

Cornell Law School

2026 - 2027 LL.M. Curricular Requirements & Course Pre-Enrollment Instructions

GENERAL LL.M. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Degree Requirements:

All General LL.M. students are required to:

- Enroll in, attend, and pass the *Introduction to the American Legal System (IALS)* course held during Orientation;
- Enroll in, attend, and pass a three-credit seminar with a substantial writing component that satisfies the **legal writing requirement** or *Principles of American Legal Writing*. [Courses](#) that satisfy the legal writing requirement contain a “Writing” label in the course description (e.g. LAW 7156 *Copyright Litigation Lawyering*). A three-credit paper or five-credit Master’s thesis supervised by a faculty member may also satisfy the legal writing requirement in place of a seminar; and
- Enroll in, attend, and pass courses totaling at least **20 law credits** over two semesters.

New York Bar Exam Requirements:

LL.M. students who plan to sit for the New York Bar exam and need to [enroll under NY Court of Appeals Rule 520.6](#), must complete at least **24 law credits** in classroom courses, and coursework must include:

- 2 credits in professional responsibility;
- 2 credits in legal research, writing, and analysis;
- 2 credits in American legal studies; and
- 6 credits in core subjects covered by the New York Bar Exam.

Interested students are advised to review the *NYS Bar Requirements for LL.M.s* memo posted on the [Law School Registrar’s website](#).

ONLINE COURSE PRE-ENROLLMENT

Overview:

LL.M. students select courses from the Law School [Course Catalog](#). Initial course registration will begin **Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at 9:00 AM ET** and end **Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 4:00 PM ET** through [Student Center](#) and is known as “pre-enrollment”. Course availability during this pre-enrollment period is on a first-come, first-serve basis, meaning that those applying first will have enrollment priority. Note that the scheduled pre-enrollment period is in Eastern Time. We understand that incoming students are currently located in many different time zones around the world so please be conscious of your local time zone conversion to Eastern Time.

If you do not complete course pre-enrollment during your approved pre-enrollment window, you will need to select fall term courses during the course registration Add/Drop period in August.

Semester Enrollment Requirements:

LL.M. students typically take between **10 and 12 law credits** each semester. While the Law School’s pre-enrollment process allows for course selection of up to 17 credits, students may take no more than 15 credits (maximum) and no fewer than 10 credits (minimum) per semester. Total course enrollment must be within 10 - 15 credits by the end of the Add/Drop period unless otherwise approved by the Dean of Students Office through the [Exception to Hours](#) form.

For the fall semester, you will be automatically enrolled in the two-credit *Introduction to the American Legal System* (IALS) course. While this course counts towards your total course enrollment for the fall semester, it is still expected that you will enroll in a minimum of 10 additional law course credits for the remainder of the fall term.

Law School Course Pre-Enrollment Considerations:

Enrollment in any particular course outside of IALS is not guaranteed. Students should carefully consider their preferred course schedule during course pre-enrollment and during the Add/Drop period. Students who plan to sit for the New York Bar exam are advised that some courses required to satisfy the New York Bar cure provision may occasionally conflict with another of their preferred courses thereby preventing enrollment in both courses. Students cannot enroll in a course that overlaps in time with another course, even if the overlap is minimal. There are no exceptions.

Fall 2026 Clinical & Practicum Application:

Students do not enroll in [clinics and practicums](#) during course pre-enrollment; instead, they must apply and be selected by the clinical faculty during the designated June clinic pre-enrollment window. Note that enrollment in clinics and practicums is very competitive and selective. If you are not chosen to participate in a clinic or practicum during the fall term, you will have another opportunity to apply to participate during the spring term.

The application window for Fall 2026 clinical and practicum offerings is scheduled to begin **Monday, June 22, 2026, at 8:00 AM ET** and end **Monday, June 29, 2026, at 12:00 PM ET**. If you would like to be considered for enrollment in a clinic or practicum course for Fall 2026, you must submit your application during this window. Information on how to apply will be emailed to incoming LL.M. students by mid-June.

The application process will include: (1) selection of clinical or practicum offering(s), and (2) submission of relevant application materials. Application materials typically include a statement of interest, résumé, and transcript from your prior studies (note: an unofficial copy of your transcript will be sufficient). Some faculty members may request submission of additional materials, such as a cover letter or writing sample, when applying for their clinic or practicum.

Participation in a clinic or practicum course is not a degree requirement, and applying is optional.

Non-Regularly Scheduled Law School Classes:

LL.M. students may take no more than six (6) cumulative credits outside of regularly scheduled law school classes. These six cumulative credits include externships, directed readings, supervised writings, and graduate-level courses taught in other university divisions. Please note that externships are limited to 4 credit hours and may be further restricted by visa requirements and work authorization.

- Courses outside the Law School – LL.M. students may enroll in up to 6-credit hours of course work outside the Law School using the [Student Center](#) during the add/drop period. If you are requesting Law credit for non-Law courses, complete the [Request for Law Credit for Non-Law Course form](#) before the end of the Add/Drop period. For more information, review [FAQs About Registering for Courses Outside the Law School](#). Courses outside the Law School that are not cross listed will **not** qualify for the New York Bar cure provision.
- Directed Reading – The faculty has adopted several very specific rules governing directed reading courses. Students must be certain that the directed reading they are requesting satisfies each of these rules. Interested students may access the [Directed Reading \(Students\) form](#) on the Law Registrar’s site. Directed Reading credits are not classroom based and will **not** qualify for the New York Bar cure provision.
- Supervised Writing – LL.M. students may enroll in supervised research and writing with law faculty members. Interested students may access the [Supervised Writing form](#) or [Thesis form](#) on the Law Registrar’s site. Supervised writing credits are not classroom based and will **not** qualify for the New York Bar cure provision.
- Cornell Tech Courses – LL.M. students may enroll in select law courses offered through Cornell Tech that are listed in the [Law School Course Catalog](#). Cornell Tech courses are live-streamed from New York City to the Law School for Ithaca based students and contain a “NY Tech

Course" label in the course description. Cornell Tech course enrollment is virtual and credits will **not** qualify for the New York Bar cure provision. Note if you entered the U.S. on a student visa the federal government has reverted to pre-pandemic guidelines for international student online studies. **For example, if you have entered the U.S. on a F-1 visa only 3 credits of online, virtual, or distance learning count toward your required full-time enrollment per semester.**

Add/Drop Policy:

The dates and times below are tentative and subject to change. Please pay careful attention to emails from DOS and the Law Registrar for further information.

For the Fall 2026 semester, the Law School Add/Drop period is scheduled to begin on **Monday, August 17, 2026, at 9:00 AM ET**. A student may add (providing space is available) or drop courses until **Monday, August 31, 2026, at 11:59 PM ET**. Note: Clinical offerings may have an earlier deadline.

Students **must** be within 10 - 15 credit hours by the end of the Add/Drop period each semester.

Students are reminded to **review all course enrollments**, including law courses and any non-law courses, immediately following the Add/Drop period to confirm their **finalized course schedule**.

Waiting Lists:

Course enrollment caps are based on faculty requirements and classroom seating capacity. There are no waitlists during the July pre-enrollment period. During the Add/Drop period there will be ordered waitlists for limited-enrollment classes (classes with an enrollment capacity of 40 or fewer). Once the enrollment cap for a limited-enrollment course is reached, a waiting list will be created. If a seat becomes available in a limited-enrollment course, the registrar will automatically enroll students in the order they appear on the waitlist. Students are responsible for dropping a course if they no longer wish to be enrolled. Students are advised to check their Cornell email and course schedules regularly during the Add/Drop period as students will have a limited period to adjust their schedule.

Law School Course Pre-requisites:

The University's course registration system will only permit students to pre-enroll in a course requiring a pre-requisite if the pre-requisite has been taken in a previous semester. A student who wishes to be considered for enrollment who has not previously taken the required pre-requisite may request a waiver from the instructor. Students must email the instructor detailing prior coursework/experience and complete the [Prerequisite Waiver Form](#) which requires the signature of the instructor. Students requesting a pre-requisite waiver are advised to request approval from the instructor well before the pre-enrollment period to ensure that an approved waiver is timely processed and access is granted to select the desired course. Once the instructor's approval has been secured, the form must be submitted to the Law Registrar. The next opportunity after pre-enrollment to request a pre-requisite waiver will be during the Add/Drop period at the beginning of each semester.

Class Attendance:

ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED on a regular basis beginning on the first day of the semester. **Irregular attendance or neglect of work may result in removal from the course with a failing grade or other sanctions.** Regular attendance is required for certification to the bar examiners. **Students must notify their instructor if they miss a class and notify the Dean of Students Office (law.dos@cornell.edu) if missing more than three classes.**

Auditing Courses:

With permission of the instructor, law students may register for a course as an auditor. Interested students may access the [Audit form](#) on the Law Registrar's site. However, please note that faculty members cannot override seminar enrollment capacity or classroom seating capacity established by the Law Registrar. Auditors may not sit for examinations. Auditing is recorded on the internal/unofficial and official record. Auditing is not available for the majority of non-law course offerings.

Examinations and Laptops:

Each student must have a laptop prior to enrollment for personal use and to complete Law School Exams via Exam4. We also recommend students avoid purchasing digital textbooks, as they cannot be used during an "Open Book / Closed Laptop" exam.

Faculty Bios:

Biographies for all faculty members are published in the [Faculty Directory](#).

Grading:

LL.M. students are graded on the scale of High Honors (HH), Honors (H), Satisfactory (S), and Unsatisfactory (U), except that an LL.M. student may, after consultation with a DOS advisor, elect to be graded on the J.D. scale and curve. Review the [Graduate Program Grading Policy](#) for additional details. The grading scale election applies to the student's entire period of LL.M. study (*i.e.*, two full semesters) and must be made by notifying the Law Registrar by the appropriate deadline, typically within the first four weeks of the date Fall semester classes begin. **The Law Registrar will communicate the exact deadline via email.**

All externships and directed reading, supervised writing and supervised teaching will be graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U). Grades received from courses graded exclusively S/U will be recorded as SX or UX.

University Registration Status:

The Office of the University Registrar determines student registration status. To be considered a **registered student** by the University, a student must:

- complete course enrollment according to individual college requirements;

- settle all financial accounts, including current semester tuition;
- clear any holds, whether these are from the Bursar's Office, Cornell Health, the Judicial Administrator, or the Dean of your college; and
- satisfy Cornell University and New York State health requirements.

Students can check their registration status at the beginning of the semester using the [Student Center](#). View the "Holds" box on the home page of the Student Center. If you have no holds, you are registered with the University. If you have a hold that says "No Registration, Trans, Diploma" or "No Registration" then you are not registered. It is possible for there to be other "Holds" listed that do not affect registration. Click on "Details," then click on the "Hold Item" link to find out what is affected and how to clear the hold.

If you do not clear the hold, after the third week of classes you will lose access to university services and be charged a late fee, in addition to finance charges. If you register after the sixth week of classes, you will be charged an additional late fee, in addition to finance charges. Failure to register will impact financial aid, loan deferments and health benefits that rely on in-school status. If you are an international student, failure to register will also impact your visa status. This may also affect the ability to use certain services on campus such as your Cornell Card, Library Services, and Cornell Health.