualify for completing this requirement—look for “ULW.” [Directed Research](#) is another option.

**Public Service requirement**
- There are many ways to meet this requirement. One is by taking courses (Consult the Registrar’s [course listings](#) – the classes are marked “PUBL”).
- Find other ways to meet this requirement [here](#).
- Professor Alexi Freeman is the Public Service Advisor.

**Professional Skills/Experiential Coursework requirement**
- The Registrar’s [course listings](#) show which classes qualify for completing this requirement—look for “EA” (Experiential Advantage).
- Students who entered SCOL prior to the Summer 2015 term must successfully complete two or more semester credits in EA courses.
- Students entering SCOL in the Summer 2015 term or later must successfully complete six or more semester credits in EA courses.
EA: What is the Experiential Advantage Curriculum?

This initiative demonstrates our capacity to provide real world, skills-based legal education to all of our students.

The EA Curriculum includes

• Our highly-renowned Clinical Programs where students learn lawyering skills in live client settings.
• Our Externship Program that places more than 450 students a year in a wide variety of work settings, including the innovative Semester-in-Practice.
• Legal simulation courses, Capstone courses and Carnegie-Integrated Courses, which bring skills-based experiential learning to law school classrooms.

Denver Law’s EA Curriculum provides a rich array of opportunities for students to prepare for the practice of law.
Tracking your progress at Denver Law

It’s important that you monitor your academic progress. To see where you stand in terms of meeting requirements for the J.D.:

• Consult this worksheet.

• Contact the Office of the Registrar and set up an appointment to do a degree audit.
Now it’s time to think about charting your professional path as you learn the law

Remember the math:

- 90 credits to graduate
- 30 credits done to complete 1L
- 10 more credits for the 3 additional required classes
- 50 credits left

50 credits is 14 to 17 classes you get to choose.

Your choices will tailor the legal education you pursue at Denver Law.

Be intentional.

Use Denver Law’s resources to inform yourself about the roads you might take.

Then follow your own path.
Two ways to think about how to use the 50 credits you get to choose

Continue constructing your general legal knowledge by studying areas of the law “every lawyer should know.”

- Corporations
- Commercial Law
- Family Law
- Trusts & Estates
- Criminal Procedure

Specialize in areas of the law in which you think you might like to practice.

As the profession becomes more specialized, Denver Law is fashioning ways to study particular areas of the law.

*Suggestion: combine these two approaches.*
First approach: Study areas of the law “every lawyer should know”

The areas of law listed on the prior screen are commonly encountered by lawyers in their practice. They are topics family and friends will quiz you about. They are typically tested on state bar exams. Few students take all these courses. Most take a few.

How do you decide which one(s) to take?

The answer is different for everyone. Talk to your professors and the practitioners you meet. Of course, preparing for the Bar is something to consider.
Bar prep is a strength at Denver Law

The DU Bar Success Program is excellent.
Besides taking courses in areas of the law tested on bar exams, you can also enroll in Legal Analysis courses to get yourself ready.

Speak with Bar Success faculty to learn more about preparing for the bar exam at Denver Law.

Find information about the Colorado Bar Exam on the website of the Colorado Supreme Court.
Second approach: Specialized paths to take

There are seven Certificate Programs at Denver Law.

Constitutional Rights and Remedies
Corporate and Commercial Law
Environmental and Natural Resources Law
Intellectual Property Law
International Law Certificate
International Law And Human Rights Certificate (with the Korbel School)
Workplace Law (Employment and Labor Law)

Each program offers a curricular track composed of required and suggested courses leading to a Certificate, earned along with your JD.

Find the list of courses by clicking on the links above, then look for “Certificate Petition Form” for any of the programs.

Molly Ryan is the Advisor for students who wish to learn more about the Certificate Programs. Ms. Ryan’s office is Room 478.
More paths to take

You can design your own track
What specialized area of the law do you want to pursue?

Criminal Law – Defense
Criminal Law – Prosecution
Education Law
Family Law
Immigration Law
Litigation: The Trial Advocacy Program
Non-Profit and Public Interest Law
Sustainability and Community Development

If you don’t see the area of law you are interested in above, or if you wish more consultation and information about charting your professional path, contact:

Randy Wagner, Academic Advising – Room 465A
The Student Affairs Office – Suite 235
Faculty members – identify them by areas of specialty and by the courses they teach
The Office of Career Development & Opportunities (CDO) – Suite 223
Denver Law’s Office of Career Development & Opportunities

- Assists students in formulating career plans.
- Connects potential employers with qualified applicants.
- Advises students how to develop marketable, professional skills to assist in locating and obtaining satisfying and meaningful employment.

Build a relationship with the CDO

- Find their office on the Second Floor, in Suite 223.
- Read about Denver Law’s Career Consultants here.
- Contact the CDO to make an appointment with one of the Law Career Consultants.
Consider a path that takes you beyond your JD studies

You can take courses outside the law school

You may earn up to 8 (out of your total 90) law school credits at another DU graduate unit. The rest of DU runs on a quarter system; thus, 8 JD semester credits translates to 12 quarter credits (3 to 4 courses) taken in another graduate department or school.

You can complete an LLM alongside your JD.

Read more about [LLM and Denver Law Masters degrees here](#).

Pursue a Dual Degree at another DU unit, department or school

In one or more extra semesters, you can earn a Master’s degree in another field—Public Policy, Social Work, Business, International Studies, etc. **Important**: You must begin courses at the second unit prior to completing the first half of your law school credits.

Read more about [Dual Degrees here](#).
Be aware that there is a limit to out-of-class credits

You may take up to 25 out-of-class credits. These include:

- Externship credits
- Out-of-class clinic credits
- Credits earned in other DU units
- Credits earned for law journal work

Read the requirement here.
Reaching out for advice
Where do you go and with whom do you speak?

Many advisers are available at Denver Law. Ask questions, get opinions and collect perspectives. Then chart your path.

- Seek out faculty members from your classes and those who teach in areas of the law you want to pursue.
- Join the Professional Mentor Program.
- Join the Peer Mentor Program.
- Talk with your fellow students, especially students ahead of you at Denver Law, for example your Peer Mentor.
- You will meet members of the local bar. Ask them for advice.
- Set up a meeting with the Career Development and Opportunities Office. Contact them here.
- Set up a meeting with Randy Wagner, Administrative Director for Strategic Initiatives
  Jessica Boynton, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
Something to do right now

Join the Colorado Bar Association (CBA).
Student membership is free.
It’s a way to get out into the legal community and start networking.
Click here for student membership info.
Be sure to join sections associated with areas of the law you are interested in.