

LAW (JSD)

Graduate School

Program Website (<https://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/admissions/jsd-admissions/>)

CIP: 22.0203 | HEGIS: 1401.00 | NYSED: 13388

Graduate Field

Law (<https://catalog.cornell.edu/graduate-school/law/>)

Program Description

The Doctor of Science of Law degree is intended for students who want to become legal scholars and to pursue original investigations into the function, administration, history, and progress of law.

The minimum residence requirement is two full terms; the program requires at least four terms. Candidates typically complete the program within six terms. Candidates ordinarily concentrate on one legal field and do a substantial amount of work in at least one other field.

Concentrations

- Law

Program Information

- Instruction Mode: In Person
- Location: Ithaca, NY
- Minimum Credits for Degree: 48

Program Requirements

- Minimum Semesters for Degree: 4

Graduate School Milestones

- Responsible Conduct of Research Training: Required
- Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID): Required
- Student Progress Reviews (SPR) begin: First Year
- Defense of Dissertation (B Exam): Spring of Third Year

Field Specific Milestones

- Prospectus required spring of second year

Course Requirements

Additional course requirements may be set by the student's Special Committee. Program specific requirements that apply to all students are included below.

- Cornell Research Colloquium, taken in the first year in residence

University Graduation Requirements Requirements for All Students

In order to receive a Cornell degree, a student must satisfy academic and non-academic requirements.

Academic Requirements

A student's college determines degree requirements such as residency, number of credits, distribution of credits, and grade averages. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific major, degree, distribution, college, and graduation requirements for completing their chosen program of study. See the individual requirements listed by each college or school or contact the college registrar's office (<https://registrar.cornell.edu/service-resources/college-registrar-directory/>) for more information.

Non-academic Requirements

Conduct Matters. Students must satisfy any outstanding sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed or agreed to under the Student Code of Conduct (Code) or Policy 6.4. Where a formal complaint under the Code or Policy 6.4 is pending, the University will withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the adjudication process set forth in those procedures is complete, including the satisfaction of any sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed.

Financial Obligations. Outstanding financial obligations will not impact the awarding of a degree otherwise earned or a student's ability to access their official transcript. However, the University may withhold issuing a diploma until any outstanding financial obligations owing to the University are satisfied.

Learning Outcomes

- Cultivate and maintain a level of expertise in the general Field of Law that befits the degree level and institutional standards.
- Demonstrate an in-depth and dynamic knowledge of a specific, major or emerging topic in the Field of Law.
- Develop necessary effective professional skills, including surveying current events within the field, producing clear and concise writing, and creating well-organized presentations.
- Adhere to an approved timeline of research and exploration, faculty consultation, writing objectives, and progression towards a comprehensive dissertation defense.
- Produce original, publishable work(s) of novel and relevant scholarship, including publication of the dissertation in an external publication either prior to completing the degree or upon completion.
- Participate in topic-specific professional organizations, publications, and conferences in order to maintain a peer scholar network.
- Successfully complete and pass a Prospectus and B Examination prior to final dissertation submission.
- Represent and uphold the rigorous academic standards, ideals, and ethics of Cornell Law School and the Cornell University Graduate School throughout the program of study and after graduation.

Program Calendar

J.S.D. candidates follow Cornell Law School's Academic Calendar.

Fall 2025

Date	Event
August 25, 2025	First Day of Instruction
October 13-17, 2025	Fall Break
November 26-28, 2025	Thanksgiving Break
December 3, 2025	Last Day of Instruction
December 4-7, 2025	Study Days

December 8, 2025	First Day of Exams
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December 19, 2025	Last Day of Exams
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Spring 2026

Date	Event
January 13, 2026	First Day of Instruction for 1L Students
January 20, 2026	First Day of Term for All Other Courses
February 16-17, 2026	February Break
March 30-April 3, 2026	Spring Break
April 29, 2026	Last Day of Instruction
April 30-May 3, 2025	Study Days
May 4, 2026	First Day of Exams
May 15, 2026	Last Day of Exams