

UC Berkeley School of Law

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UC BERKELEY SCHOOL OF LAW



Established	1894
Mailing address	215 Boalt Hall, Berkeley CA 94720
Phone	510-642-1741
Website	http://www.law.berkeley.edu/
Student-faculty ratio	10.9:1
Number of students enrolled	869
Acceptance rate	12.7%

Bar passage rate (first-time test takers)	92%
Law school cost (tuition and fees)	\$50,163 per year

Overview

The University of California, Berkeley, School of Law is also referred to as Boalt Hall and as Berkeley School of Law. The Department of Jurisprudence at Berkeley was founded in 1894 and thereafter the department was renamed School of Jurisprudence in 1912 and School of Law in 1950. Even though UC Berkeley School of Law is one of the best law schools in U.S. its environment is considered to be less stressful than most.

The law school has an acceptance rate that is lower than every other U.S. law school except Yale and Stanford. But Berkeley Law emphasizes more on GPAs and personal statements than on LSAT scores, and the school does not have a letter-grading system but has a pass/fail system designed to reduce the rat race.

The UC Berkeley School of Law offers interdisciplinary or dual degrees to interested students in combination with other schools in the university and also in combination with other universities across the nation. In the Berkeley-Harvard program, students in third year study at Harvard.

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Rankings and reputation

In the U.S. News Law School Rankings published in 2012, Berkeley Law was placed seventh in its [list of best law schools in the country](#). This also makes it the highest ranked public law school.

The [intellectual property law](#) department has been considered No. 1 in the nation for the past 11 years by the U.S. News & World Report. The school is also well-known for its social justice, environmental law and international law programs.

Prospects of placement and employment are as expected from one of the best schools of law in the U.S. Berkeley law graduates have a success rate of more than 88% at the bar and more than 98% are employed nine months after graduation. The ABA report on the employment prospects of the graduating class of 2011 shows that 80 percent of them were employed in jobs requiring bar passage within nine months of graduation.

Berkeley Law also was featured in a list of top law schools analyzed and ranked by LawCrossing CEO Harrison Barnes. This list can be found here: [Top Law Schools Analyzed and Ranked by America's Top Legal Recruiter](#).

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Admissions

Berkeley Law received 7,253 applications in 2011, out of which 920 were accepted. That's an acceptance rate of 12.7%. Average undergraduate GPA is between 3.64 and 3.89, while average LSAT score is between 163 and 170.

Personal statements are extremely important in gaining admission to Berkeley and usual personal statements submitted at Berkeley are known to be twice the length of that required by other law schools. The personal statement makes few specific requirements but is an opportunity for candidates to express themselves and their journey through life. Of course, the personal statement also provides a sample of the candidate's intelligence, expressions, and writing skills. Though personal statements are allowed to be up to four pages in length, resumes are expected to be in single-page formats. Letters of recommendation are also given much weight in the admission process.

Like other top-tier law schools, Berkeley expects candidates to apply early though there is no early-decision program. Applications are usually opened from late October and offers start being sent then.

Berkeley Law's in-state resident tuition fees are lower than that in most universities though the law school is among the top ten in the world.

Admission criteria

	LSAT	GPA
25th-75th Percentile	164-169	3.62-3.88
Median	167	3.79

The above LSAT and GPA data pertain to the fall 2011 entering class.

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Grading system

Berkeley law students are not ranked by their academic records. The law school does not calculate grade point averages (GPAs). Students can receive one of five grades in courses:

- High Honors (HH)
- Honors (H)
- Pass Conditional/Substandard Pass (PC)
- Credit (CR)/No Pass (NP) very few courses are graded on this basis
- No Credit (NC), a failing grade showing that no credit has been earned for the course

In first-year classes, the curve for honors grades is strict-the top 40% of the class receives honors grades, with 10% of the class receiving High Honors and the next 30% receiving Honors. There is no required curve for the grades of Pass and below, and faculty members are not required to give any Substandard Pass or No Credit grades. In second- and third-year classes, up to 45% of the class can receive honors grades, of which up to 15% of students can receive High Honors. In small seminar classes, the curve still exists, but it is further relaxed. Very few courses are graded on a Credit (CR)/No Pass (NP) basis.

Berkeley students are not ranked by their academic records. Moreover, the grade ranges described above often do not make fine distinctions. A student who received a Pass grade, for example, may have done very strong or only minimally passing work. Students are graded on a curve, which strictly limits recognition for excellence. The grading system has remained constant for more than 25 years; and there has been no grade inflation.

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Awards

- Jurisprudence Prize: Awarded to the highest-ranking student in each section/class
- Prosser Prize: Awarded to the second-highest-ranking student in each section/class
- Best Brief Award: Awarded for the best brief
- Best Oral Argument Award: Awarded for the best oral argument
- James Patterson McBaine Honors Moot Court Award: Awarded for advanced moot court competition
- Ellis J. Harmon Prize in Environmental Law & Policy: Awarded for the best research paper in Environmental Law and Policy
- Alvin & Sadie Landis Prizes in Water Law & Government Law: Awarded for the best research papers in Water Law and Government Law
- Thelen Marrin Award for Scholarship: Awarded for the best GPA from the first five semesters
- Thelen Marrin Award for Writing: Awarded for the best published student article
- Stephen Finney Jamison Award: Awarded to the best student scholar-advocate
- Anthony F. Dragonette Memorial: Awarded to the best third-year student in Civil Trial Practice
- Alvin & Sadie Landis Scholarship: Awarded to the best student in Local Government Law or Water Law
- Francine M. Diaz Memorial Award: Awarded to the third-year minority woman student who best exemplifies the spirit of public interest law practice
- Class of 1995 Student Service Award: Awarded to the third-year student who has contributed the most to the Boalt Hall community
- Brian M. Sax Prize: Awarded for excellence in clinical advocacy
- National Association of Women Lawyers Award: Awarded to a graduating female student for excellence in

promoting women's welfare

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Honors

Each year the Order of the Coif extends invitations to the top 10% of graduating JD students by grade point average. GPA is determined by multiplying the point value of each grade received in a course (HH = 5 points, H = 3, P = 2) by the units given for that course and dividing the sum of the products by each student's total number of graded units.

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Placement facts

Starting Salaries in Private Sector(median)	\$160,000
Starting Salaries in Public Service(median)	\$59,000
Graduates known to be employed at graduation	90.6%
Graduates known to be employed nine months after graduation	93.6%

Data for 2010 Graduates employed full-time.

Areas of legal practice where Berkeley law graduates are employed

Law Firms	65.7%
Business and Industry	1.8%
Government	8.7%
Public Interest Organizations	12.3%
Judicial Clerkships	9.4%
Academia	2.2%
Unknown	0.0%

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Externships

Berkeley offers a field placement program. There are three components to the field placement program, all of which are supervised by the field placement coordinator. These are:

General Field Placement Program: In this program, students work with supervising [attorneys in public interest organizations or government agencies](#). These field placements offer work in many different areas, including civil rights, consumer protection, criminal law, employment, environmental law, health, housing, poverty, regulatory law, and women's rights.

Judicial Externship Program: Students work as externs for local, federal, or state judges. The externships may be full-time or part-time.

Away Field Placement Program: Students get field placements outside of the San Francisco Bay Area.

UCDC Law Program: Started in Spring 2009, law students are eligible to participate in a semester externship program in Washington, DC in which students receive up to 10 units for their field placements.

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Internships

The law school offers a program called the Domestic Violence Law Practicum, which provides students opportunities to work in domestic violence legal agencies or with their instructors on state legislation. Students work on real cases, either in faculty-supervised field placements or under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

The law school's summer internship program provides an excellent opportunity to gain meaningful hands-on experience working on cutting edge issues and to work with leading scholars and advocates in the field. The spring semester internships are handled by the Warren Institute.

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Clinical programs

The clinical programs provide many opportunities for students to work on real cases as part of their legal education. During second and third years, students can participate in a variety of clinical projects that provide legal services directly to individual clients or that involve close interaction with lawyers on large-scale cases or other legal matters. Clinical opportunities include:

- International Human Rights Law Clinic
- Samuelson Law
- Technology and Public Policy Clinic
- East Bay Community Law Center
- Domestic Violence Clinic
- Death Penalty Clinic

The student-run clinics are typically open to first-year students who work under the supervision of 2L and 3L students and skilled practitioners. No course credit is given for participation in student-run clinics. The student-run clinics are:

- California Asylum Representation Clinic
- East Bay Workers' Rights Clinic
- HIV Outreach Program
- Homeless Outreach Program
- Migrant Legal Services

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Moot court

The James Patterson McBaine Honors Competition is Berkeley's [moot court competition](#) and is open to all second- and third-year law students. Cases chosen for the competition involve cutting-edge issues of great public importance. The competition format is modeled after US Supreme Court practice. All competitors must prepare both an appellate brief and an oral argument.

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Journals

- California Law Review
- Asian American Law Journal
- Berkeley Business Law Journal
- Berkeley Journal of African-American Law & Policy
- Berkeley Journal of Criminal Law
- Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labor Law
- Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice
- Berkeley Journal of International Law
- Berkeley La Raza Law Journal
- Berkeley [Technology Law](#) Journal
- Ecology Law Quarterly
- Berkeley Journal of Middle Eastern & Islamic Law
- Berkeley Journal of Entertainment & Sports Law

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Notable alumni

Berkeley Law School has produced many graduates who have gone on to hold top positions in business, government and judiciary as well as in the media. Earl Warren and Dean Rusk got their law degrees from Berkeley. Some of the notable alumni are:

- Kathryn M. Werdegar - Associate Justice, California Supreme Court
- Howard Lincoln - Chairman and CEO of the Seattle Mariners; former chairman of Nintendo of America
- Robert K. Tanenbaum - Novelist and former Mayor of Beverly Hills, CA
- Richard Delgado - Professor at University of Pittsburgh School of Law, expert in civil rights law and critical race theory
- Barry Scheck - co-founder of the Innocence Project
- Joan Donoghue - Judge, International Court of Justice
- Craig Walker - Founder of Grandcentral, Yahoo! Voice, Entrepreneur-in-residence at Google Ventures
- Reynato S. Puno, MA of Laws - Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines
- Larry Hillblom - Co-founder of DHL Express

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In the news

05/15/12

A 121-page report which cost \$300,000 to produce has concluded that the university police can use batons and pepper spray . But the report also says that these weapons should be used as the last resort. The report has around 50 recommendations for handling various forms of student protests. It also says that administrators should respect civil disobedience and avoid “blind adherence” to rules and regulations.

Former DOJ attorney John Woo's continued employment as law faculty in the UC Berkeley School of Law is being protested by a San Francisco anti-war group at the law school's commencement ceremony at the Hearst Greek Theatre.

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