



Juris Doctorate

The Juris Doctorate degree at the National Institute for Law and Justice is a four year program of study designed for adult learners that blends synchronous and asynchronous instruction within a comprehensive curriculum specifically to prepare law school students for careers as practicing attorneys. The JD curriculum is designed to meet all requirements prescribed by the California State Bar and the American Bar Association. The degree program is campus based.

First Year Requirements:

Introduction to Law – LAW 500

An overview of the American legal system, including an examination of the Biblical and historical foundations of the common law and the common law subjects to be studied in the first year. Students are introduced to important legal terminology, basic legal analysis, concepts of counseling, as well as the proper application of basic life principles to the practice of law.

Contracts – LAW 501

This course provides a study of civilly enforceable agreements, including the common law development of contract principles. Specific topics include formation elements, such as offer, acceptance, and consideration; performance of contracts and the related subjects of conditions, discharges, and breach; damages and remedies; third-party beneficiaries, assignments and delegations; and statutory changes to the common law of contracts.

Criminal Law – LAW 502

Students enrolled in this course are provided with an examination of the common law doctrines and development of criminal law, with a thorough overview of modern crimes and punishments. The principles of actus reus, mens rea, and causation are discussed, along with the specific elements of each crime.

Torts – LAW 503

This class focuses on civil wrongs and injuries and the civil liability which results from such wrongs and injuries. General topics include theories of tort liability, intentional torts to persons and property, negligence, strict liability, and the more specific areas of products liability, nuisance, misrepresentation, defamation, invasion of privacy, and torts in business.

Legal Research & Writing I – LAW 504

This course provides an introduction to the fundamental sources and techniques of legal research, including use of a law library and its various resources. The course also presents an in-depth study of legal writing, with the goal that students develop their analytical writing skills. This first year focuses on essay writing, case analysis, logic, and the legal memorandum.

First Year Law Exam Preparation – LAW 505

This course prepares students to take the California State Bar, First Year Law Student Examination.

Second Year Requirements:

Civil Procedure – LAW 506

This class encompasses the study of how rights and remedies are addressed through a civil lawsuit, including a survey of the goals and strategies of litigation. The course analyzes the development of a civil action from pretrial to the entry of judgment, including pleadings, motions, joinder of parties, discovery, process, and practice. Examination is also given to the appellate process and to the organization and jurisdiction of federal and state courts.

Legal Research & Writing II – LAW 507

A continuation of the subject matter developed in Legal Research & Writing I. The second year focuses on objective writing and computer-aided research skills.

Property – LAW 508

This class provides student with an introduction to private property, both real and personal. Topics of study include personal property, donative transfers, future interests and estates in land, landlord/tenant law, freehold and non-freehold estates, easements and covenants, land improvements, conveyances and transfers of interest, and adverse possession. Attention is also given to the practical aspects of real property law, such as real estate contracts, deeds and mortgages, liens on property, legal descriptions, the recording system, and title insurance.

Constitutional Law – LAW 509

This class provides a thorough study of the basic concepts of constitutional law, with particular emphasis on the United States Constitution and governmental design. The course examines the separation of powers between branches of the federal government and between federal and state governments, federal commerce and fiscal power (including taxation and the Commerce Clause), judicial review, international affairs, procedural and substantive due process, state police power, equal protection, civil rights, and First Amendment liberties.

Principles of the Common Law – LAW 510

This course provides an examination of the Biblical principles which provided the basis of English common law and their application to modern American jurisprudence. Students will study the development of these principles and analyze current legal issues from the perspective of Biblical principles. The limits of governmental authority and scope of individual liberty are also studied.

The Opposing Counsel – LAW 511

This course provides students with an in depth look at the more strategic aspects of the practice of law. Included within this class will be instruction and analysis of legal strategies invoked by opposing counsel in a variety of disputes. Case studies will be used, along with a variety of strategic level analyses to highlight what the opposing counsel may be thinking, how they are likely to respond, how to anticipate their action and reaction in the legal setting, and judge/jury reactions to legal arguments and contests.

Third Year Requirements:

Business Law – LAW 512

This course examines the formation, control, property, structure, and dissolution of business organizations, including the rights and duties of officers and shareholders, and state and federal rules regarding close and public corporations. The course further examines the principles of agency and partnership, including the rights, duties, and liabilities of persons so related.

Criminal Procedure – LAW 513

This course provides students in attendance with an analysis of the administration and enforcement of criminal law from pre-arrest to appellate review by state and federal courts. The course discusses the constitutional rights of the accused and the guidelines for law enforcement agents, including arrest, search and seizure, due process, right to jury, police interrogation, and confessions. Criminal trial practice, proceedings, and techniques are also explored.

Evidence – LAW 514

Students enrolled in this class will be provided with a comprehensive study of the law regarding admission or exclusion of testimonial and documentary evidence in civil and criminal cases. Specific topics may include sufficiency and relevancy of evidence, order of proof, notice, hearsay, presumptions, privilege, competency, and impeachment of witnesses.

Legal Research & Writing III – LAW 515

This class builds on the concepts presented in Legal Research & Writing I and II, the third year centers on persuasive writing, including trial and appellate briefs. An additional one hour of credit may be earned if a student chooses to take the Appellate Advocacy elective in the second semester of the third year.

Wills and Trusts – LAW 516

This class provides student with a comprehensive study of the basic principles of intestate succession and testamentary instruments, including the construction, interpretation, revocation, administration, and execution of wills. The course also examines the creation and termination of trusts, as well as the fiduciary administration of both estates and trusts.

The Judge, the Law, the Case, and Attorney Preparation for the Courtroom – LAW 517

To help students prepare for themselves to be effective within the courtroom setting, this class provides a thorough indoctrination to criminal and civil procedure within municipal, superior/district courts, federal courts, and appellate courts. Judges of these courts play by rules, command conformance to those rules, expect certain behaviors from those attorneys arguing cases before the court, and in order to be effective, attorneys must maintain a thorough understanding of this environment. This course will illustrate how courts work, the thought processes used by judges and juries to arrive at conclusions, the protocols associated with trial law, and the mechanisms found most effective in preparing and delivering arguments.

Fourth Year Requirements:

Community Property – LAW 518

A study of the law in California and other community property jurisdictions as applied to real and personal property owned by a husband and wife.

Remedies – LAW 519

This course identifies and distinguishes the types of recovery available to a plaintiff for both legal and equitable relief, including the study of the viability of monetary damages, specific performance, injunctive relief, and other recovery in tort, contract, real property, and constitutional law.

Uniform Commercial Code- LAW 520

A survey and analysis of commercial transactions as these relate to the Uniform Commercial Code. Although the UCC is covered in first-year Contracts, this course offers a more detailed study of the subject.

Trail Advocacy – LAW 521

This course engages students in practical exercises designed to develop students' familiarity with trial procedures, including pretrial motions, jury selection, opening statements, presentation of documentary and testimonial evidence, and closing arguments. During these exercises, students are required to employ the rules of evidence, both California and federal, necessary to successfully bring and defend pretrial motions, to raise and respond to objections at trial, and to conduct other stages of the trial.

Professional Responsibility – LAW 522

This course explores the modern challenges to fulfilling the attorney's professional responsibility and the far more profound dilemmas facing a responsible attorney seeking to practice ethically and to adhere to the highest professional values in the 21st century. Topics include organization and regulation of the legal profession; canons of ethics; disciplinary measures; the lawyer's responsibility to clients, the community, and the profession; and the obligation of judges to remain impartial and independent.

Appellate Advocacy – LAW 523

In this course, students study appellate practice and procedure, the appellate process, appellate court rules, writ practice, and strategies for structuring a case for appellate review. Students prepare and submit a formal appellate brief and participate in an oral argument competition.

Bar Examination Preparation – LAW 524

This class is devoted to preparing students to successfully pass the California Bar Examination.