



# Your Academic Path:

*Choices, Requirements, and Logistics*

Office of Clinical and Pro Bono Programs  
Office of Student Academic Affairs  
Registrar's Office

March 2026

# 500+ Choices

Courses

Seminars

# Choices

Reading Groups

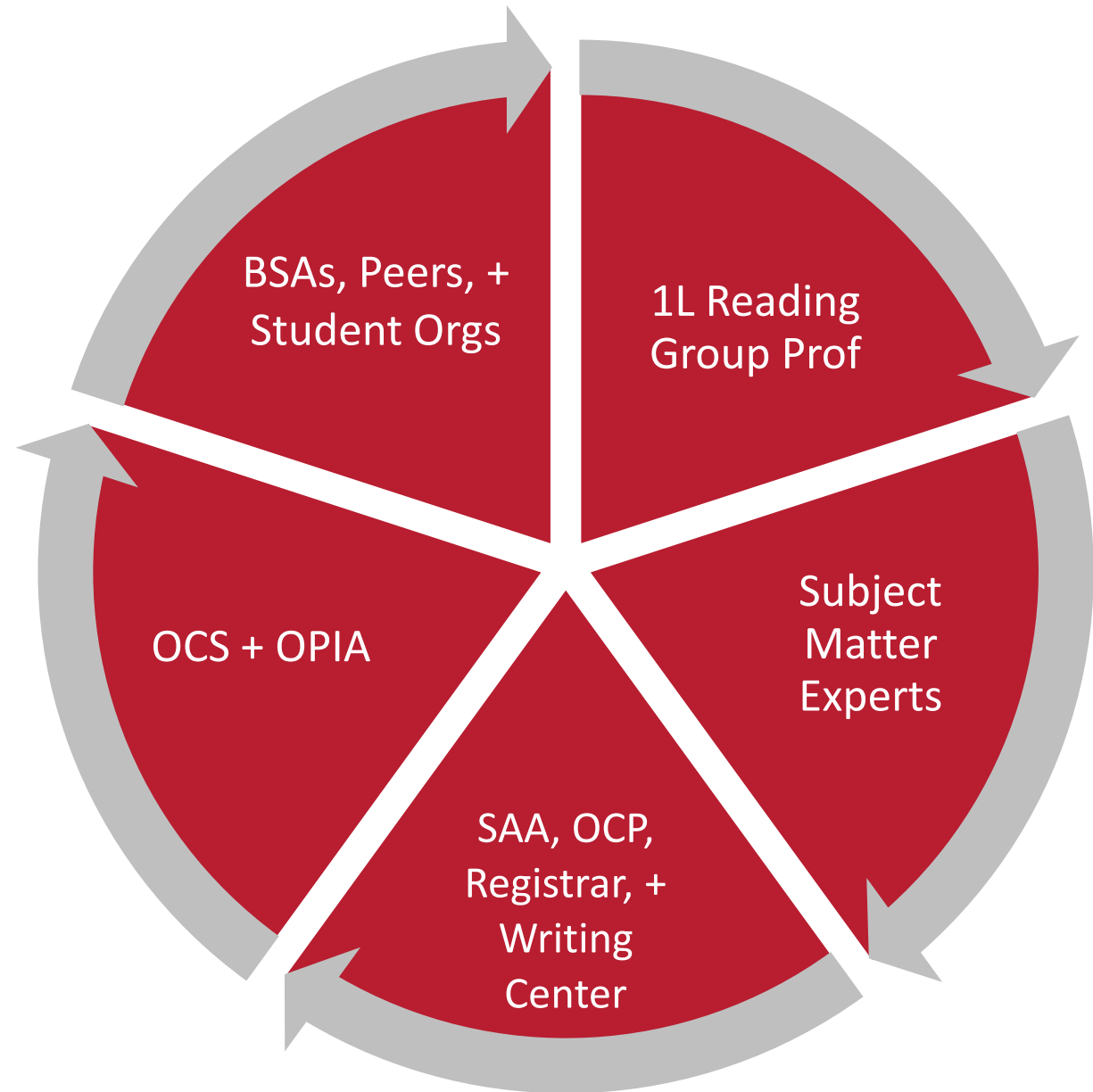
Writing

Clinics/Externships

Cross-Registration

# Academic Network

For more information:



# Guiding Principles

1. Develop **SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE** in 1 or 2 area(s) of interest to you and supportive of your career goals.
2. Hone **PRACTICAL SKILLS** important for your career via clinics, externships, hands-on courses, and cross-registered courses.
  - i.e., research /writing, advocacy, client services, contract drafting, negotiation, financial skills, language skills, statistics
3. Complete **J.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**.
4. Consider subjects on your jurisdiction's **BAR EXAM**.
5. **Expand your horizon with courses of interest!**

# Guiding Principles for Clerkships

1. Develop **RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY**.
  - Multiple courses, seminars, writing opportunities, Research Assistant, Teaching Fellow, etc.
  - Will need 3 recommendation letters
2. Look for opportunities to craft a **WRITING SAMPLE**.
3. Judges tend to **PREFER DOCTRINAL COURSES** so aim for at least 50/50 balance with seminars/clinics.
4. Strive to take:
  - Administrative Law
  - Criminal Procedure
  - Employment Law
  - Evidence
  - Federal Courts

A photograph of a bookshelf filled with books of various colors and sizes. The books are arranged in two rows. The top row is more densely packed, while the bottom row has more space between the books. The word "Requirements" is overlaid in large, white, serif font across the middle of the image, centered between the two rows of books. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Requirements

# Types of Requirements

For more information:

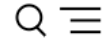


Credit Requirements

Residency Requirements

Degree Requirements

# Handbook of Academic Policies 2025-2026



*The Handbook of Academic Policies is the official source of academic policy and requirements at HLS.*

*Please refer to the HAP for additional information on degree requirements and academic policy.*

## Table of Contents

Find details on Harvard Law School's academic policies by opening sections below.

<b>Preface</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>I. Requirements for the J.D. Degree</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>II. Requirements for Graduate Degrees</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>III. Additional Academic Opportunities (J.D. and Graduate Programs)</b>	<b>+</b>

For more information:



# Credit Requirements

*The American Bar Association (ABA) determines the credits required for an accredited law school curriculum.*

52 upper-level credits in 2L + 3L years



36 classroom credits

16 additional credits



More classroom credits

Max. 16 clinical credits

Max. 12 writing credits

Max. 12 cross-registration/joint/  
coordinated degree credits

# Residency Requirements

	Min. Required	Max. Allowed
Each Academic Year	24	35
Each Fall + Spring Term	10	16
Each Winter Term	2	3

Students must maintain annual and term minimum credit requirements regardless of total number of credits taken.


For example, front-loading credits to take fewer than 24 credits in 3L year is not permitted.

# Degree Requirements

- ✓ **Experiential Learning**
  - 6 credits
  - 1L JET satisfied 2-3 credits + 1L Spring LRW satisfied 2 credits
  
- ✓ **International & Comparative Law Course**
  - 1 course; Min. 3 credits
  
- ✓ **J.D. Written Work**
  - *Analytical Paper* - Research paper min. 20-25 pages, created as part of Independent Written Work, Writing Group, or Course/Seminar/Workshop Papers
  - *Professional Writing* - 5 pages, created as part of clinic or course that satisfies Experiential Learning Requirement
  - Both require supervisory feedback and written peer feedback on substantially completed draft
  
- ✓ **Negotiation/Leadership**
  - 1 course, clinic or combo; Min. 2 credits
  - Possibility satisfied by 1L JET or 1L Spring Elective
  
- ✓ **Professional Responsibility**
  - 1 course; 2 credits minimum

*Plus 50 Pro Bono Hours . . .*

# Course Catalog (<https://hls.harvard.edu/courses>)



**HARVARD  
LAW SCHOOL**

Showing 21 results. [Reset all filters](#)

Page 1 of 1 [← Prev](#) [Next →](#)

Spring 2026

**Type**

Clinic

Course

Reading Group

Seminar

**Requirements**

Analytical Paper

Experiential Learning

International/Comparative

Negotiation/Leadership

Professional Responsibility

Professional Writing

**Day(s)**

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

<b>American Indian Law</b>	Spring 2026 Course 3 credit(s)	<b>M, T</b> 1:30pm – 3:00pm Robert Anderson
<b>Climate Change and the Politics of International Law</b>	Spring 2026 Course 3 credit(s)	<b>W, Th, F</b> 1:30pm – 3:30pm Anne Orford
<b>Comparative Constitutional Law</b>	Spring 2026 Course 3 credit(s)	<b>Th, F</b> 8:30am – 10:00am Madhav Khosla
<b>Comparative Corporate Governance</b>	Fall 2025 Course 4 credit(s)	<b>M, T</b> 3:45pm – 5:45pm Mariana Pargendler
<b>Comparative Corporate Governance and Finance</b>	Fall 2025 Course 3 credit(s)	<b>M, T</b> 10:15am – 11:45am Mark Roe
<b>Comparative Law: Ancient Law</b>	Fall 2025 Course 3 credit(s)	<b>Th, F</b> 10:15am – 11:45am Adriaan Lanni
<b>Comparative Law: Why Law? The Experience of China</b>	Spring 2026 Course 4 credit(s)	<b>M, W</b> 10:15am – 12:15pm William Alford
<b>Constitutionalism at the Margins- Human Rights in Contested</b>	Fall 2025 Course	<b>M, T</b> 1:30pm – 3:00pm



# Logistics



# Selection Process

For more information:



Phase	Open	Close	Results Available
Clinical Selection	Tuesday, 3/31 @ 9am	Thurs, 4/2 @ 5pm	Mon, 4/6 by 5pm
Legal Profession Course Selection	Tues, 4/7 @ 9am	Weds, 4/8 at 5pm	Fri, 4/10 by 5pm
Multi-Section Course Selection	Sat, 4/11 @ 9am	Tues, 4/14 @ 5pm	Thurs, 4/16 by 5pm
Fall Elective Selection*	Fri, 4/17 @ 9am	Tues, 4/21 @ 12pm	Thurs, 4/23 by 5pm

*\*Winter and Spring 2027 electives selected in Fall 2026.*

# Clinics

Practice Component  
(Clinical Credits)



Seminar Component  
(Classroom Credits)



Hands-on legal experience under  
supervision of attorneys

**25** In-House Clinics

**13** Externship Clinics

*Which clinic(s) align with my personal learning goals?*

Use our [Clinic Finder](#) to begin to narrow your options and meet with an OCP advisor to discuss more!

Clinic Finder > Clinics

Skills Learned ▾ Areas of Interest ▾ Graduation... ▾ Term ▾ Location ▾

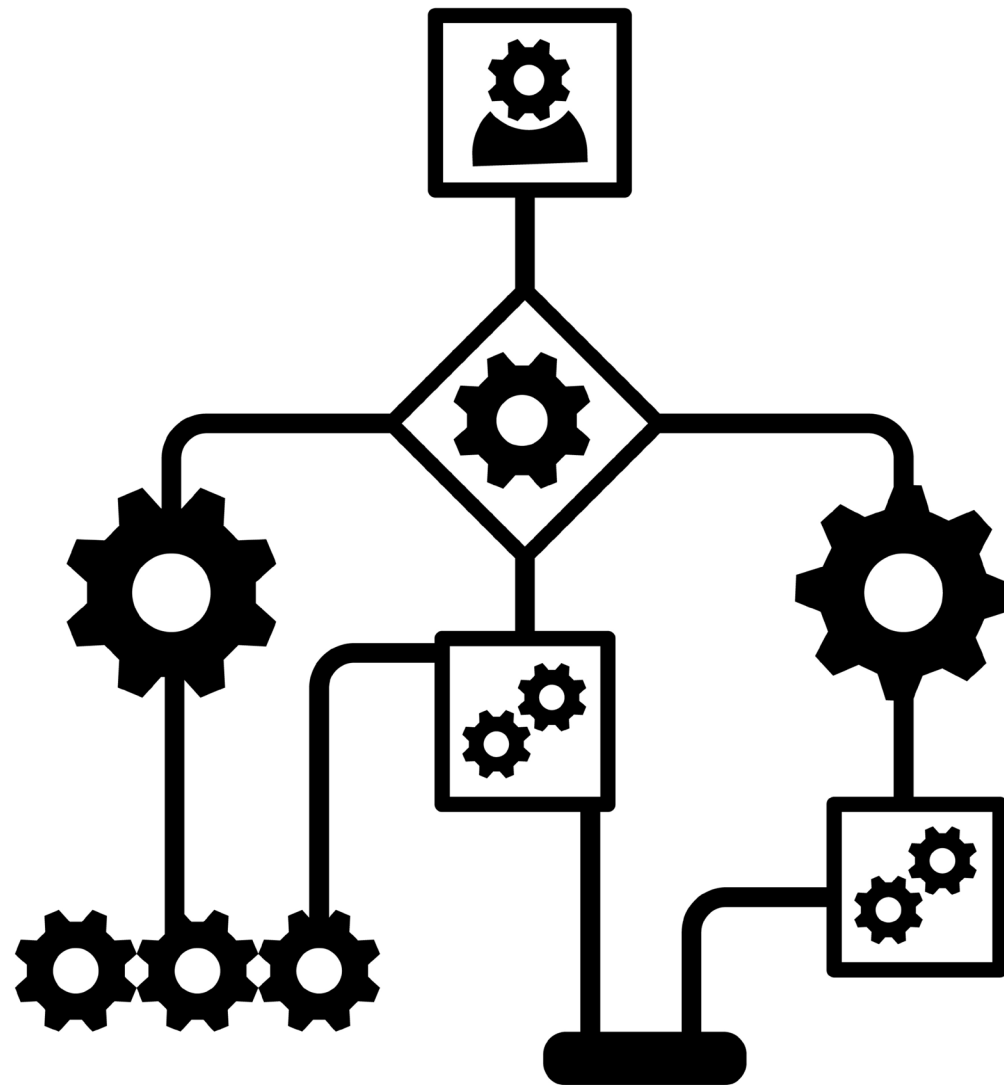
Clinic Name	Skills Learned	Areas of Interest	Graduation Requirements (Eligible) ↓
Judicial Process in Trial Courts Clinic	Advancing Rule of Law Analyzing	Administrative and Regulatc	Experiential Learning Professic
Human Rights Entrepreneurs Clinic	Analyzing Facts Collaborating, Te	Comparative Law Civil Li	Experiential Learning Professic
Government Lawyer: Attorney General Clinic	Advancing Rule of Law Analyzing	Administrative and Regulatc	Experiential Learning Professic


# Multi-Section Courses

Foundational courses taught by multiple professors each year, and tend to be larger (75-125 seats) courses

Multi-Section Courses	
Administrative Law	Evidence
Bankruptcy Law	Federal Courts and the Federal System
Constitutional Law: First Amendment	Negotiation Workshop
Corporations	Public International Law
Criminal Procedure: Survey	Taxation
Criminal Procedure: Investigations	Trial Advocacy Workshop

# Enrollment Algorithm





What if I don't get  
the courses I want  
through the  
lottery?

# Post- Selection Process

## **Add/Drop**

- Opens after each round's results are available
- Can make changes in Helios until each term's deadline
- Some clinics/classes have earlier deadlines, noted in Course Catalog

## **Waitlist**

- Waitlist offers made when seat is available
- Offers made in May and June, lasting 24 hours
- Paused mid-June to mid-August
- Made mid-August to Add/Drop deadline, lasting 15 hours

## **Firesale**

- One day process (next business day after add/drop closes)
- Opportunity to request open seats in classes which you were waitlisted for and did not receive offer

# Other Enrollment Opportunities

(i.e., outside Helios)

For more information:



- **Cross-Registration**
  - Any Harvard schools, MIT, and Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts
- **By Permission Courses**
  - i.e., Becoming a Law Professor, Investments Workshop, Public Law Workshop, Teaching Copyright
- **By Application Clinics**
  - i.e., HLAB, Semester in Washington, Religious Freedom Clinic
- **Writing Groups**

# Upcoming Events



## **Academic Advising Drop Ins**

- Fridays, 12-5pm, WCC 3025 (in Clinical Wing)

## **Clinical Program Open House and Academic Advising Fair**

- Tuesday, March 31, 11:30am-1:30pm, Milstein East

## **Academic Advising & Clinical Program Tabling**

- Wednesday, April 1, Monday, April 13, and Monday, April 20, 12:30-1:30pm, WCC South Lobby
- Wednesday, April 8 and Friday, April 17, 12:30-1:30pm, Hark Ramp

# Questions?

