



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

# College of Law

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# STUDENT HANDBOOK

## Academic and Administrative Policies

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October 2019

Subject to further revision and updating by the Office of the Dean  
Any changes will be posted on the College of Law website.

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this Handbook is to inform you about important academic and administrative regulations and procedures that govern your studies at the College of Law. It is the responsibility of all students to know and observe all regulations and procedures of the College of Law and Northern Illinois University. Students are thus responsible for, and are presumed to know and understand, all of the law school's policies and procedures included in the Handbook, as modified throughout the school year. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because students plead ignorance of, or contend that they were not informed of, the regulations or procedures.

The regulations and procedures are subject to change at any time, and any material changes will be emailed to students and posted on the law school's website at [www.niu.edu/law](http://www.niu.edu/law). Such changes are binding on all students. The Handbook does *not* create a contract between the students and the College of Law or the University.

In rare instances, there are special circumstances that might require a waiver of a regulation, requirement or general law school policy. Students should speak with the Associate Dean or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs about such a circumstance. Where a waiver is possible, decisions regarding whether to grant a waiver are entirely within the discretion of the deans.

Additional information concerning the College of Law, its various departments and their policies and procedures is available on the [College of Law website](#) and in various written and oral communications with students. Much of this information is indicated by a hyperlink in the electronic version of this Handbook. If there is a conflict or inconsistency between those sources and this Handbook with respect to a material issue of policy or a procedural requirement, the terms of the Handbook, as amended from time to time, are controlling.

Resources for information and answers to questions about various issues of relevance to law students are listed in Appendix A. Questions about academic policies and their interpretation should be addressed to the one of the College of Law deans.

*October 1, 2019*

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## **I. LAW SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

The following sections describe the administrative offices within the College of Law and include contact information for the administrative staff, so that students can find the appropriate office to which to address a question or concern. The abbreviation “SP” refers to Swen Parson Hall on Normal Road in DeKalb, Illinois 60115.

### **1.1 Office of the Dean**

The Office of the Dean is responsible to the law faculty, the President, the Provost, and the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University (NIU) for the management of the College of Law. The duties and authority of the Office of the Dean include the following: administration of the College of Law; implementing and enforcing College of Law and university policies; assuring compliance with legal accreditation requirements; coordinating strategic planning; preparing and administering the College of Law budget and records, including student records; hiring and supervising administrative staff; supporting faculty research efforts; forming and convening faculty committees; providing staff assistance for faculty committees; imposing sanctions under the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct; assuring adequate maintenance and improvement of the physical facilities; and fundraising. These duties and authority may be exercised by the Dean and the Dean’s designee. In addition, the Office of the Dean serves as the principal liaison with the NIU administration, the Alumni Council, the Board of Visitors, the American Bar Association, other national, regional, and local bar associations, and the Association of American Law Schools. The Office of the Dean is headed by the Dean of the College of Law, who is assisted by the Associate Dean, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, assistant deans, administrative staff members, and others designated by the Dean from time to time.

Contact:	Interim Dean	
	Laurel A. Rigertas	Phone: 815-753-1380
	SP Room 270	Email: <a href="mailto:lrigertas@niu.edu">lrigertas@niu.edu</a>
	Administrative Assistant	
	Tita Kaus	Phone: 815-753-1068
	SP Room 270	Email: <a href="mailto:tkaus@niu.edu">tkaus@niu.edu</a>

### **1.2 Office of the Associate Dean**

The Associate Dean is responsible for supervising College of Law academic and curricular matters, including scheduling of law school courses and examinations, designation of teaching assignments, coordination with other NIU departments, and various matters involving or affecting the College of Law faculty. The Associate Dean also oversees student requests for approval of directed research projects and credit for courses from other graduate school departments.

Contact: Associate Dean  
Marc D. Falkoff  
SP Room 199C  
Phone: 815-753-0660  
Email: [mfalkoff@niu.edu](mailto:mfalkoff@niu.edu)

Office Support Manager  
Le Ann Baie  
SP Room 190  
Phone: 815-753-0618  
Email: [lbaie@niu.edu](mailto:lbaie@niu.edu)

### **1.3 Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs**

The Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs oversees a wide range of matters pertaining to the student body, including student requests for exam rescheduling, class absences, course withdrawals, transfer of credits from other law schools, and departures from prescribed academic policies and workloads. The Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs also supports and oversees the mission of student academic support, supervises students on probation, investigates and reports on violations of the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct; provides counseling and assistance to law students; and serves as the principal contact person for all students with disabilities enrolled at the College of Law.

Contact: Associate Dean for Student Affairs  
Kathleen L. Coles  
SP Room 276A  
Phone: 815-753-0668  
Email: [kcoles@niu.edu](mailto:kcoles@niu.edu)

Interim Assistant Dean for Student Affairs  
Yolanda M. King  
SP Room 195A  
Phone: 815-753-7231  
Email: [yking@niu.edu](mailto:yking@niu.edu)

Office Support Specialist  
Lisa Hoebing  
SP Room 276  
Phone: 815-753-9488  
Email: [lhoebing@niu.edu](mailto:lhoebing@niu.edu)

### **1.4 Office of Career Opportunities and Professional Development**

The College of Law, through its Office of Career Opportunities and Professional Development (Career Services), is committed to helping students find permanent employment, as well as school year and summer clerkships. Although students retain the primary responsibility for their job searches, Career Services is available to assist them in this endeavor by aiding in the identification of career goals and opportunities and providing extensive counseling. Among other activities, Career Services conducts an on-campus interview program, maintains résumé referral and direct-employer contact services; participates in state and national consortia and job fairs; hosts informal on-campus workshops, lectures and interview “boot camps”; cultivates relationships with alumni, employers and bar associations; distributes information concerning admission to the bar; assists students with 711 licenses; administers 1L and 2L mentoring programs, APPLE and PILS grants and summer assistantships; oversees the annual PILS auction; compiles employment statistics; maintains a resource library; publishes a weekly

newsletter called “Career Corner” ; and maintains an online job board.

Contact: Assistant Dean and Director of Career  
Opportunities and Professional Development Phone: 815-753-9604  
Greg Anderson Email: [ganderson@niu.edu](mailto:ganderson@niu.edu)  
SP Room 280A1

Office Manager  
Becky Leneau Phone: 815-753-0589  
SP Room 280 Email: [rleneau@niu.edu](mailto:rleneau@niu.edu)

### **1.5 Office of Alumni Events and Public Relations**

The Office of Alumni Events and Public Relations (Alumni Office) is responsible for maintaining and strengthening relationships with all alumni of the College of Law and for guiding current students into active participation in law school activities after graduation. All graduates of the College of Law are members of the Northern Illinois University College of Law Alumni Association, whose Alumni Council expands the interests of alumni through receptions and other events held throughout the state. To enhance the public image of the College of Law, the Alumni Office releases information to the media on faculty achievements, student honors and awards, and the activities of various law school committees and organizations. The Alumni Office also provides opportunities for educational and professional development by making available the expertise of the College of Law’s own faculty and of visiting faculty and dignitaries through legal symposia, conferences, and seminars. In addition to these activities, the Director of Alumni Events and Public Relations helps coordinate many College of Law events and serves as the liaison for the College of Law Board of Visitors, which is a group of distinguished judges, attorneys, academics, alumni, and corporate executives.

The Alumni Office is also responsible for enhancing the College of Law’s web presence, including creation of content; web site maintenance; and administration of social networking sites, digital signage and web-based forms.

Contact: Director of Alumni Events  
and Public Relations  
Melody Mitchell Phone: 815-753-1027  
SP Room 350 Email: [mmitchell@niu.edu](mailto:mmitchell@niu.edu)

### **1.6 Office of Admissions and Financial Aid**

The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid administers and guides students through the law school application process and the transition to the College of Law. The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid also refers current students to appropriate University offices for help in meeting their educational costs and living expenses while in the College of Law through a variety of scholarships, loan programs and other means. The College of Law participates in all federal Title IV programs available at the graduate and professional level. These include the

Direct Federal Stafford Loans and Graduate PLUS Loans programs. Additional information concerning financial aid programs and procedures of the [College of Law](#) and the [University](#) is available online.

Contact: Assistant Dean and Director  
of Admissions and Financial Aid  
Michael S. Burns  
SP Room 151  
Phone: 815-753-1109  
Email: [mburns4@niu.edu](mailto:mburns4@niu.edu)

Associate Director  
Kellie Martial  
SP Room 151  
Phone: 815-753-9485  
Email: [kmartial@niu.edu](mailto:kmartial@niu.edu)

Contact: Admissions Record Specialist II  
Alexandra Chapman  
SP Room 151  
Phone: 815-753-8595  
Email: [achapman1@niu.edu](mailto:achapman1@niu.edu)

### **1.7 Office of Budget and Records**

The Office of Budget and Records serves dual roles in the College of Law as the Office of the Registrar and the Business Office. As the Office of the Registrar, it is the custodian of matriculated law student records and files and is responsible for the posting of class offerings and grades in MyNIU and for the registration and withdrawal of law students. The Office of the Registrar also administers class rankings, honors, and the audit for degree candidacy for graduation. In addition, it is responsible for the dissemination of information to external agencies such as the American Bar Association (ABA) and state boards of bar examiners. As the Business Office, the Office of Budget and Records is the custodian of all revenue and expenses associated with the College of Law. It is also responsible for the submission of all purchasing and invoicing paperwork, as well compilation of financial statistics.

Contact: Director of Budget and Records  
Ann Apple  
SP Room 280A2  
Phone: 815-753-6580  
Email: [aapple@niu.edu](mailto:aapple@niu.edu)

Contact: Administrator  
Julie Mahoney-Krzyzek  
SP Room 285  
Phone: 815-753-1620  
Email: [jmahoney@niu.edu](mailto:jmahoney@niu.edu)

### **1.8 Office of Information Technology Services**

The College of Law Office of Information Technology Services provides onsite support for the students, staff and faculty of the College of Law at its main campus in DeKalb and its two satellite locations: the Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic in Rockford and the NIU College of Law Medical-Legal Partnership in Aurora. Additional information concerning IT support [at the College of Law](#) and [from the University](#) is available online. Email requests for IT/AV services

at the College of Law can be sent to [colit@niu.edu](mailto:colit@niu.edu) .

Contact:	Director of Information Technology Services Rahul Thatte SP Room 356	Phone: 815-753-1784 Email: <a href="mailto:rthatte@niu.edu">rthatte@niu.edu</a> Tech Support Line: 815-753-0860
	<a href="#">University IT Services Helpdesk</a> Technology Support Desk Founders Library – Main Floor	Phone: 815-753-8100 Email: <a href="mailto:ServiceDesk@niu.edu">ServiceDesk@niu.edu</a>

### **1.9 The Law Library**

The David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library provides access to an outstanding array of print and digital legal collections and facilitates the strong research mission of the College of Law. Located in the heart of the law school on the second floor of Swen Parson Hall, the law library curates a collection of over 250,000 volumes and essential online legal research databases such as Westlaw, Lexis, HeinOnline, and Bloomberg Law, in addition to other critical online legal archives. The law library's primary function is serving the needs of the students and faculty of the College of Law. To facilitate use by NIU students, the law library offers legal research orientation programs and tours. Library faculty also teach basic and advanced legal research courses and provide assistance on particular research questions at the reference desk located just inside the main entrance to the law library. Additional information concerning the [resources, services and staff of the law library](#) is available online.

Research support for law students is also provided through [Founders Memorial Library](#), the University's main library, which is conveniently located across the street from the College of Law. Founders Memorial Library contains over 2 million volumes and an additional 1.2 million federal, state, and international government documents.

Contact:	Director of the Law Library Heidi Kuehl SP Room 267D	Phone: 815-753-9493 Email: <a href="mailto:hkuehl@niu.edu">hkuehl@niu.edu</a>
	Deputy Director of the Law Library Therese Clarke Arado SP Room 290B	Phone: 815-753-9497 Email: <a href="mailto:tclarke@niu.edu">tclarke@niu.edu</a>
	Office Support Specialist Cheryl Korth	Phone: 815-753-0505 Email: <a href="mailto:ckorth@niu.edu">ckorth@niu.edu</a>

### **1.10 The Faculty**

In addition to their teaching, research and service responsibilities, the [faculty of the College of Law](#) works in concert with the Office of the Dean to make policy decisions relating to the academic mission of the College of Law. Much of the work in this area occurs through standing

committees, including the Academic Standing, Admissions, Appointments, Bench and Bar, Budget, Curriculum, Faculty Development, Strategic Planning and Assessment, and Library committees, as well as short-term task forces and working groups.

### **1.11 The Student Body**

The faculty and administration endeavor to consult the student body on a regular basis for input on policy issues affecting students at the College of Law. The Office of the Dean seeks student input through formal and informal student surveys, direct student meetings with the deans, periodic meetings with the student body through informal town hall meetings, and regular discussions with student organization leaders and with the students' elected representatives in the [Student Bar Association \(SBA\)](#). Student representatives, identified by the SBA, are voting members of the College of Law Disciplinary Committee and non-voting members of the following faculty committees: Bench and Bar, Curriculum, and Strategic Planning and Assessment.

## **II. STUDENT CONDUCT: POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES**

### **2.1 Ethical Standards**

As prospective attorneys, law students are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards. Specific rules of conduct govern students at the College of Law and have implications for character and fitness upon application to the bar. Those rules of conduct include, but are not limited to:

- the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct and its interpretive Comment,
- the disclosure and other requirements of the American Bar Association and applicable state bar associations,
- ongoing disclosure obligations to the College of Law, and
- the Northern Illinois University Code of Student Conduct.

In addition to the above rules of conduct, students in the College of Law are subject to various policies, procedures and rules of conduct as members of the Northern Illinois University community. To assist students in navigating these various rules, policies, and codes of conduct, a variety of resources are available at the College of Law and in the University, as described in §§ 2.8, 2.9.

### **2.2 College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct and Interpretive Comment**

The following College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct and Interpretive Comment have been adopted by the faculty.

### **2.2.1 Rule of Professional Conduct**

It is professional misconduct for a member of the law school to (1) engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; or (2) engage in conduct that is proscribed by law and that reflects adversely on the member's honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness to practice law in other respects.

### **2.2.2 Professional Conduct Interpretive Comment**

The College of Law is an academic and professional institution integrally connected to the academic community of Northern Illinois University and closely tied to the organized profession of law. The members of the College, faculty, and students have adopted the Rule of Professional Conduct to recognize within the College the academic and professional values of the larger communities of which we are a part. The Rule is a mandatory rule of conduct, violations of which may subject a member to appropriate sanctions. Mindful that no rules of conduct are completely self-executing, all members of the College community should give serious attention not only to their individual obligations to comply with the Rule but also to their collective responsibility for ensuring compliance and initiating any necessary enforcement.

**2.2.2.1** With respect to the substantive content of the mandatory rule, Clause (1) of §2.2.1 incorporates the general professional rule on honesty and trustworthiness as well as a prohibition of all forms of academic misconduct. Without limiting the reach of the foregoing, academic misconduct includes

- plagiarism,
- unauthorized collaboration
- the use of unauthorized material in connection with any paper or examination,
- misuse of materials, including the secreting of library resources or the unauthorized use of library resources such as computerized research facilities, and
- other forms of academic misconduct.

Other forms of dishonest conduct beyond what is usually thought of as academic would include, for example, misrepresentation in law school admissions proceedings or misrepresentations in connection with seeking professional employment.

**2.2.2.2** Beyond dishonesty and academic misconduct, society has identified other conduct that interferes with community needs and may violate the dignity and rights of other people. Clause (2) of §2.2.1 addresses such conduct, although the reference is to the proscribed behavior as such and does not presuppose any formal adjudication of criminality or illegality. While members of the College

are, of course, personally answerable to the entire criminal law, they are professionally answerable within the College only for conduct that indicates lack of those characteristics relevant to membership in this academic and professional community – “fitness to practice law” in this formulation. Certain kinds of conduct may be offensive to some, but may only reflect immaturity, inappropriate responses to the pressures of professional education, or simply the diversity of ages and background of community members. When combined with legally proscribed conduct, however, such as destruction of property or harassing use of the telephone or the mails, and when engaged in with disregard for the dignity and rights of others, such conduct may raise serious questions of professional character, fitness, and continued membership in the academic and professional community, questions appropriate for a community response. On the other hand, some criminalized conduct raises no direct implication of dishonesty, disregard for individual dignity and rights, or fitness to practice law in other respects and is, accordingly, not appropriate for community sanction. This part of the Rule seeks to limit sanctions to conduct directly relevant to the College’s academic and professional goals.

**2.2.2.3** The Rule of Professional Conduct, like all rules, is one of reason. It should be interpreted and applied in light of this Comment, which is an integral part of the Rule, and in view of the Rule and Comment’s purpose — the maintenance and development of a thriving academic and professional community. Sanctions and procedures for enforcement raise separate questions not addressed by the Rule. Further, it is noted that conduct in violation of this Rule may also violate other rules, such as those embodied in the Student Code of Conduct of Northern Illinois University and law generally. Likewise, some conduct not covered by this Rule may be covered by the Student Code of Conduct or other law. While a certain emphasis on questions of deviations from the Rule is inevitable, the larger spirit behind the Rule should always be kept in mind: namely, the creation at the College of a community of scholars and lawyers committed to the best traditions and values of academic pursuits and the profession of law. The procedural guidelines for enforcing the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct are described in §2.6.

### **2.2.3 Summary of Recent Professional Misconduct Decisions**

Since 2012, the following actions and conduct by students enrolled at the College of Law have been found to constitute professional misconduct, resulting in sanctions. This list is illustrative, is not exhaustive and is not intended in any way to limit the scope of the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct and Interpretive Comment.



i. *Unauthorized* collaboration: [Note: Many of these actions may be permitted or even encouraged by your instructor. They become violations if you have been instructed *not* to collaborate.]

- Reading portions of one's work to another student
- Providing copies of one's work to another student
- Completing part of another student's legal research assignment
- Viewing (although not using) another student's work
- Discussing an assignment with another student
- Looking at another student's computer screen containing answers and asking a question about it

ii. Plagiarism

- Copying portions of another student's work and presenting it as one's own (without edits)
- Copying portions of another student's work and presenting it as one's own (with some editing)
- Copying parts of a published article and presenting it as one's own without attribution or quotations
- Copying case and other citations from online sources
- Copying case and other citations from other students' work
- Using an unauthorized source for ideas and structure of an appellate brief
- Using a former student's work or forms as a template for an assignment

iii. Misrepresentation and Deception

- Lying to a dean during an investigation of alleged misconduct
- Attempting to get a supervisor to lie to the law school
- Making material misrepresentations in a petition to withdraw from a class and in discussions with a dean and faculty member
- Lying to a supervisor about whether a requirement has been met
- Using without authorization an exam answer key obtained online

iv. Misconduct During Exams

- Copying parts of another student's final examination answer
- Copying parts of another student's midterm examination answer
- Using unauthorized material (in this case, an outline) in an examination

v. Other Misconduct

- Recording a class without the professor's permission

### **2.3 Students' Authorship of Written Works**

Submission of written work by a student at the College of Law is deemed to certify his or her exclusive authorship without any assistance not specifically authorized by the professor. Any piece of student work may earn credit in only one course, unless submission in more than one course is approved in advance by all instructors involved. Student work prepared outside of the law school (*e.g.*, in the course of employment) may not be submitted for credit in a law school course.

### **2.4 Continuing Obligation to Disclose Information**

In addition to the rule and policies described in §2.2, all students attending the College of Law have a continuing obligation to disclose immediately any and all circumstances and events occurring after the date of submission of their applications until the date of their graduations that may bear on their character and fitness to join the Bar. This information includes, but is not limited to, circumstances surrounding the five questions listed below that are currently asked on the College of Law application for admission.

1. Have you ever been subject to a dismissal, a suspension, probation, an accusation of misconduct, a probable cause hearing, the lowering of a grade, or any other academic or social sanction by a high school, college, university, professional school, or professional association (*including any sealed or expunged incidents*)?
2. Have you ever, including when you were a juvenile, been formally or informally detained, restrained, cited (*including traffic citations in the last ten years but not parking tickets*), summoned into court, taken into custody, arrested, accused, charged, convicted, placed on probation, placed on supervision, or forfeited collateral in connection with any offense against a law or an ordinance (*including any sealed or expunged incidents*)?
3. In a paid or volunteer employment setting, have you ever been accused of misconduct; been disciplined; been permitted to resign in lieu of discipline or discharge; been discharged; or been permitted or requested, formally or informally, to resign from or to terminate employment (*including any sealed or expunged incidents*)?
4. Have you ever been held in contempt of court, or are there any decrees, judgments, liens, or orders entered against you that have not been satisfied?
5. Have you been discharged or dismissed from the armed forces, other than by honorable discharge, or have you been sentenced in a court-martial proceeding (*including any sealed or expunged incidents*)?

In addition, all students are required to supplement or correct their law school admissions application if the answers to any of the above questions in their applications were incorrect or incomplete. All continuing and supplemental disclosures should be made by letter to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in accordance with the dean's instructions. In drafting

continuing and supplemental disclosures, students should keep in mind the importance of such disclosures during the character and fitness review by bar admission officials. See §9.3.2.

## **2.5 Northern Illinois University Student Code of Conduct**

Upon registration, College of Law students, as members of the Northern Illinois University community, agree to abide by the policies, rules, and expectations of the University, including the [Northern Illinois University Pact](#). The Northern PACT encompasses six principles that outline the University's expectations for members of its community. With each individual making a commitment to uphold these principles, the University will have the collective benefit of a culture of care and a sense of connectedness. As a student in the NIU community, each individual at the College of Law is expected to support and contribute to a community that honors the six Northern PACT principles:

- Purposeful: Where academic goals are shared, and faculty and students work together to strengthen teaching and learning across campus.
- Just: Where all people are valued and supported while they learn from the diversity of our community.
- Caring: Where the well-being of all is supported, and service to others is encouraged.
- Open: Where freedom of expression is welcomed, and others are respected.
- Disciplined: Where group members accept their responsibility, and expectations guide behavior for the common good.
- Celebrative: Where traditions are honored, and both past and new rituals are embraced.

[Article III](#) of the NIU [Student Code of Conduct](#) proscribes certain types of conduct by students, including, but not limited to, physical and verbal abuse, disruptive behavior, prohibited use of drugs and alcohol, fraud, harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, theft, weapons violations, and noncompliance with directions of NIU officials or law enforcement officers acting in the performance of their duties. The procedures for enforcing the NIU Student Code of Conduct are described in §2.7.

## **2.6 Procedures Relating to Academic or Other Professional Misconduct by a Student**

The following procedures govern the enforcement of the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct set forth in §2.2. In carrying out investigations and making reports under these procedures, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs may from time to time delegate responsibility for a matter to the Interim Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.

### **2.6.1 Academic or Other Professional Misconduct by a Student in a Course or Co-Curricular Activity**

**2.6.1.1** If a member of the College of Law has reasonable grounds to believe that academic or other professional misconduct has occurred in a course or co-curricular activity, the member must report that fact to the faculty member

teaching the course or supervising the activity or to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

**2.6.1.2** If a faculty member has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has committed academic or other professional misconduct, the faculty member must request a review of the matter by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. If another member of the College of Law reports suspected academic or other professional misconduct directly to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the associate dean shall promptly notify any faculty member teaching or supervising the relevant course or activity.

**2.6.1.3** If a review is requested or initiated under sections 2.6.1.1 or 2.6.1.2, a formal written complaint must be furnished in a format requested by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. On receipt of the formal complaint, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall investigate and make a decision as to whether misconduct, as defined in Section 2.2 has occurred and what the sanction, if any, should be. As part of the review, the associate dean may consult with the Dean and faculty members with knowledge of the alleged misconduct.

**2.6.1.4** If both the student and the faculty member teaching or supervising the student when the alleged misconduct occurred agree with the decision of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs that no actionable misconduct has occurred or that no sanction should be imposed, the associate dean shall report the decision informally to the Dean, but no report will be placed in the student's official record at the College. If all parties agree to a decision that actionable misconduct has occurred and that the sanctions recommended by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs should be imposed, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall report the decision to the Dean, and a report shall be placed in the student's record, with a copy sent to the student and the faculty member involved.

**2.6.1.5** If the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both the student and the faculty member following the decision of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the matter will go before the Dean for a decision. Requests for consideration by the Dean must be furnished in writing by the student or faculty member no later than 14 days following the sending by email of the decision of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Participation in any meetings with the Dean to discuss the misconduct matter will be limited to the Dean, an administrative assistant, the student and faculty members involved, and any witnesses called by the Dean.

**2.6.1.6** If the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both the student and the faculty member following the Dean's review of the matter, either party may

request a hearing before the NIU College of Law Disciplinary Committee. See §2.6.3.

## **2.6.2 Academic or Other Professional Misconduct by a Student Occurring Outside a Course or Co-Curricular Activity**

**2.6.2.1** If a member of the College of Law has reasonable grounds to believe that academic or other professional misconduct has occurred outside of a course or co-curricular activity, the member must report that fact to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

**2.6.2.2** Upon receiving a report of academic or other professional misconduct under §2.6.2.1, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall investigate and make a decision whether misconduct, as defined in Section 2.2, has occurred and what the sanction, if any, should be.

**2.6.2.3** If all relevant parties agree to the decision that no actionable misconduct has occurred or that no sanction should be imposed, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall report the decision informally to the Dean, but no report will be placed in the student's record. If all parties agree to a decision that actionable misconduct has occurred and that the sanctions recommended by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs should be imposed, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will report the decision to the Dean, and a report will be placed in the student's record, with a copy sent to the student(s) and any other relevant parties.

**2.6.2.4** If the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both the student and the complaining party following the decision of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the matter will go before the Dean for a decision. Requests for consideration by the Dean must be furnished in writing by the student or faculty member no later than 14 days following the sending by email of the decision of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Participation in any meetings with the Dean to discuss the misconduct matter will be limited to the Dean, an administrative assistant, the student and faculty members involved, and any witnesses called by the Dean.

**2.6.2.5** If the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both the student and the complaining party following the Dean's review of the matter, either party may request a hearing before the Disciplinary Committee. See §2.6.3.

### **2.6.3 College of Law Hearing Process for Academic or Other Professional Misconduct**

**2.6.3.1** If a hearing is requested under §§ 2.6.1.6 or 2.6.2.5, that request must be submitted, in writing, to the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee within ten (10) calendar days after the affected party has been notified of the final decision of the Dean.

**2.6.3.2** Within ten (10) days of receipt of a written request for a hearing, the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee shall decide upon a date and time for the hearing and provide written notice to all relevant parties, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Dean.

**2.6.3.3** The College of Law Faculty, Library Faculty, Legal Writing Instructors, and Clinical Faculty are eligible to serve on the Disciplinary Committee. Each year, when new committees are appointed for the academic year, the Dean will select three (3) faculty and two (2) student members of the Disciplinary Committee, as well as two (2) alternate faculty members. The Dean will designate one member of the Disciplinary Committee as the Chair.

**2.6.3.4** Disciplinary Committee members may recuse themselves from consideration of particular matters brought to a hearing, and committee members directly involved in the matter must do so. Following any such recusal, the Dean shall select alternate members to serve on the Disciplinary Committee for purposes of the hearing.

**2.6.3.5** Hearings of the Disciplinary Committee shall be closed to all but the committee members, the student(s), and the faculty member or complaining party. The Disciplinary Committee may request witnesses for statements and questioning, but such witnesses may be present only while testifying.

**2.6.3.6** The person requesting a hearing bears the burden of production of evidence and persuasion of the Disciplinary Committee. No formal rules of evidence apply to the hearing process, and the Disciplinary Committee may decide for itself any questions of relevance and the scope of its inquiry. All information regarding a hearing is to be kept confidential.

**2.6.3.7** Within ten (10) calendar days following the conclusion of the hearing, the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee shall issue the Disciplinary Committee's written decision as to whether misconduct, as defined in Section 2.2, has occurred and what the sanction, if any, should be. The decision will be sent to the student and the faculty member or complaining party via email and first-class mail and to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Dean via email.

**2.6.3.8** The decision of the Disciplinary Committee is final.

### **2.7 Procedures for Misconduct Governed by NIU Student Code of Conduct**

Any misconduct by a student that is not covered by the College of Law's Rule of Professional Conduct in Section 2.2 but is subject to the University's [Student Code of Conduct](#) should be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who may refer the matter to the University's Office of Student Conduct for consideration in accordance with university procedures. Students, faculty or staff may also [report to the Office of Student Conduct](#) directly. Records with respect to investigations and proceedings of the Office of Student Conduct may become part of a student's official record at the University and College of Law.

### **2.8 Other Applicable College of Law and University Policies and Procedures.**

In addition to the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct (see §2.2) and the Northern Illinois University Student Code of Conduct (see §2.5), College of Law students, as members of the university community, are subject to and benefit from a number of other College of Law and university policies and procedures regulating conduct. These policies and procedures include, but are not limited to:

#### **2.8.1 University and College of Law Nondiscrimination Policy**

Northern Illinois University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender expression, gender identity, age, marital status, national origin, disability, status based on the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran. Further, the Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University provide for equal treatment regardless of political views or affiliation and regardless of sexual orientation. Inquiries concerning application of Title IX, Section 504, and other statutes and regulations may be referred to the Ethics and Compliance Office, Title IX Coordinator, Health Services Building 230, [titleixcoordinator@niu.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@niu.edu), 815-753-5560. The College of Law believes that a diverse collegial environment best serves its educational and professional goals, and thus particularly encourages applications from members of traditionally underrepresented groups.

#### **2.8.2 College of Law Diversity Statement**

The College of Law is strongly committed to facilitating access to the legal profession for members of traditionally underrepresented groups. Among the goals is to counter the effects of societal discrimination, to increase the number of lawyers who will serve in communities that are currently underserved, and to obtain for law students the educational benefits that flow from a diverse faculty and student body. The College of Law therefore recruits faculty and students who represent diverse communities and identities in society based on gender, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, race, culture, ethnicity, and physical ability.

### **2.8.3 College of Law Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**

Northern Illinois University College of Law is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, marital or parental status, race, color, religious creed, national origin, age, handicap, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam era veteran in the administration of its education policies, admissions and placement policies, and other school-administered programs. The services and facilities of the College of Law and its Career Services Office are available only to employers whose practices are consistent with this non-discrimination policy, and employers who use those facilities and services for interviewing and other placement functions will observe the College's principles of equal opportunity. Any complaints of discrimination during the placement process will be investigated or referred to the proper authority for investigation. An employer, by submitting a job posting to the College of Law, thereby agrees to adhere to the same non-discrimination standards and policies as are applied by Northern Illinois University, as stated above.

### **2.8.4 University Policies re Human Rights, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct**

[Article IX of the NIU Constitution](#) sets forth three fundamental rights: Academic Freedom (§9.1), Equality of Treatment (§9.2) and Due Process (§9.3). Under §9.2, all members of the university community are afforded “fair, impartial, and equal treatment regardless of sex, race, national origin, ancestry, marital status, age, color, veteran status, political views or affiliation, religious views or affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, or other factors unrelated to their scholarly or professional performance.” The University is also empowered to make specific provisions to promote affirmative action, and it has done so through a variety of measures.

Academic or employment decisions that are based upon race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, status as a victim or perceived victim of domestic or sexual violence, or any other factor unrelated to professional qualifications are considered a form of illegal discrimination and are a violation of the Northern Illinois University [Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedures](#). Conduct that results in sexual harassment and/or retaliation is also considered unlawful under this policy. As noted above, the University’s [Constitution](#) also prohibits discrimination based on an individual’s sexual orientation or political views or affiliation.

Conduct that may violate the Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy is [defined on](#) the University’s website and in the policy statements described in the preceding paragraph. An employee or student who has witnessed or experienced what he or she believes is conduct that violates the university's Non-Discrimination/Harassment policy should initially attempt to resolve the issue directly with the alleged offender or seek assistance



from a supervisor. If this is not possible, the employee/student has the right and/or responsibility to file a [discrimination/ affirmative action complaint](#).

Academic and employment decisions based upon sex or gender and/or acts of sexual misconduct are forms of illegal sex discrimination under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, and under other federal and state laws. Such decisions and acts are also prohibited under the University's [Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Policy](#). If the University knows or reasonably should know of possible sexual misconduct, a thorough, impartial, and confidential investigation will be conducted as promptly as possible to determine if there has been a violation of NIU's Title IX Policy. Sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment, sexual violence (includes rape, sexual assault, or sexual abuse), dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. Victims are not required to [file a Title IX complaint](#) but are encouraged to do so. For more information about rights and options under Title IX, including accommodations or protective measures for victims, see the web page entitled [Notification of Rights and Options](#).

All students enrolled at the College of Law must complete annual online training in Title IX issues, as mandated by the University and State law. Inquiries concerning the application of the University's Title IX and other anti-discrimination policies may be directed to the [Ethics and Compliance Office](#) located on the 2nd floor of the Health Services Building, 815-753-5560, [eco@niu.edu](mailto:eco@niu.edu).

### **2.8.5 Other University Policies and Procedures**

Among the other policies of Northern Illinois University regulating the conduct of students at the College of Law are:

- the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) for all information, computing, and communication resources and facilities operated by the University (whether owned, leased or licensed), including computers, telephones, mobile data devices, printers, scanners, voice mail and email
- the policy re [Privacy in the Electronic Environment](#)
- the [Smoke-Free Campus Policy](#)
- the [Concealed Carry Policy](#)
- the Board of Trustees' [Alcoholic Beverage Policy](#)

In addition, all members of the university community are expected to promptly and accurately report all crimes and public safety-related incidents to the [NIU Department of Police and Public Safety](#) or the appropriate [local police agency](#).

## **2.9 Information, Counseling and Other University Resources**

Further information and counseling for students at the College of Law regarding policies and procedures described in this section are available through the office of the Associate Dean for

Student Affairs at the College of Law and through the following university offices: the [Office of the Ombudsperson](#), the [Student Conduct](#) office, and the [Ethics and Compliance Office](#). Personal counseling services are available through the [Counseling and Consultation Services](#) office. Legal assistance in disputes with outside parties is available through the [Students' Legal Assistance](#) office.

### **2.9.1 Office of Counseling and Consultation Services**

The University's [Office of Counseling & Consultation Services](#) (CCS) provides comprehensive mental health support for currently enrolled students at Northern Illinois University. After office hours and on the weekends, a CCS on-call counselor is available to provide support to NIU students experiencing mental health [emergencies or crisis](#) situations. Students needing assistance with personal/emotional concerns or crisis situations during office hours can [walk in \(no appointment needed\)](#) for a consultation appointment with a CCS counselor. If [individual counseling](#) at CCS is recommended, the student will discuss the goals and length of counseling with her/his assigned counselor. Students whose personal concerns can best be addressed in [group counseling](#) are scheduled for an initial appointment with a group facilitator (or co-facilitators). For a more complete description of counseling services and resources, see the [CCS website](#).

Counseling & Consultation Services      Phone: 815-753-1206  
Campus Life Building 200

### **2.9.2 Office of the Ombudsperson**

The [Office of the Ombudsperson](#) provides students, faculty and staff with guidance to help solve a variety of university-related issues or conflicts — offering confidential, neutral, informal and independent guidance and information about rights as a member of the University community. Meetings with law students are generally conducted by Sarah Klaper, NIU's Ombudsperson, who will listen to student concerns about a variety of topics, assess the situation and suggest options that may help resolve the matter.

Northern Illinois Ombudsperson  
Sarah Klaper      Phone: 815-753-1414  
Holmes Student Center, 6th Floor      Email: [ombuds@niu.edu](mailto:ombuds@niu.edu)

### **2.9.3 Students' Legal Assistance Office**

The [Office of Students' Legal Assistance](#) provides consultation, advocacy, and court representation services to NIU students in a wide variety of cases including landlord-tenant, criminal misdemeanor, traffic, consumer, domestic relations, public benefits and employment matters. Students' Legal Assistance attorneys are, however, prevented by their contracts and/or by the Code of Ethics from representing students in disputes relating to Northern Illinois University and conflicts between students. In addition to its direct services, Students' Legal Assistance has an extensive legal education program which seeks to prevent legal problems through community education. The office also

maintains an attorney referral list and provides legal forms and other resources for students. Students seeking an appointment with a staff attorney should complete an [online legal intake form](#).

Students' Legal Assistance  
Campus Life Building, Room 120

Phone: 815-753-1701  
Email: [studentslegal@niu.edu](mailto:studentslegal@niu.edu)

#### **2.9.4 Office of Student Conduct**

The [Office of Student Conduct](#) coordinates the university student conduct system, providing an opportunity to confront and resolve academic, residential, student conduct and disciplinary conflicts. See §§2.5, 2.7. The office also provides education, information and referral for students.

Office of Student Conduct  
Campus Life Building, Room 280

Phone: 815-753-1571  
Email: [judicial@niu.edu](mailto:judicial@niu.edu)

### **III. CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER ACADEMIC POLICIES**

#### **3.1 Graduation Requirements**

A minimum of 90 hours of academic credit is required for graduation. At least 65 hours of the 90 must be in law school courses with regularly scheduled classes, and all 90 hours must be completed within a period of no less than 24 months and no more than 84 months. At least 55 hours must be completed at the College of Law itself, and students must have a 2.2 cumulative GPA or better to graduate. In addition, all of the following are required for graduation:

##### **3.1.1 All Students**

For all students, regardless of year of matriculation, the following are required:

- An official undergraduate transcript must be on file with the Office of Budget & Records by October 15 of the year of a student's matriculation
- A student's bursar account must be unencumbered
- A degree fee of \$75 must be paid

##### **3.1.2 Students Matriculating in or after the Fall 2017 Semester\***

For students who matriculate in or after the Fall 2017 semester, all of the following courses must be completed with a passing grade (course numbers are from the current numbering system):

Legal Writing & Advocacy I (Law 500)	Criminal Law (Law 510)
Legal Writing & Advocacy II (Law 701)	Basic Legal Research I (Law 511)
Contracts I (Law 502)	Basic Legal Research II (Law 512)

Contracts II (Law 503)	Constitutional Law I (Law 550)
Property (Law 505)	Constitutional Law II (Law 600)
Civil Procedure I (Law 506)	Introduction to Lawyering Skills (Law 720)
Civil Procedure II (Law 507)	Professional Responsibility (Law 643)
Torts (Law 508)	Upper-Level Writing Requirement – see §3.18
Legal Methods (Law 513)	An Experiential Learning Project – see §3.15
Introduction to Legal Profession I (Law 515)**	Introduction to Legal Profession II (Law 516)**

\* For information about course requirements applicable to those matriculating before the Fall 2017 semester, students should contact the office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

\*\* This requirement is being waived for students matriculating in Fall 2019.

**3.1.2.1** Students who possess a grade point average below 2.6 at the conclusion of the spring semester of their first year of law school are required to complete the following six courses prior to graduation: Business Associations I (Law 640); Criminal Procedure: Police Investigations (Law 601); Evidence (Law 655); Family Law (Law 610); Secured Transactions (Law 631); and Trusts & Estates (Law 620). The GPA of a part-time student for purposes of this requirement will be determined at the conclusion of the equivalent of the first year of law school, as determined by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

**3.1.2.2** In addition to the foregoing, students who are not ranked in the top 25 percent of their class at the end of the spring semester of their second year of law school are required to enroll in and pass the Bar Fundamentals Workshop (Law 676) during the spring semester of their third year of law school (if they plan to graduate in May) or Legal Analysis: Skills and Strategies (Law 710) during the fall semester of their third year of law school if they plan to graduate in December.

### **3.1.3 Electives**

In addition to required courses, the College of Law offers a number of elective courses to students, including regularly scheduled classes with direct faculty instruction, skills classes, and co-curricular activities. [Courses offered in the last two years](#) are described on the College of Law website. Some courses are not offered every year. For various limits on counting elective courses toward graduation requirements, see §3.2.

## **3.2 Limits on Courses Counting Toward Graduation**

Not all course credits will count toward the 90 hours required for graduation with a J.D. degree. The following limitations apply:

### **3.2.1 Required Credits in Regularly Scheduled Classes**

At least 65 credit hours must be earned through attendance in regularly scheduled class sessions or under direct faculty instruction at an ABA-approved law school. Accordingly, no more than 25 hours of credit for other activities, including, but not

limited to, externships, co-curricular activities (interscholastic competitions and law review), and graduate courses in other colleges of the University, may be counted toward the 90 credit hours required for graduation.

### **3.2.2 Credit Limits for Interscholastic Competitions and Directed Research**

No more than 4 hours of credit for participation in interscholastic competitions or 6 hours of directed research may be counted toward the 90 credit hours required for graduation. See §§ 3.7, 3.14.

### **3.2.3 Credit Limits for Non-Law Graduate Courses**

No more than 6 hours of credit for graduate courses in other colleges of the University may count toward the 90 credit hours required for graduation, except that

- Under the [joint J.D./M.B.A. degree program](#), up to 9 credit hours of M.B.A. course credit may count towards the 90 hours required for the J.D. degree.
- Under the [joint J.D./M.P.A. degree program](#), up to 12 semester hours of M.P.A. course work with a grade of B or better may be applied toward the 90 hours required for the J.D. degree.

See §§3.9, 3.10.

### **3.2.4 Credit Limits for Distance Education Courses**

No more than 12 hours of credit for distance education (online) courses may be applied toward the 90 hours required for the J.D. degree, and no more than 6 hours of such online credit may be from another ABA-accredited law school. See §3.12.

### **3.2.5 Pre-Matriculation Course Credits**

No credit earned for coursework taken prior to a student's matriculation in a law school, including coursework taken in a pre-admission program, may be applied toward the J.D. degree.

## **3.3 Standard Schedule of Required Courses for Graduation**

Students on a full-time schedule at the College of Law are generally expected to adhere to the following schedule of required courses. See §4.9 for guidelines regarding students on a part-time schedule. All students are also strongly encouraged to take a substantial number of courses in subjects covered by the bar examination. See §3.1.2.1 for required bar courses for certain students below a 2.6 GPA and §3.4 for bar exam topics and recommendations regarding bar courses for all College of Law students.

### **First Year\***

#### ***Fall Semester***

Legal Methods (Law 513)	2.0
Contracts I (Law 502)	3.0
Civil Procedure I (Law 506)	3.0
Torts (Law 508)	4.0

#### ***Spring Semester***

Legal Writing & Adv. I (Law 500)	2.0
Contracts II (Law 503)	3.0
Property (Law 505)	4.0
Civil Procedure II (Law 507)	3.0

Criminal Law (Law 510)	3.0
Basic Legal Research I (Law 511)	1.0
Intro to Legal Profession I (Law 515)**	
Total Hours	<u>16.0</u>

Basic Legal Research II (Law 512)	2.0
Constitutional Law I (Law 550)	2.0
Intro to Legal Profession 516	<u>1.0</u>
Total Hours	<u>17.0</u>

\*For students matriculating before the Fall 2017 semester, the recommended order of required courses varies in some respects from this schedule. Course numbers are from the current numbering system, which was revised in the fall of 2017.

\*\*One credit is awarded at end of academic year for successful completion of both semesters. This course is being waived for students matriculating in Fall 2019 and will not be offered during the 2019-2020 academic year.

## Second Year

### *Fall Semester* (Note 1)

Constitutional Law II (Law 600)	3.0
Legal Writing & Adv. II (Law 701)	2.0
Electives	<u>10-11</u>
Total hours	15-16

### *Spring Semester* (Notes 1, 2)

Electives	<u>13-16</u>
Total hours	13-16

## Third Year

### *Fall Semester* (Notes 1, 2)

Electives	<u>13-16</u>
Total hours	13-16

### *Spring Semester* (Note 1)

Electives	<u>13-16</u>
Total hours	13-16

*Note 1:* Constitutional Law II (Law 600), Professional Responsibility (Law 643), and Introduction to Lawyering Skills (Law 720) are upper-level requirements for all students. An Experiential Learning Project (either a clinic or externship) is required of all students matriculating during or after the fall of 2015. Constitutional Law II must be taken in the fall semester of the second year, and Introduction to Lawyering Skills must be taken during either the fall or spring semester of the second year. See also §3.1.2.1 re required bar courses for students with GPAs below 2.6.

*Note 2:* Students who do not receive a law review waiver or complete a directed research project specifically approved by the Associate Dean as satisfying the Upper-Level writing requirement must take a three-hour seminar during their fourth or fifth semester. See §3.18.

## 3.4 Bar Examination Topics

In selecting upper-level electives, some students are required and all students are strongly encouraged to take a substantial number of law school courses covering topics tested on the bar examination. See §3.1. While various post-graduate review courses may enhance bar preparation, it is imprudent to rely too heavily upon these commercial courses to prepare for the bar, particularly for core subjects that are frequently tested and often difficult to learn from a commercial outline.

Illinois currently administers the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE), which consists of the Multi-State Bar Exam or MBE (200 multiple-choice questions), the Multi-State Essay Examination or

MEE (six essay questions) and the Multi-State Performance Exam or MPT (two 90-minute practical problems to answer in writing).

### **3.4.1 Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) Topics\***

Topics tested on the [Multi-State Bar Examination](#) or MBE (the multiple choice section) are:

Constitutional Law	Evidence
Contracts/Sales	Real Property
Criminal Law	Criminal Procedure
Civil Procedure	Torts

Topics tested on the [Multi-State Essay Examination](#) or MEE may include all MBE subjects plus the following:

Agency	Family Law
Partnerships	Conflict of Laws
Corporations and LLCs	Secured Transactions
Decedents' Estates	Trusts & Future Interests

\* The [Multi-State Performance Examination](#) or MPT problems are contained in a file and a library given to students as part of the examination, along with written instructions from a "supervising attorney."

### **3.4.2 Sources of Information**

Additional information about the [Illinois bar examination](#), as well as the bar examinations in [Indiana](#) and [Wisconsin](#), is available online, as is additional information about the [Uniform Bar Examination](#). For more information about the bar admission process, see Article IX of this handbook.

## **3.5 Academic Success Program**

The Academic Success Program (ASP) demonstrates the College of Law's strong commitment to the success of each of its students. Various aspects of the program are offered during all three years of law school, and some students will be required to participate if objective criteria indicate that they will benefit from additional assistance.

All segments of first-year and upper-level ASP utilize varied pedagogical methods of instruction to facilitate student learning. These methods include, but are not limited to, lectures, written assignments, group discussions, and review and editing of written work by upper-level Graduate Assistants and by other students (peer review).

### **3.5.1 First-Year Program**

The first-year ASP consists, in part, of small-group mentor and study sessions. These sessions are facilitated by second- and third-year students and are offered weekly

throughout the first year of law school. The mentor sessions provide students support and guidance on a variety of topics, from issues specific to the range of first-year classes to questions about maintaining an appropriate work/life balance in law school. These sessions also include practice with hypotheticals and other study skills. The study sessions focus on learning skills such as note-taking techniques, case-briefing skills, and exam-writing techniques within the context of a substantive-first-year course.

In addition to the mentor and study sessions, ASP Graduate Assistants offer regularly scheduled weekly office hours open to the entire first-year class. The Legal Writing/ASP professors are also available to discuss students' individual concerns.

Some first-year students will be required to participate in the program's small-group mentor and study sessions throughout their first year of law school and until they complete their first-year courses. These students will be selected during the admissions process and will be notified of this requirement as part of their acceptance to the College of Law. Other students will be invited to participate voluntarily in the ASP mentor and study sessions as space permits. The entire first-year class is encouraged to participate in any other ASP-sponsored informational sessions during the first semester. These sessions offer discussions on topics such as study groups, exam-writing, and class participation.

Students on a full-time schedule who are initially required to participate in the program's small-group mentor and study sessions throughout the first year of law school may opt out of participation during the second semester of the first year if, but only if, their first semester GPAs are 3.00 or above. To opt out of first-year course mentor and study sessions, a student on a part-time schedule must have earned at least 18 credits with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above. All students with a GPA of 3.00 or above are encouraged to continue voluntarily in the mentor and study sessions even if they qualify to opt out.

Whether or not they were required to participate in ASP during the first semester, *all* first-year students with cumulative GPAs of 2.2 or lower at the end of the first semester are required to participate in the ASP mentor and study sessions during the spring semester of their first year of law school. These students are also required to participate in an intensive six- to eight-week exam-writing seminar during the same semester. These weekly seminar sessions are administered and taught by the Legal Writing/ASP professors and offer students the opportunity to receive individualized feedback on their responses to hypothetical problems similar to those used during final exams.

### **3.5.2 Upper-Level ASP**

Second-year students with cumulative first-year GPAs between 2.2 and 2.4 and students on academic probation or subject to discretionary enrollment or scholarship conditions that mandate participation are required to participate in the upper-level Academic



Success Program, which is designed to furnish additional training by giving students the opportunity to improve fundamentals such as outlining and note-taking skills and by providing individualized feedback on practice exam questions. The upper-level ASP consists of weekly sessions during the first semester of second year and is administered and taught by the Legal Writing/ASP professors.

### **3.5.3 Third-Year Bar Supplement Programs**

Those students who have the ten lowest cumulative GPAs in their class at the end of the spring semester of the second year of law school are required to enroll in the College of Law's Advanced Legal Analysis: Skills and Strategies course (Law 710) during the fall or spring semester of their third year of law school. The remaining slots in this limited enrollment course will be open to all members of the third-year class. If the class is over-subscribed, enrollment preference will be given to students ranked in the bottom half of their class at the end of the spring semester of their second year of law school. See also §3.1.2.2 re the requirement to take the Bar Fundamentals Workshop (Law 676).

Advanced Legal Analysis: Skills and Strategies is designed to help students prepare for the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE). See §9.4. The course focuses primarily on improving test-taking skills on the performance (MPT) and essay (MEE) sections of the UBE, with some instruction related to multiple choice questions (MBE). Basic skills such as outlining, memorization, organization, and analysis are reviewed, practiced and assessed. Other skills, including time-management and self-assessment, are also addressed.

### **3.5.4 Absences and Missed Assignments**

Students who are required to participate in any aspect of the Academic Success Program are expected to attend classes and mentor sessions regularly and make a good faith effort to complete all assignments. In the discretion of the instructors and the Dean, sanctions for excessive absences and missed assignments may range from additional required assignments to placement on academic probation to suspension from law school.

## **3.6 Certificate Programs**

The College of Law offers certificate programs in business law, civil advocacy, criminal practice, international law, and public interest law. Certificate program requirements and general guidelines are [available online](#). In cooperation with the Graduate School, the College of Law also offers a [Graduate Certificate in Law and Women's and Gender Studies](#).

## **3.7 Co-Curricular Competition Credit**

Two credits may be earned for participation as a competitor in a co-curricular interscholastic competition that has an extensive writing requirement. One credit may be earned for participation in a co-curricular interscholastic competition without an extensive writing requirement. No more than two credits may be earned for participation in co-curricular competitions in any given semester, and a maximum of four credits for participation in all such

activities may be counted toward the 90 credit hours required for graduation. For a student to receive credit for participation in an interscholastic competition, the competition must have a faculty advisor appointed by the Dean, and the student must register for credit. A student may withdraw his or her registration only upon consent of the faculty advisor. Any award of credit must be based on the faculty advisor's evaluation and review of the student's entire work in the competition. These credits will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

### **3.8 Credit for Courses Taken at Other Law Schools**

With advance approval from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, a student who has earned at least a "C" or comparable grade in a course taken at an "approved law school" as defined by the American Bar Association may receive credit for this work toward the J.D. degree at NIU. Only the credit hours earned (and not the grade) will be transferred and noted on the student's record. Such credit hours must be supported by an official transcript and certification of good standing signed by a dean or other appropriate official of the school from which the credit is transferred. At least 55 hours of the 90 hours required for graduation under §3.1 must be completed at the College of Law.

Before registration for courses at another law school, students should consult with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and furnish all requested information. Students will also need to complete and submit a [Petition for Special Consideration](#) to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs describing the courses for which the student intends to register, specifying if any of the courses are online, and stating the number of credit hours to be received for successful completion of each course. If the student is later unable to register for any of the courses listed in the petition, he or she should promptly notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and submit a revised or supplemental petition with an updated list of courses for which the student has actually registered, which must be approved by the associate dean. Course credit will not be given more than once for any courses with substantially similar content taken at the College of Law or another law school. Approval of credits from courses at other law schools will *not* be granted retroactively.

Requests for permission to take graduate courses in other non-law departments at NIU or elsewhere and receive academic credit toward the J.D. degree should be submitted to the Associate Dean. See §3.9.

### **3.9 Credit for Graduate Courses in Other Colleges of the University**

In appropriate cases, law students may enroll for credit in law-related graduate courses offered by other colleges of the university. Except in the case of an approved joint degree, no more than six credit hours in such courses may be applied toward the 90 hours required for a law degree. Registration in such courses must be approved *in advance* by the Associate Dean of the College of Law. Students not admitted to the Graduate School must obtain permission to register as a student-at-large to take classes there. Credit toward the law degree will be granted only if the student receives a grade of "C" or higher ("B" or higher for the joint J.D./M.P.A. degree), and only the credit hours and not the grade will be transferred and noted on the student's record.

Approval of credits from graduate courses in other departments will *not* be granted retroactively. Information concerning [NIU graduate school](#) courses is available online.

### **3.10 Dual Degree Programs**

The College of Law offers dual degree programs with the College of Business (J.D./M.B.A.) and the Department of Public Administration (J.D./M.P.A.). Graduation requirements to receive the J.D. as part of a dual degree program are identical to those for other J.D. students, with the exception that for dual degree students, 9 credits earned in the M.B.A. program and 12 credits earned in the M.P.A. program may be applied toward the J.D. degree, instead of the usual 6 hours of credit for graduate courses in other colleges of the University. See § 3.2.3. Information about applying to a dual degree program and about non-law graduation requirements may be found at the [College of Law's J.D./M.B.A. page](#) and [J.D./M.P.A. page](#). In order to receive the benefits of the dual degree program, students must complete the Joint Degree Application Form in advance; credit will not be granted retroactively.

### **3.11 Accelerated J.D. Program**

Some Northern Illinois University undergraduates may be allowed to matriculate to the College of Law before completing their baccalaureate degree. To be eligible for admission to the College of Law under an Accelerated J.D. program, Northern Illinois University students in specified departments or in the University Honors Program must complete at least 90 credit hours toward the 120 needed for the baccalaureate, must complete all general-education and major-specific requirements, must hold a 3.25 cumulative undergraduate GPA (3.20 for University Honors Program students), and must score above the median LSAT score for the previous year's entering class at the College of Law. Students who are admitted are allowed to apply credits earned during their first year of law school toward their baccalaureate degree. A student who matriculates to the law school under one of these programs but who fails by the end of his or her first year to earn enough credits to complete the baccalaureate degree will be subject to dismissal from the College of Law at the discretion of the Dean. Requirements for earning the J.D. degree are otherwise no different for these students than for those of their cohort. For more particularized information about the programs, which in some instances have somewhat unique admissions criteria, visit the [Accelerated J.D. Program page](#).

### **3.12 Credit for Distance Education (Online) Courses**

Up to 12 hours of distance education courses as defined in ABA Standard 306 (online courses), whether offered by the College of Law or another ABA-accredited law school, may be counted toward the 90 credit hours required for graduation, except that

- no course listed as required under §3.1.2 may be taken online for credit toward graduation;
- no student may enroll in an online course for credit unless he or she has earned at least 28 credit hours toward the J.D. degree; and
- no more than 6 of the 12 credits may be from a law school other than the College of Law.

Each online course taken at another law school must be approved by the Associate Dean for

Student Affairs under the procedures described in §3.8. Online course hours count toward the 65 hours that must be earned through attendance in regularly scheduled classes under §3.2.1.

### **3.13 Credit for Law Review**

All awards of academic credit for participation on *The Northern Illinois University Law Review* must be approved by a faculty advisor to the review. Subject to that condition, students participating on law review are eligible to receive pass/fail academic credit as follows:

- All student members of law review who successfully complete a note of publishable quality, as well as their various editorial responsibilities, during the course of their second year will earn two credits during their second year in law school. Both credits will be awarded at the end of the spring semester of that year.
- In addition to credits earned during the second year, student staff members of law review who successfully complete their various editorial responsibilities during the course of their third year in law school will earn two credits during their third year. One credit will be awarded in the fall semester, and one credit will be awarded in the spring semester of that year. Students who graduate in December will only receive the credit awarded during the fall semester of their third year.
- In addition to credits earned during the second year, members of the editorial board of the law review who successfully complete their various board and editorial responsibilities during the course of their third year will earn three credits during their third year. One credit will be awarded in the fall semester and two credits will be awarded in the spring semester of that year.

### **3.14 Directed Research Projects**

Students wishing to conduct independent research or pursue special projects may do so by enrolling in a Directed Research course. Each full-time member of the faculty (including tenured and tenure-track faculty, library faculty, clinical faculty, legal writing instructors, and emeritus faculty) may supervise up to three directed research projects at any one time. Other instructors (including visiting and adjunct professors) may supervise directed research projects with the permission of the Associate Dean. Directed research projects may be approved for either two or three credit hours and may be on either a graded or pass/fail basis. In some cases, a directed research project may satisfy the upper-level writing requirement. See § 3.18.3.

A student planning to enroll in Directed Research must submit an application describing the nature of the proposed project, setting forth the number of credit hours sought, indicating whether the project is to be graded or pass/fail, and stating whether credit toward the upper-level writing requirement is requested. Applications are available online under [Resources for Current Students– Academic](#). The directed research form must be approved and signed by the supervising faculty member and then submitted to the Associate Dean for approval. A student is

limited to three hours of directed research per semester and a total of six hours of directed research for credit toward the J.D. degree.

### **3.15 Experiential Learning Projects**

As part of its experiential learning program, the College of Law offers students a number of practice experiences through [clinical programs](#), [externships](#) and the [Prisoners' Rights Project](#). The clinic courses are taught by College of Law clinical professors who are also experienced practitioners. The externships allow students to gain practical experience under the supervision of a practicing lawyer or judge and with the guidance of a knowledgeable faculty member. The College of Law requires students to take either a clinic or an externship with a classroom component (an Experiential Learning Project) in order to graduate. See §3.1.2. Not all externships and experiential learning opportunities that are available to College of Law students will fulfill the Experiential Learning Project graduation requirement.

#### **3.15.1 Structure of Clinic and Externship Programs**

Most externships are for one semester, but a few are for longer periods. Most are offered for four credit hours, and all are graded on a pass/fail basis. A few externships are for more than four credits. Clinic courses are also one-semester courses and are offered for four hours of pass/fail credit. Students may not receive credit for a practice experience that is substantially duplicative of a prior practice experience for which the student has already received credit. A description of [current clinic and externship programs](#) is available on the College of Law website.

#### **3.15.2 Prerequisites and Co-Requisites**

All externships require that a student have already taken Professional Responsibility and Introduction to Lawyering Skills. In addition, some externships have GPA requirements, and some have recommended courses for students to take either before or during the externship. All clinics require that a student have already taken or be enrolled in Professional Responsibility and Introduction to Lawyering Skills. In addition, some clinics have additional prerequisites, co-requisites, or recommended courses. More information about requirements for individual clinics or externships can be found [online](#) or by contacting the Interim Director of Clinics ([pcain@niu.edu](mailto:pcain@niu.edu)) or the Director of Externships ([jomalley1@niu.edu](mailto:jomalley1@niu.edu)).

#### **3.15.3 Rule 711 Certification**

Externship placements and most clinic courses require law students to have certification pursuant to [Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711](#), which permits certified law students to perform designated legal services under the supervision of a member of the bar of the State of Illinois. To qualify for Rule 711 certification, an NIU law student must be in good standing, have completed 45 credit hours, and file an [application](#) for rule 711 certification with the Office of the Dean. For assistance with 711 applications, students should contact the Assistant Dean and Director of Career Opportunities and Professional Development in SP Room 280A1 ([ganderson@niu.edu](mailto:ganderson@niu.edu)).

#### **3.15.4 Enrollment Procedures and Restrictions**

Enrollment in [externships](#) and the [Prisoners' Rights Project](#) is by application and requires the permission of the supervising faculty member. Students may not enroll in more than one practice experience (clinic course, externship or Prisoners' Rights Project) in any given semester. Externships may not be approved retroactively, and all applications for approval should be submitted by no later than the first week of a semester. See also 3.2.1.

#### **3.15.5 Student Eligibility Requirements**

In general, students are not eligible to participate in clinics or externships until their fourth semester. The only exception is for clinic projects that do not require a 711 license, in which case the clinical professor may allow participation by students in their third semester who possess a cumulative GPA of at least 2.80. At present, only projects in the Health Advocacy Clinic may not require a 711 license. Students who are allowed to participate in a clinic in their third semester will receive academic credit for the course, but the credits will *not* count toward fulfillment of the Experiential Learning Project graduation requirement.

### **3.16 Pro Bono Service**

The College of Law strongly encourages pro bono publico legal services. To support students performing voluntary services, various forms of scholarship, stipends, and other grants are available.

#### **3.16.1 Pro Bono Programs**

The NIU College of Law pro bono initiative will pair students and mentoring attorneys in nearby counties who are willing to engage in legal work on behalf of persons of limited means or underserved populations, charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental, and educational organizations for various purposes, and individuals or groups who wish to secure or protect civil rights. Students may only be paired with, and supervised by, practicing attorneys. They cannot provide direct services to members of the general public. A list of current pro bono opportunities is available [online](#). Some pro bono programs are available for first-year students, and most are available to second- and third-year students. All students may volunteer for pro bono activity at any time. Forms to express an interest in pro bono work and additional information about pro bono opportunities are available [online](#) and from the Director of Career Opportunities and Professional Development in SP Room 280A1 ([ganderson@niu.edu](mailto:ganderson@niu.edu)).

#### **3.16.2 Pro Bono Service Recognition**

Students who complete a cumulative 60 hours of approved pro bono service will receive a notation on their transcripts. For purposes of the College of Law Approved Pro Bono Service Recognition, "[pro bono service](#)" is defined as legal or law-related work for the benefit of (a) persons of limited means or underserved populations; (b) charitable,

religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters that are designed primarily to address the needs of persons of limited means or underserved populations; (c) individuals, groups or organizations, or governmental units and agencies seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties or public rights; (d) charitable, religious, civic, or community organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes; or (e) educational organizations. Participation in activities for improving the law, the legal system or the legal profession also qualifies for recognition. Only voluntary work that is uncompensated and for which academic credit is not received will qualify, but reimbursement of reasonable expenses or receipt of scholarships, stipends, or other grants designated for the support of students performing voluntary services will not be considered compensation.

### **3.17 Study Abroad**

Every summer, the College of Law, in partnership with the Université de Bordeaux, offers an intensive six week [study abroad experience in Agen, France](#). Students participating in the program take two courses: Civil Law & Civil Lawyers: The French Experience (Law 699A), and The Legal System of the European Union (Law 699B). The courses in the Agen program are taught in English by members of the NIU College of Law faculty and distinguished French law faculty. There also guest lectures from French legal professionals. In addition to the classroom experience, the program includes a series of academic field trips to legal and political institutions, including the École Nationale de la Magistrature (the school where all French judges and prosecutors are trained), the Cour de Cassation and the Conseil d'État (the two French Supreme Courts), the Constitutional Council, the National Assembly, the French Senate, the Agen Préfecture (a peculiarly French governmental institution), and others. These visits reinforce and expand upon the materials discussed in the classroom. Enrollment in the Agen program is limited, and [applications](#) are generally due by February 1 of the spring semester. Students must be in academic good standing to enroll. Also see §6.4 re 1L students with GPAs below 2.5. Additional information about the program is [available](#) online, from Prof. Taylor, [dtaylor@niu.edu](mailto:dtaylor@niu.edu), and from the University's Study Abroad Office (815-753-0700; [niuabroad@niu.edu](mailto:niuabroad@niu.edu)).

### **3.18 Upper-Level Writing Requirement**

All students at the College of Law must satisfy an upper-level writing requirement during their fourth or fifth semester of enrollment at the College of Law, and credit toward that requirement will not be given for students enrolled in a seminar or directed research project in their third semester. The upper-level writing requirement may be satisfied by completing any one of the following:

- a writing seminar meeting the description in §3.18.1
- a note for law review meeting the description in section §3.18.2
- a qualifying directed research project meeting the description in §3.18.3

Advance approval of the Associate Dean is required to enroll in a writing seminar or qualifying

directed research project during a student's last semester in law school. Students should be cognizant that an "Incomplete" grade or a grade below "C" for an upper-level writing project taken during the final semester will prevent them from graduating at the same time as their cohort.

### **3.18.1 Writing Seminars**

A student may satisfy the upper-level writing requirement by completion of a three-credit writing seminar with a grade of "C" or better. To qualify as a writing seminar, a course must require submission of one or more written projects that demonstrate a capacity for meaningful legal research and an ability to express such research in written form.

Ordinarily, a student will satisfy this requirement by submitting a paper that is written in law review comment form. This requirement may also be satisfied by the submission of a single significant work in other than law review comment form (*e.g.*, brief, memorandum) or by two or more works (*e.g.*, problem analyses, opinion letters, short memoranda), provided that the single work or the multiple works, taken together, are substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to a law review comment. The major submission by a student in any writing seminar must involve multiple drafts and significant research and analysis.

Students are not limited to just one writing seminar. Students may take additional writing seminars for law school credit in addition to a writing seminar used to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement, but enrollment preference for any seminar will be given to students who have not already completed the upper-level writing requirement.

### **3.18.2 Law Review Notes**

A student may satisfy the upper-level writing requirement by the successful completion of a note written for the *Northern Illinois University Law Review* that is deemed publishable by the editorial board of the law review, subject to the review and approval of a law review faculty advisor.

### **3.18.3 Seminar-Substitute Directed Research Projects**

A student may satisfy the upper-level writing requirement by the successful completion of a three-credit directed research project that has been specifically approved for this purpose. To satisfy the upper-level writing requirement, a directed research project must meet all of the following requirements:

- the project must be approved by the Associate Dean and the supervising faculty member, including approval that it be used to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement
- the project must receive a grade of "C" or better
- the supervising faculty member and student must have a minimum of four in-person meetings during the semester



- the normal standards of quality and multiple drafts for seminar papers apply, including that the paper or papers “demonstrate a capacity for meaningful legal research and an ability to express such research in written form” (see §3.18.1)
- each faculty member will ordinarily be limited to supervising one directed research per semester that can satisfy the upper-level writing requirement
- all students and supervising faculty for whom directed research projects are being used to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement in a given semester must meet at an arranged time or times in the last month of the semester for oral presentation of the students’ work-in-progress to the other students and the supervising faculty
- use of directed study to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement must typically occur in the fourth or fifth semester during the student’s enrollment at the College of Law

Directed research projects may also be undertaken that do not meet the upper-level writing requirement. See §3.14.

### **3.19 Definition of Credit Hour**

Northern Illinois University College of Law utilizes a definition of credit hour that is consistent with federal guidelines and ABA standards. A credit hour is defined as an amount of work that reasonably approximates (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in subparagraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities – including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours – as determined by the College of Law. For purpose of this definition, fifty minutes suffices for “one hour” of classroom or direct faculty instruction, but sixty minutes is required for “one hour” of out-of-class student work. The fifteen-week period includes one week for courses with a final examination.

### **3.20 Attendance Policies**

Regular and punctual attendance is required in all classes. Faculty members shall impose sanctions on any student or students who are absent for more than 20 percent of the classes in any given course. Such sanctions may include, but are not limited to, grade reductions, exclusion from the final exam with an automatic grade of “F,” or voluntary or involuntary withdrawal from the course with a notation of “W.” Individual faculty members may impose more rigorous attendance policies (*e.g.*, students may miss no more than 10 percent of the classes in a course, or students may miss no more than one class in a course) and impose appropriate sanctions for failure to comply, provided notice of the more rigorous requirement is given to the students in the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester. The Office of the Dean shall ensure that the attendance policies are enforced appropriately, and its determination is final.

Although Northern Illinois University, as a public institution, does not observe religious holidays, it is [University policy](#) to reasonably accommodate the religious observances of individual students in regard to admissions, class attendance, examination scheduling, and work requirements. Religious observance includes all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief. Absence from classes or examinations for religious observance does not, however, relieve students from responsibility for any part of course work that is required during the period of absence. To request accommodation, students who expect to miss classes, examinations or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance should provide instructors with reasonable notice of the date or dates they will be absent. Students who believe they have been denied a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office of the Dean. If the issue is not resolved there, students may proceed to the [Office of the Provost](#). Students may also contact the University [Ombudsperson](#) for advice.

### **3.21 Policy Regarding Guests in Law School Classes**

Attendance in NIU College of Law classes is normally restricted to enrolled students. Guests (anyone who is not enrolled as a student in a particular class) may attend with permission of the instructor. For guests to attend classes in any courses on a regular basis, permission of both the instructor and the Associate Dean is required. In all circumstances, guests may not be disruptive or negatively affect the learning environment for enrolled students, as determined by the instructor.

### **3.22 Policy Regarding Use of Electronic Equipment in the Classroom**

The use of any electronic equipment by students during class (including, without limitation, laptops, smart watches, cell phones or smartphones, tablets, and any type of recording equipment) is allowed solely at the discretion of and under the terms set by the instructor. For restrictions on recording, see the College of Law Classroom Recording and Transmission Policy in Appendix E. When the use of laptops is permitted in the classroom, students should be aware of the University's Acceptable Use Policy. See §2.6.1. Furthermore, students are cautioned that any use of electronic equipment in class for non-class purposes can be distracting to others and subject the offending student to sanctions from the instructor and, in appropriate cases, academic discipline from the College and University.

## **IV. REGISTRATION AND RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Registration Schedule**

Course registration for each semester normally takes place near the end of the preceding semester. Generally, third-year students will have priority, and registration will open for them at least one day earlier than for the rest of the students. For priority registration in the spring for the upcoming fall semester, students with at least 54 credit hours, including hours in progress, will be treated as third-year students. For priority registration in the fall for the upcoming spring semester, students with at least 72 credit hours, including hours in progress, will be treated as third-year students.

## **4.2 MyNIU Self-Registration System and Exceptions**

Students register for most courses through the university's [MyNIU](#) system. In order to obtain access to registration and other records and forms on MyNIU, students must enter a current university identification number. In the following instances, self-registration is not permitted.

### **4.2.1 Registration for First-Year Courses**

First-year students who are taking a full-time schedule are automatically registered for all required courses by the Office of Budget and Records upon approval of the Associate Dean and may not enroll themselves. No additional courses may be added, and no courses may be dropped without approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students in their first and second semester who have approval for a part-time schedule will be registered by the Office of Budget and Records for those first-year courses that have been approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students who have not taken all required first-year courses by the end of their first year at the College of Law will be automatically registered by the Office of Budget and Records for the remaining required first-year courses during their third and fourth semesters. See §4.9 for course approval and other requirements applicable to students taking a part-time schedule.

### **4.2.2 Other Special Registration Procedures**

Special registration procedures are in effect for some upper-level courses requiring department or instructor consent, including externships, co-curricular competitions, and directed research. For those courses, the faculty member whose consent is required will notify the Office of Budget and Records of the students permitted to enroll in the course. Upon notification, the Office of Budget and Records will register the students. Students may not enroll themselves, and any inquiries concerning such registration should be directed to the Office of Budget and Records, the faculty member involved or the Associate Dean.

### **4.2.3 Changing Sections**

Students are not permitted to change from one section to another in any required courses for which self-registration is not allowed.

## **4.3 Limited Enrollment Courses**

Seminars, Introduction to Lawyering Skills, Trial Advocacy and some other courses have limited enrollment. Seating capacity limitations may also restrict enrollment in some courses. Slots in limited enrollment courses are generally filled on a first-come, first-served basis except that third-year students who have not completed a course required for graduation may be given priority. When deemed appropriate by the Associate Dean, registration in limited enrollment classes may be controlled via a balloting system or any other method chosen by the Associate Dean. If no slots are currently available in a course, students can utilize the wait-list function in MyNIU.

#### **4.4 Adding and Dropping a Course**

Students may add courses until the end of the first week of a semester. After the first week, courses may only be added with the approval of one of the associate deans. Students may drop courses until the end of the second week of a semester without a “W” appearing on their transcript. Students should note, however, that the self-service add/drop function in MyNIU is only available until the end of the first week of each semester. During the second week, a student wishing to drop a course must contact the College of Law Office of Budget and Records. After the end of the second week, requests to “drop” courses will be treated as course “withdrawals” under §4.5. The above deadlines are substantially shorter during the summer session.

#### **4.5 Withdrawals from a Course**

From the end of the second week of a semester until the student receives a copy of the final exam, or, if there is no final exam, until the last day of scheduled final exams, a student may withdraw from a course only with the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. To obtain such approval, students should submit a [Petition for Special Consideration](#). Except for withdrawals during the first two weeks of a semester, a “W” (withdrawn) is given for a course from which a student withdraws and is recorded as such on the student’s official and unofficial transcript.

#### **4.6 Auditing**

Students seeking Juris Doctor degrees may not audit any course offered by the College of Law. Students from other NIU departments may audit a course with the permission of the instructor and Associate Dean.

#### **4.7 Non-Law Students in Law Courses**

Non-law students are not normally permitted to enroll in courses offered by the College of Law. In special circumstances, however, the Associate Dean may grant permission for graduate students, including students-at-large in the Graduate School, to enroll in law courses as space permits. Such circumstances may include, without limitation, students pursuing a certificate offered jointly by the College of Law and the Graduate School, students with special interest in a particular course where the student seeking permission to enroll has appropriate background, or where the individual seeking to enroll in a law course already has a J.D. from an accredited law school. Undergraduate students may not enroll in courses offered by the College of Law except pursuant to an approved accelerated degree program.

#### **4.8 Full-Time Schedule**

Normally, law students are expected to adopt a full-time schedule. The definition of a full-time schedule may vary depending on the context. For example, requirements established by the academic program, lending agencies, government regulations, employing entities, and certain insurance policies may establish different definitions of a full-time schedule. For purposes of the College of Law academic program in the fall and spring, a full-time schedule requires a student to take at least 12 credit hours per semester. The normal course load first year is 16 to 16.5

credits per semester. After the first year, the normal course load is about 15 credit hours per semester. In no case may a student enroll in more than 18 credit hours in a semester. Upper-level students with cumulative GPAs lower than 2.4 may not take more than 16 credit hours per semester without permission from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, which is obtained by filing a [Petition for Special Consideration](#). Normally the number of credit hours is equal to the number of class hours per week.

#### **4.9 Part-Time Schedule**

A part-time scheduling option is offered by the College of Law on a limited basis as a daytime program to accommodate special circumstances of individual students such as employment and family obligations. In considering whether to adopt a part-time schedule during a term, students should take into account the impact of that decision on eligibility for certain scholarships and some types of financial aid.

##### **4.9.1 Minimum Requirements**

First-year students who adopt a part-time schedule must take a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester during the first year after matriculation, and those credit hours must include Legal Methods (Law 513), Basic Legal Research I (Law 511) and Introduction to the Legal Profession I (Law 515) during the fall semester and Legal Writing and Advocacy I (Law 500), Basic Legal Research II (Law 512) and Introduction to the Legal Profession II (Law 516) during the spring semester. Upper-level students must also take a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester except in their final semester of law school.

##### **4.9.2 Approval Procedures**

Until they have completed all of their first-year course requirements, students taking fewer than 12 hours during the fall or spring semester must file a [Petition for Special Consideration](#) with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and must also have their course selections and schedules approved by the associate dean. Generally, all first-year courses must be completed within the first four semesters after matriculation. After the first-year requirements are fulfilled, students who continue to attend part-time generally do not need to file a petition for approval, but are responsible for ensuring that they have met all upper-level requirements for graduation. Upper-level students are also strongly encouraged to continue to consult with and have an associate dean review their schedule selections prior to registering in MyNIU and should be aware that the terms of scholarships, loans or other financial assistance may require adoption of a full-time schedule.

#### **4.10 Summer Courses**

Courses offered by the College of Law during the summer session are generally taught for six to seven weeks during the first half of the summer, though occasionally courses are also offered during the latter half of the semester. Some externships, directed research projects and online courses may also be available for enrollment in the latter half of the summer. Students may not take more than 7 credit hours at any one time during the summer session and may not take more

than a total of 10 credit hours during the entire summer session. These restrictions apply whether courses are taken at the College of Law, in a study abroad program or on a visit to another law school during the summer. All students who register for summer courses, including courses in the study abroad program (see §3.17), must complete and sign a waiver and acknowledgement form designated by the Associate Dean. Failure to comply with this waiver requirement will result in the withdrawal of a student from all summer courses.

#### **4.11 Petitions for Special Consideration**

Student requests for variances from normal College of Law procedures or policies based on extraordinary circumstances should be submitted to one of the deans by filing a [Petition for Special Consideration](#). Petition forms are available on the College of Law website under [Current Student Resources – Forms](#). Supporting documentation for a petition may be required.

#### **4.12 Failing a Required Course**

A student who fails a required course (*i.e.*, receives a grade of “F” or no pass) is required to retake the course. Both the original failing grade and the grade received after re-taking the course will be of record and will be included in the calculation of the student’s cumulative grade point average. The requirement to retake the course and be examined may be waived by a dean. A student who fails the first semester in a continuing course (*e.g.*, Contracts, Civil Procedure, Introduction to the Legal Profession) may not take the second semester of the continuing course until the student successfully retakes the first semester of the course. A student who fails an elective course may retake the course, and both grades will be of record.

#### **4.13 Visiting Students**

##### **4.13.1 Visits In**

The College of Law may admit a limited number of visiting students from other law schools. Students who have been approved for visiting status must seek the advice and approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in order to complete registration. All students matriculated in the College of Law, including visiting students, must conform to the Rule of Professional Conduct, Student Code of Conduct and all applicable University and College of Law academic policies and procedures. Visiting students requiring financial assistance should consult the web site of the NIU [Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#). If further information is needed, students should contact the College of Law [Office of Admissions and Financial Aid](#). Visiting students who seek a change from visiting to transfer status must meet standards for admission established and administered by the admissions committee and the faculty.

##### **4.13.2 Visits Out**

Students enrolled at the College of Law who wish to visit and take courses at other law schools, including during the summer, must obtain permission from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and should submit a [Petition for Special Consideration](#). For policies regarding transfer of credits from other law schools, see § 3.8. Students who plan to use

federal loans to finance courses taken at another law school should discuss the applicable procedures with the NIU [Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#). The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will act as a student's academic advisor for purposes of filing a [Consortium Agreement](#) under those procedures.

#### **4.14 Failure to Provide Official Undergraduate Transcript**

For all students admitted to the College of Law, the American Bar Association requires verification of completion of a baccalaureate degree. Unless accepted as part of an accelerated degree program, each applicant must therefore furnish an official transcript directly from the registrar of his or her undergraduate institution by August 1 of the year of matriculation. Post-graduation official transcripts sent to the Law School Admission Council will suffice for this requirement. If the College of Law has not received an official undergraduate transcript by October 15 of a student's year of matriculation, the student will be dismissed from the College of Law. Students who have matriculated pursuant to an accelerated degree program must normally provide their transcripts by October 15 of their second year of study at the College of Law.

#### **4.15 Withdrawal and Readmission**

A student with a cumulative grade point average of 2.2 or above may withdraw from the College of Law in good standing by notifying the Office of the Dean in person and the College of Law Registrar in writing. A student will be considered registered until written notice of withdrawal is received by the Registrar. In some cases, a student who withdraws may be eligible for a refund [under University policy](#). A student who has withdrawn may apply for readmission only by written request to the Dean. Such request may then be referred to the Admissions Committee or the Academic Standing Committee. A student seeking readmission must satisfy existing admission standards and requirements, and if readmitted, must satisfy the curriculum requirements and academic standing policies existing at the time of readmission. Additional requirements and conditions may also be imposed by the Dean.

#### **4.16 Deferrals of Admission and Leaves of Absence**

A student who elects not to attend the College of Law after being admitted may request a deferral of admission by submitting a request to the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. Requests for deferral of admission are subject to the approval of the Dean. Once classes begin, a recently admitted student or other student in good standing who desires a leave of absence must submit a written request to the Dean. Approval for deferrals of admission and leaves of absence will normally be granted for a period of not more than one year and may be made subject to conditions, in the discretion of the Dean. Students who exceed the term of a leave of absence may later request permission from the Dean to return to the College of Law, and the Dean may either grant permission to term activate the student and allow him or her to resume studies or may require the student to file a formal application for readmission as a first-year student.

#### **4.17 Student Financial Responsibility**

By registering for courses at Northern Illinois University, a student accepts [financial responsibility](#) for payment in full of the student account plus (if necessary) any additional costs

which may be incurred by the University in the collection of these debts. Late payment fees will be applied to past due amounts. Failure to pay a past due debt may result in the debt being listed with the State Comptroller's Offset Program and (if necessary) referred to a collection agency or other authorized legal debt collection procedures. Under such circumstances, the student is responsible for all fees and costs incurred by the university in the collection of the past due debt, including collection fees and attorneys' fees. For law students, disclosure of unpaid debts may also be required under character and fitness requirements for admission to the bar.

#### **4.17.1 Charges and Payment Information**

Through their [MyNIU](#) self-service access, students can view their NIU charges, due dates for these charges, payments, and credits for financial aid at any time. General information about [payments](#) (including due dates, payment methods and late payments) is available from the NIU [Office of the Bursar](#). The bursar's office also has a [FAQ page](#) online with information about tuition and fees, late payment fees, account statements, refunds and other financial issues.

#### **4.17.2 Financial Aid Information**

Information about tuition waivers and other sources of financial aid is available from the College of Law [Office of Admissions and Financial Aid](#) and from the NIU [Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#). For students needing or already receiving financial aid, the NIU Financial Aid and Scholarship Office publishes a statement of [Students Rights and Responsibilities](#) and answers questions about unpaid bills and outstanding balances. Debt counseling for students is available from both the College of Law and University financial aid offices.

### **4.18 Account Holds**

Under some circumstances, a hold may be placed on a law student's account that prevents future registration for courses and receipt of an official transcript or diploma until the hold is removed.

#### **4.18.1 Bursar's Holds**

Under a bursar's financial hold, any student with a past due balance remaining will have a hold placed on his/her records until the account balance is paid-in-full, and late payment fees will continue to accrue on the unpaid balance. Students will be notified by the bursar's office each month if the balance remains unpaid, and students should [make an appointment](#) with an account counselor as soon as this letter has been received in order to allow for more options and even the possibility of some financial assistance to resolve the account debt.

#### **4.18.2 College of Law and Other University Holds**

The College of Law or the University may also place holds on law student accounts in a number of instances, including without limitation, the following:



- Incomplete admissions requirements (*e.g.*, failure to supply an official undergraduate transcript)
- Failure to provide proof of immunization to Health Services
- Failure to furnish required forms (*e.g.*, selective service forms)
- Failure to complete required online Title IX training
- Repeated failure to respond to official correspondence
- Following academic dismissal
- Other material violations of College of Law rules and requirements
- Disciplinary actions by the University or a Student Conduct Board

Students will be notified of the hold, which will not be removed until the infraction has been cured and/or the office requesting the hold has authorized its removal.

## **V. FINAL EXAMINATIONS AND GRADING POLICIES**

### **5.1 Administration of Examinations**

To ensure consistency and fairness, all final examinations are generally administered by a member of the College of Law staff, under the direction of the deans. Midterm examinations may be administered by a member of the staff or by the instructor. Students will be given instructions at the beginning of each in-class examination and are also responsible for reading carefully the general instructions of the instructor at the beginning of each examination, whether in-class or take-home. The number of hours for each final examination is normally equivalent to the number of credit hours for the course, but faculty members have the discretion to determine the number of hours allowed for their exams and may require a shorter or longer exam time. The length of midterm examinations varies and is determined by the course instructor. At the conclusion of each in-class final examination, answers and all exam materials will be collected at a table located outside the exam room or in the faculty support office (Room 190). Students will receive instructions for collection of midterm and take-home exams from the instructor or other administrator.

### **5.2 Examination Rules**

College of Law examinations are conducted on a partial honor system. The examination rules in Appendix B to this handbook will be distributed in advance of the exam period and will be posted at each examination. All students are responsible for reading and complying with those rules, and failure to comply with the examination rules will constitute academic misconduct. **Students found to have violated the examination rules or the Rule of Professional Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the College of Law Procedures Relating to Academic or Other Professional Misconduct by a Student.** See §§2.2, 2.6.

### **5.3 Laptop Use in Examinations**

Students are permitted to take any essay portion of any final examination on their own laptops using ExamSoft software. Prior to exams each semester, all students enrolled in courses with

exams for which laptops may be used will receive an email inviting them to register with ExamSoft. Each student is responsible for registering with ExamSoft by the deadline established by the Associate Dean. The College of Law is not responsible for laptop malfunctions or ExamSoft system failures, and all students should be prepared to write exam answers by hand in the event of any such malfunction or system failure.

#### **5.4 Rescheduling Examinations**

All students are normally required to take examinations as scheduled, and midterm or final exams may *only* be rescheduled under the following circumstances.

##### **5.4.1 Scheduling Conflicts**

A student may request a change in exam date if there is a scheduling conflict in which two exams are scheduled on the same day or at least one exam is scheduled on three consecutive *calendar* days.

##### **5.4.2 Extraordinary Circumstances**

Except for a scheduling conflict described in §5.4.1, an exam may not be rescheduled or deferred except for extraordinary circumstances that are beyond the student's control and that will not recur and then only with the written approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Notification of the extraordinary circumstances must be given to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the College of Law registrar as soon as possible, followed by a formal written request for a deferred examination and required supporting documentation. Conflicts involving outside employment or job interviews are not considered extraordinary circumstances.

##### **5.4.3 Rescheduling Procedures**

All students requesting approval to reschedule an exam will be required to sign a [Petition to Reschedule an Exam](#), which is available online under [Current Student Resources – Forms](#). Students requesting approval under §5.4.1 should attach a copy of their entire midterm or final exam schedule to the petition. Based on the nature of the scheduling conflict or other circumstances, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will determine whether to grant approval for rescheduling. Administrative arrangements for taking an approved rescheduled examination must then be made by the student with one of the deans in conjunction with the faculty support office. A rescheduled examination must ordinarily be taken before the close of the relevant exam period and will generally take place *after* the announced examination date for the course unless the course instructor agrees to an earlier examination date. A fee may be charged for any examination required to be rescheduled after the exam period ends. A student who fails to take an examination when scheduled or rescheduled, and who has not received approval for missing the exam on that date, will receive a failing grade (“F”).

#### **5.5 Students Needing Disability Accommodations**

Students who believe that reasonable accommodations with respect to course work, examinations

or other academic requirements may be appropriate in consideration of a disability should contact the NIU [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) for an appointment to discuss what accommodations may be appropriate and provide requested verification. Students are encouraged to obtain DRC letters of accommodation as early as possible during the semester and, in any event, must do so in time for appropriate steps to be taken to implement the accommodations. Neither classroom nor examination accommodations will be made by the College of Law without a Letter of Accommodation evidencing the approval of the DRC. Letters of Accommodation should be given to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and *not* to any instructors.

### **5.5.1 Classroom Accommodations**

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will notify instructors of any classroom accommodations approved by the DRC, and students are encouraged to meet with their instructors to discuss how the classroom accommodations will be implemented.

### **5.5.2 Exam Accommodations**

For exam accommodations approved by the DRC, students should complete individual exam accommodation forms for each exam to be taken and should deliver them to the faculty support office in Room 190 for completion. To help preserve anonymous grading, students with exam accommodations should *not* take accommodation forms to individual faculty members or discuss exam accommodations with them. After completion of the forms by the faculty support office, current DRC procedure requires that accommodated students deliver the forms *in person* to the DRC office.

### **5.5.3 Questions and Appeal Procedures**

Questions about the exam forms or the exam accommodations should be addressed to one of the associate deans or the DRC. The DRC also describes [appeal and grievance procedures](#) for disability-related complaints and concerns and maintains a list of [resources](#) for students in need of accommodations and support. College of Law students who have a disability-related grievance or concern about a College of Law faculty or staff member may wish to contact their DRC Access Consultant for assistance in resolving the problem. If the grievance is academically related, the students may also contact one of the deans for assistance.

Disability Resource Center  
Health Services Building, Fourth Floor

Phone: 815- 753-1303 (voice/TTY)  
Email: [drc@niu.edu](mailto:drc@niu.edu)

## **5.6 Anonymous Grading Policy**

Most final examinations in the College of Law are graded anonymously. Students are given and are required to use exam numbers for each blind-graded exam. Final exam numbers are assigned randomly by MyNIU; midterm exam numbers are created and distributed by the Associate Dean. Instructors assign exam grades to the respective exam numbers without having access to the names of the students and report the anonymous exam grades to the Office of Budget and

Records. Some final course grades may be based on factors in addition to, or instead of, anonymously graded final exams. For example, course grades may take into account factors such as attendance, class participation, written papers, or other assignments. In some courses, such as seminars, grades may be based entirely on written papers. If a course has a final examination and other factors are also included in determination of the course grade, the instructor may, after turning in blind-graded exam grades to the Office of Budget and Records, receive a list of names and matching exam numbers to permit inclusion of the other factors. In determining a final course grade, instructors may not alter the exam grade by more than one step (e.g., C+ to B-) without approval of the Associate Dean. If it becomes necessary to reschedule an examination after the close of the relevant examination period (see §5.4), anonymous grading may not be feasible and is not guaranteed.

### **5.7 Grading System**

A student's performance in a course is usually expressed in terms of the following letter grades, with the following numerical equivalents used for computation purposes: A (4.00); A- (3.67); B+ (3.33); B (3.00); B- (2.67); C+ (2.33); C (2.00); C- (1.67); D+ (1.33); D (1.00); F (0.00).

The grade "I" (Incomplete) may be given to a student who is able to show good cause for failing to complete a required writing assignment, when this assignment is the principal grade determinant in a course. Such grades will be assigned only with the written approval of the instructor and the Associate Dean. The "I" grade is only an interim mark. The required writing assignment must be submitted by the end of the next semester or summer session. If it is not so submitted, the result will be a failing grade (F) in the course. A pass/fail (P/F) grading system may be adopted for certain courses as determined by the faculty. A grade of "pass" does not affect, but a failing grade does affect, a student's cumulative grade point average.

Grade point averages (GPA) are calculated and provided by the University and are carried out to three decimal places. GPAs will not otherwise be rounded up or down for any purpose.

### **5.8 Grading Curves**

In all first-year courses with more than 30 students, the mean grade shall be between 2.70 and 2.90 inclusive. The Associate Dean may grant individual exceptions to this requirement upon a satisfactory showing by the instructor that student performance in a particular class deviated significantly from the norm. In all upper-level courses, it is strongly suggested that the mean grade shall be between 2.8 and 3.2 inclusive. In addition, it is strongly suggested that a minimum of 15% of the grades in all such upper-level course shall be A- or above, and a minimum of 25% of the grades shall be B+ or above.

### **5.9 Notification of Grades**

Students are notified of their grades in [MyNIU](#). Fall semester grades for first-year courses are normally due approximately one week before the beginning of spring semester classes. Fall semester grades for upper division courses are due before the beginning of spring semester classes. Spring semester grades for first- and second-year students are normally due

approximately three weeks after the end of exam period. Grades for graduating students are due before graduation.

### **5.10 Review and Appeal of Grades**

Grades are not subject to review or appeal. Grades are final as submitted to the Office of Budget and Records, except for computational recording errors. As a learning experience, students should be provided with a reasonable opportunity to review an examination or written assignment with the instructor, upon request by the student.

## **VI. ACADEMIC STANDING AND RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **6.1 Academic Good Standing and Academic Deficiency**

To be in academic good standing, a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.2 on a 4.00 scale, computed at the end of each academic year. In addition, a student must

- achieve a GPA of at least 1.8 by the end of the first semester of first year; and
- achieve a GPA of at least 2.2 by the end of the student's second year (calculated on the basis of third and fourth semester grades only)

Any student whose cumulative GPA at the end of any academic year is below 2.2 or whose GPA does not meet the additional 2.2 GPA requirement in the second year will be dismissed for academic deficiency, unless the student petitions for and is granted reinstatement. Any student whose GPA does not meet the minimum GPA requirement for the first semester of first year will be dismissed for academic deficiency and will *not* be eligible for reinstatement.

### **6.2 Reinstatement and Readmission**

A student whose cumulative GPA at the end of any academic year is below 2.2 or whose GPA does not meet the additional 2.2 GPA requirement in the second year may seek reinstatement by written petition to the Dean and the Academic Standing Committee. Students who are reinstated are permitted to continue with their studies without repeating courses in which they received passing grades. Students who are not reinstated must be readmitted to the College of Law to continue with their law studies and must begin first year over. A student seeking readmission must satisfy admission standards and requirements existing at the time of readmission, as well as ABA Standard 501(c). If readmitted, a student must also thereafter satisfy the curriculum requirements and academic standing policies existing at the time of readmission. Both the original grades from a student's first attempt at law school and the grades received after readmission will be of record, but the original grades will not be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA at the College of Law (but may be included in the calculation of cumulative GPA for financial aid purposes).

### **6.2.1 Criteria for Reinstatement First Year**

For students who fail to meet the 2.2 cumulative GPA requirement, the Academic Standing Committee will recommend to the Dean that petitions for reinstatement be granted only if it finds that (1) there were material events or circumstances of an unusual nature, beyond the student's control, that significantly affected his or her ability to perform; or, for students who have completed only one year, that there has been a significant improvement in academic performance during the second semester, and (2) there is a likelihood that the student will be able to raise his or her cumulative GPA to 2.2 by the end of the academic year of reinstatement and to maintain this standard for the remainder of his or her academic career.

### **6.2.2 Criteria for Reinstatement Second Year**

For students who meet the cumulative GPA requirements but who fail to meet the additional 2.2 GPA requirement in the second year, the Academic Standing Committee will recommend to the Dean that petitions for reinstatement be granted only if it finds that (1) there were material events or circumstances of an unusual nature, beyond the student's control, that significantly affected his or her ability to perform during the second year; and (2) there is a likelihood that the student will be able to achieve a GPA of at least 2.2 in the semester following reinstatement and to maintain this standard for the remainder of his or her academic career.

### **6.2.3 Additional Criteria**

In determining whether to recommend reinstatement, the Academic Standing Committee may take into consideration how close the petitioning student's GPA is to the required minimums, whether the student is consistently performing at or below a C+ level or has shown the ability to do B- or better work in at least a few courses, whether the student has taken clear affirmative steps to improve performance, and such other factors as the committee deems appropriate in its discretion. If a student petitioning for reinstatement was required to participate in the Academic Success Program (ASP), the student's attendance record and level of participation in that program may be considered by the Academic Standing Committee in making recommendations. This includes, but is not limited to, the degree of participation in weekly tutorials, the exam-writing seminar, and any other required activities that are applicable to the petitioning student. Failure to meet the requirements of the program may be considered negatively in evaluating petitions for readmission.

### **6.2.4 Final Determination**

Reinstatement is not a right. The Dean will consider the recommendations of the Academic Standing Committee, but the final determination whether to reinstate a student will be made in the discretion of, and subject to conditions imposed by, the Dean. No student may be reinstated more than once.

### **6.2.5 Readmission Conditions**

A student who is dismissed for academic deficiency and is not reinstated must reapply for and be granted admission to the College of Law and must wait at least one year before beginning law school classes again. In some instances, petitions for reinstatement will, in the discretion of the dean, be treated as applications for immediate readmission and waiver of the one-year waiting period. All students applying for readmission after academic dismissal must meet ABA Accreditation Standard 501(c). A student who is readmitted after a dismissal and again fails to meet the requirements for academic good standing or violates the terms of probation will not be eligible for either reinstatement or readmission.

## **6.3 Academic Probation**

Academic good standing and academic probation are related but not co-extensive. The following students will be on academic probation, regardless of whether they are currently in academic good standing.

### **6.3.1 Criteria for Academic Probation**

Any student granted reinstatement upon dismissal after the first or second year will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one year. In addition, any student

- whose GPA at the end of the first semester of the first year is at or above 1.8 but below 2.2,
- whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.2 at the end of the third semester,
- whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.2 at the end of the fifth semester, or
- in the case of part-time students, whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.2 at the end of any fall semester following the first two years of law school

will be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the relevant academic year.

### **6.3.2 Probation Conditions**

While on academic probation, a student

- must obtain approval of course loads and class schedules from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs;
- may not hold office in any College of Law organization without the permission of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs;
- may not participate in any internal or external competitions without the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs;
- must obtain permission from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to be employed;
- must participate in the Academic Success Program;
- must comply with all other terms and conditions set forth in the Dean's letter granting reinstatement (where applicable); and
- must comply with any other terms or conditions deemed appropriate by the Dean or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

#### **6.4 Treatment of Summer School Grades**

Summer school, including summer study abroad, normally starts before all grades from the spring semester are available. Consequently, it is possible for a student to fall below the required cumulative GPA of 2.2 as of the end of the spring semester but not be aware of this fact at the time summer school begins. If a student enrolls in summer school and is subsequently academically dismissed for failure to have the required 2.2 cumulative GPA as of the end of any academic year and is not granted reinstatement, the grading basis for the summer course(s) will be changed, and the student will receive only a grade of pass or fail. If the student is readmitted to begin first year over, the credits received during the summer will not count toward the 90 credits required for graduation. If a student is reinstated, the grade will be entered as a letter grade in accordance with regular practice. Students on academic probation must have the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to enroll in summer school. At the time of registration for summer school, all students will be required to sign a Disclosure, Acknowledgement and Waiver form as a condition to enrollment.

#### **6.5 Financial Aid Issues**

Readmitted students who receive federal financial loans may encounter issues under the requirements for “[satisfactory academic progress](#)” and should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the NIU [Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#) for assistance. Reinstated and readmitted students should also note the requirement for academic good standing under the terms of many scholarships.

### **VII. RECORDS**

#### **7.1 Record System**

Law student records are kept in electronic form in the College of Law Office of Budget and Records. The College of Law maintains individual student files with all original application documents and any relevant academic and disciplinary information generated during a student's enrollment in the College of Law.

#### **7.2 Official Correspondence and Emergency Notifications**

Each student must keep his or her current residence address and telephone number on file in the College of Law [Office of Budget and Records](#) and promptly notify that office of any changes. Emergency contact information, as well as current work address and telephone numbers, should also be provided so that immediate contact with the student, whenever necessary, may be made by the law school administration. Students should also notify the NIU [Registration & Records Office](#) of any name, address or phone number changes so their information can be updated on the NIU phonebook directory. Students may change their addresses online using MyNIU. The requirements of adequate notice are considered met if an official communication is mailed to the student at the address on file with the Office of Budget and Records or if the communication is sent by email to the student's NIU Z-email address, regardless of whether a student has opened or read the mail or email.



### **7.3 Transcripts and Good Standing Letters**

Official student transcripts are maintained by and are available from the NIU [Office of Registration & Records](#) for a fee. Students requesting an official transcript should file a [request form](#) with that office. Processing generally takes from two to three business days. Current students may print unofficial transcripts from their [MyNIU](#) accounts. Students may also request a letter of good standing from the Office of Budget and Records or one of the deans. Students making such a request must furnish the name and address of each recipient of the letter, as well as any other information requested.

### **7.4 Dean's List**

Students who attain a grade point average of 3.00 or above for a semester's work (minimum 9 hours of graded courses) will be placed on the Dean's List for that semester.

### **7.5 Determination of Class Level**

For purposes other than registration and class rank, the following schedule of hours earned is used to determine class level:

First Year	00 - 32.99 hours
Second Year	33 - 59.99 hours
Third Year	60+ hours

### **7.6 Class Ranks**

Class ranks are calculated by using a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) on MyNIU, which is carried out to three decimal places. See §5.7. Class ranks are calculated at the end of students' first year of law school and at the end of each fall and spring semester thereafter until they graduate. Class ranks are not published, but students may be advised of their own class rank by contacting the Director of Career Opportunities and Professional Development. The name of the student with the highest GPA in the graduating class is announced at graduation.

#### **7.6.1 Criteria for Inclusion in Classes Being Ranked**

For purposes of calculating class rank, students are included with the first-year class until they have completed at least 33 hours. For class rankings at the end of any fall semester, students are ranked with the third-year class only if they are registered for enough spring semester hours to graduate at the end of the spring semester. For class rankings at the end of any spring semester, students are ranked with the graduating third-year class only if they actually graduate (or have graduated the prior December). All students who have completed at least 33 hours but who do not qualify to be ranked with the third-year class are ranked with the second-year class.

#### **7.6.2 Ranking Students with Part-Time Schedules**

At the end of the first academic year after matriculation, students with part-time schedules will be ranked with the first-year class of which they were a part. Beginning

with the end of their third semester, such students will be ranked as part of the second-year class until they qualify to be ranked with the third-year class. When class ranks are computed following the end of any fall semester, students with part-time schedules will qualify to be ranked with the third-year class if, and only if, they are enrolled (as of the date the rankings are computed) for enough credits in the spring semester to graduate at the end of the spring semester. When class ranks are computed following the end of any spring semester, students with part-time schedules will be ranked with the graduating third-year class if, and only if, they are graduating with the third-year class at that time.

### **7.6.3 Ranking Transfer Students**

Transfer students will be given class rank equivalent to the rank they would hold in the class with which they will graduate, which will be added to the same rank otherwise given to a non-transfer student so as not to change the class rank of any non-transfer student. Thus, whatever rank a transfer student holds, there will be a non-transfer student in the same class with the same class rank.

## **7.7 Student Evaluations of Faculty**

University policy requires that student assessments of teaching effectiveness be completed for each course, including those taught by adjunct professors. The goal of the University is to recognize effective teaching as an important criterion in evaluation of faculty members for matters of salary, promotion, and tenure. The evaluations will be distributed to the Dean and Associate Dean, as well as to the faculty member being evaluated, after the semester has ended and grades have been submitted. Records of evaluations will be maintained in the Office of the Dean.

## **7.8 Student Complaints**

Students may make informal complaints about any matter relating to the College of Law to the administration by communication to the Dean, the Associate Dean, or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The administration will attempt to resolve such complaints informally. Good faith allegations of unfair treatment by faculty or staff that adversely affect the status, rights, or privileges of a student in a substantive way may be brought under the NIU [Grievance Procedures for Students](#).

## **7.9 ABA Policy-Based Complaints**

Pursuant to [ABA Standard 510](#), any student at the College of Law may bring a formal complaint to the administration of the College of Law “of a significant problem that directly implicates the school’s program of legal education and its compliance with the ABA Standards.”

### **7.9.1 Procedures for Filing**

A student wishing to bring an ABA policy-based complaint shall do all of the following:

- Submit the complaint in writing in hard copy to the Dean's office (SP Room 270) on a [form](#) available from the Dean's office and on the College of Law website.
- Describe in detail the substance of the complaint and explain how the matter implicates the law school's program of legal education and compliance with specific ABA Standard(s).
- Provide the name, official College of Law email address, and street address of the complaining student for further communication about the complaint if appropriate.

### **7.9.2 Procedures upon Receipt**

When the Dean's office receives an ABA policy-based complaint, the following procedures will be followed:

- The Dean's office will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five business days by email to the student's official College of Law Z-email address.
- Within a reasonable time after acknowledgment of the complaint, the Dean's office will either meet or correspond with the complaining student, providing a written response to the substance of the complaint or informing the student that further investigation is needed. If further investigation is necessary, the Dean's office will complete the investigation within a reasonable time and provide a written response to the substance of the complaint. Any written response from the Dean's office to the student may be by email to the student's official College of Law Z-email address.
- If the Dean's office provides the student with a written response to the complaint from an associate dean, an appeal may be taken to the dean of the College of Law; any decision made by the dean, either as an original response to the complaint or as an appeal from a decision of an associate dean, shall be final.
- The Dean's office shall maintain a record of all student complaints submitted since the College of Law's most recent ABA accreditation site visit. The record shall include the resolution of the complaints.

### **7.10 Student Information and Records under FERPA**

Information and data concerning individual students are collected, maintained, and used by the College of Law and Northern Illinois University only as needed in relation to those institutions' basic educational purposes and requirements. Relevant policy and procedures are designed and operated to be in compliance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#). The official university procedures and a directory of educational records maintained

by the University are available for review in the [Office of Registration and Records](#). All questions about interpretations or clarifications involving university policy and procedures are to be directed to the NIU [Office of General Counsel](#).

### **7.10.1 Types of Records**

There are four basic types of student records at NIU: academic, financial, medical, and placement, in addition to certain specialized records.

**7.10.1.1** A student's official academic record is established and kept current by the [Office of Registration and Records](#). It is a cumulative history of the student's enrollment and educational participation and performance. Maintained in connection with the academic record is certain biographical and personal identification information as needed for enrollment purposes. In addition to certain elements of this record, the College of Law maintains a law student's law school admissions record and a record of progress toward meeting graduation requirements. Part or all of this student data is provided by the NIU Office of Registration and Records and the College of Law as needed to the university's academic offices, colleges, schools, and departments for academic administration and advisement, and to other university administrative units as necessary for the functioning of various student and support services.

**7.10.1.2** Student financial records are the responsibility of the NIU [Office of the Bursar](#), with respect to the billing, payment, and accounting of tuition and fees, and the [Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#) for operation of the University's student financial assistance program. The Bursar keeps a complete record of student financial transactions relative to the payment of the university charges that are accrued. Within the Student Financial Aid Office, the student file contains all necessary information regarding scholarships, grants, loans, and employment that are part of the student's financial assistance program, including institutional, organizational, and federal and state sources.

**7.10.1.3** For those students who require medical assistance and care from NIU Health Services, a medical history record is created at the time of their first contact with Health Services and is maintained by the Health Service staff. Only information pertinent to the health of the individual is included therein. Health Services medical records will be destroyed ten years after the last date medical services were provided.

**7.10.1.4** For those persons who wish to avail themselves of its services, the NIU Office of Career Opportunities, with the student's voluntary participation, creates and distributes to potential employers a copy of a file that consists of a self-completed résumé and various personal references. Similarly, the College of Law Office of Career Opportunities and Professional Development maintains résumés

and other records furnished by students on a voluntary basis.

**7.10.1.5** Certain records within the university community are exempt from FERPA, including records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel that are the possession only of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute; files within the NIU Department of Public Safety (University Police); and medical records used in connection with the provision of treatment for a student. Access to these records is strictly limited to the university staff immediately involved with their creation and maintenance, with certain exceptions.<sup>1</sup>

### **7.10.2 Restrictions on Release**

Access to or release of each of the above types of records or their respective parts, or of any personally identifiable information, with the previous exceptions noted, is restricted to the following: the student or former student; parents of a legally defined dependent student (reference § 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954); university officials who have a legitimate university-related educational or administrative interest and need to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities; certain specified state and federal representatives, primarily as concerns the evaluation and auditing of government-funded programs in which the university participates; officials of other colleges, universities, or schools in which the student intends to enroll, provided the student is informed of this type of request in advance of the information being released; individuals, agencies, and organizations in connection with the student's application for or receipt of financial aid; state and local officials as directed by State Statute adopted prior to November 19, 1974; with certain restrictions, organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs and improving instruction; accrediting organizations; and appropriate persons in connection with an emergency, if knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other person. Additional information regarding government officials and others with access to educational records is available on the [website](#) of the Family Policy and Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education.

**7.10.2.1** A university official for the purposes of §7.10 is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance

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<sup>1</sup> The University also is not required to make available to students the financial records of their parents or confidential letters and statements of recommendation which were placed in students' files prior to January 1, 1975, if such are used only for the purpose specifically intended.

committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks). In all other instances, access or release may be granted only with the written authorization of the student.

**7.10.2.2** In cases where records are to be furnished in compliance with a judicial order or pursuant to a lawfully issued subpoena, the University shall make a reasonable attempt to notify students prior to release of the records. Such attempts at notice will normally be by personal service or first-class mail to a student's last known address.

### **7.10.3 Right to Review**

Students have the right to review personally their records in the presence of a university representative at an appropriate or convenient campus location. This right pertains separately to each status to which the student has been in attendance at the University (i.e., undergraduate, student-at-large, law, graduate). The student should submit a written request to the appropriate university office identifying the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. The university office will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected within 45 days following receipt of such request. Where necessary, interpretation of the record shall be provided by qualified university personnel. Original records cannot be removed from university premises. A copy may be provided where failure to provide such copy would effectively prevent a student from exercising the right to inspect and review the educational records. While a charge may be made to cover costs of reproduction, in most instances this is not done. Depending upon the number of copies requested, however, normal operational fees exist with respect to record reproduction within the Office of Career Opportunities and the Office of Registration and Records.

### **7.10.4 Right to Challenge**

Students have the right to challenge the content of a record on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights, and to have inserted in the record their written explanation of its contents. To initiate such a challenge, students must, within 60 days after they have inspected and reviewed the record in question for the first time, file with the university office responsible for maintaining such records a written request for a hearing, in a form specified by the university. Within 30 days following receipt of such request, the head of such office, or a designated representative, shall review the record in question with the student and either order the correction or amendment of such alleged inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate portions of the record as specified in the request or notify the student of the right to a hearing at which the student and other persons directly involved in the establishment of the record shall have an opportunity to present evidence to support or refute the contention that the portions of the record specified in the request are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate. The student shall be given written notice of the time and place of such hearing no fewer than 10 working days in advance. The hearing

will be conducted by a university representative who does not have a direct interest in the outcome. The student shall have the right to attend the hearing, to be represented and advised by other persons, and to call witnesses on his or her behalf. The student shall be notified in writing of the decision within 10 working days following the hearing or within 10 working days of a decision without a hearing. Such decision is final. College of Law notices under this section will normally be by email to the student's official Z-email address.

#### **7.10.5 FERPA Waivers**

Students may waive their right of access to confidential statements submitted with respect to their application for admission to the College of Law or another educational institution, an application for employment or receipt of an honor or recognition. However, they cannot be required to do so. Further, a student who does waive right of access will be provided, upon request, with the names of all persons making confidential recommendations. [FERPA authorization forms](#) for the release of non-directory information are available on the website of the NIU [Office of General Counsel](#).

#### **7.10.6 Directory Information**

Directory information pertaining to students, as defined below, may be released by the University at any time provided that it publishes this definition at least once each academic year in the campus student newspaper, and students are given a reasonable period of time to inform the University that they do not wish such information to be released without their prior consent. Such information is never knowingly provided to any requester for a commercial purpose. The following items are considered directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing(s), date and place of birth, email address ([Z-ID@students.niu.edu](mailto:Z-ID@students.niu.edu), alias address or other), electronic or photographic picture or image, major field of study, classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, full or part time status, degrees and awards received and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. Law students should consult the University's [notice to all students](#) regarding the procedures for restricting or granting shared access to directory information.

#### **7.10.7 FERPA Complaints**

Students who believe that their privacy rights under FERPA have been violated have the right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-8520.

## **VIII. GRADUATION**

### **8.1 Graduation with Honors**

Graduates shall be granted the Juris Doctor degree with honors as determined by their cumulative grade point average at the end of their final year in law school:

Summa Cum Laude	3.700 cumulative GPA and above
Magna Cum Laude	3.350 to 3.699 cumulative GPA
Cum Laude	3.000 to 3.349 cumulative GPA

Honor designations will be annotated on a student's transcript.

### **8.2 Dean's Certificates**

As standard policy, a [Dean's Certificate](#) is created by the Office of Budget and Records for each student in the College of Law graduating class and, following signature by a dean, is filed with the Illinois Board of Admissions (regardless of whether a student currently intends to apply for admission to the Illinois bar). The dean's certificates are normally submitted for each student in January for December graduates and in early June for May graduates, after confirmation that all graduation requirements for the student have been met. Students applying for admission to the bar in other states are responsible for furnishing the Office of Budget and Records in a timely manner with comparable forms requiring certification by a dean.

### **8.3 Participation in Graduation Ceremony**

Normally, all students who graduate in December or May of their third year of law studies are invited to participate in May graduation ceremonies for their class. Students who will have completed five or more semesters and at least 75 credit hours by the end of the spring semester may file with the Dean's Office a [Petition for Special Consideration](#) for permission to participate in graduation with the class with which they matriculated even though they will not qualify for or receive a degree at that time. Such petitions must be filed by the date on which Statement of Candidacy forms are due for graduates. Alternatively, such students may participate in graduation ceremonies during the academic year in which they actually earn their J.D. degree. Students may participate in graduation ceremonies only once.

### **8.4 Graduation Regalia and Honor Cords**

Graduation regalia will be furnished by the College of Law. Students who receive honors awarded by NIU Law based on their grade point average (Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, or Cum Laude) will be listed in the Commencement program and may wear an approved gold cord during Commencement ceremonies. NIU Law will purchase and provide the honor cords to eligible students, and the cords may be retained by the student honorees at their option.

#### **8.4.1 Additional Cords and Accompaniments to Regalia**

Other honor cords and accompaniments to regalia are limited to the following.



- Students who wish to represent their racial or ethnic background or participation in a Study Abroad program may wear the appropriate stoles or sashes during the Commencement ceremony, furnished by them at their own expense.
- Students who are veterans may wear appropriate cords during the Commencement ceremony, furnished by them at their own expense.
- Students who are members of recognized NIU Law student organizations during their studies at NIU Law may choose to wear up to two approved cords representing those organizations during the Commencement ceremony. The College of Law will bear the cost of the Law Review cords. Payment for other student organization cords will be the responsibility of the individual student organizations or the Student Bar Association.

#### **8.4.2 Limits per Student**

No more than two student organization cords, one honor cord, one stole/sash and one veterans cord may be worn by any graduating student during the Commencement ceremony.

### **8.5 Guidelines for Student Organization Honor Cords**

To qualify for the wearing of student cords at Commencement, graduating students must belong to a student organization that is officially recognized by NIU Law.

#### **8.5.1 Approved Colors and Changes in Colors**

A full list of organizations that are currently recognized will be [posted on the NIU Law web site](#), along with the approved colors of the organizations' respective cords.

Generally, student organizations will maintain the same cord color from year-to-year. If changes in vendors, budget restrictions, cancellation of particular colors or other factors necessitate changes, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will meet with representatives of the SBA and the affected student organizations to arrange an equitable means of reallocating cord colors. A student organization may also request a change in its cord color on its own initiative as long as no other active or recently inactive organization is using the requested new color. Gold is reserved for the honors cords, and Kelly Green is reserved for law review.

#### **8.5.2 New and Inactive Student Organizations**

A newly recognized student organization may select a cord color, provided that the color is not the same as any color currently used by a recognized organization and provided that the selection is reported to and approved by the Student Bar Association not later than 90 days prior to the first Commencement at which the cords are to be worn. A recognized student organization will retain priority for its respective cord color for a period of one academic year following the academic year in which it becomes inactive. If the organization does not reactivate after one academic year, it loses the priority for the

cord color allocated to it. If and when the inactive organization becomes active again, it must select a new color in accordance with the above procedures. All new color selections will be reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-served basis, and all cord colors are subject to change depending on availability and cost.

### **8.5.2 Role of SBA and Student Organizations**

Each student organization will establish its own requirements for determining which students qualify as members entitled to wear that organization's cords and whether students must return the cords to the organization or may retain them. The student organizations and the SBA will be responsible for the distribution of the cords to students prior to or at Commencement and for the collection of the cords after the Commencement ceremony (if students are not permitted to retain the cords).

## **IX. ADMISSION TO THE BAR**

### **9.1 Requirements for Admission to the Bar**

Each state sets its own requirements for admission to the bar in that state. All law students are advised to contact the state bar in the state in which they intend to practice for further information. In addition to a bar examination, there are very important character, fitness, and other qualifications for admission to the bar in every U.S. jurisdiction. Applicants are encouraged to determine these requirements for any jurisdiction in which they intend to seek admission by contacting the jurisdiction. Addresses for all relevant agencies are available through the [National Conference of Bar Examiners](#). Because most College of Law graduates apply for admission to the Illinois bar, the information in the remainder of this section of the Handbook applies to that application process unless otherwise indicated.

### **9.2 Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination**

Most states, like Illinois, test academic qualifications and professional responsibility separately. To test professional responsibility, most states, including Illinois, require applicants to pass the [Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination](#) (MPRE), a two-hour, 60-question multiple choice exam. The MPRE is given three times a year, usually in March, August, and November. Each state has different passing scores and its own requirements as to when to take the MPRE. Failure to take the MPRE at the appropriate time can have dramatic consequences for a student's bar admission in some states (including having to retake the exam). The Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar requires a MPRE score of 80 or more to pass. An applicant need not take the MPRE before taking the Illinois bar exam testing academic qualifications, but must have done so and obtained a passing score before he or she can be recommended for admission to the bar. Most College of Law students take the MPRE before graduation.

### **9.3 Illinois Bar Application**

Students who wish to file an application with the [Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar](#) (IBAB) for admission to the Illinois bar must first [create a personal registration account](#) on the IBAB

website. In anticipation of graduation from law school, students will then typically seek to apply for admission to the Illinois bar through the testing process and will file an application to take the Illinois bar examination. A [separate admissions process](#) is available to licensed attorneys from other jurisdictions under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 705.

The Illinois bar examination that tests academic qualifications is administered by the Illinois Board of Admissions twice a year on the last consecutive Tuesday and Wednesday in February and July at various venues in Chicago. For the February and July exams, the regular filing deadlines for first-time applicants to the bar are typically in mid-September and mid-February, respectively. Late filings are permitted upon payment of significantly escalating fees through mid-December for the February exam and mid-May for the July exam. IBAB will not consider requests to file beyond the final deadline for any reason. Application forms are specific to particular exam dates. For example, an application for the February bar exam may not be used to apply for the July bar exam. Law students should therefore check carefully to determine when registration for a particular exam opens and be sure to complete the appropriate [application forms](#), which are available online from IBAB.

### **9.3.1 Nonstandard Testing and Administrative Accommodations**

Qualified applicants for admission to the Illinois bar may seek nonstandard testing accommodations (NTA) on the basis of a disability by filing properly completed NTA [request forms](#). Administrative accommodations for applicants for certain health-related issues may also be available. Information concerning nonstandard testing and administrative accommodations is [available online](#) from IBAB.

### **9.3.2 Character and Fitness Disclosures**

The Illinois bar application contains extensive questions relating to the [character and fitness](#) of applicants for admission. As part of the admissions process, IBAB file processors and investigators will compare answers to character and fitness questions on the Illinois bar application with student disclosures made on law school admissions applications and during law school. If there are discrepancies, the applicant will be asked to notify the College of Law and explain the discrepancies. The resulting process of clarifying the record can be time-consuming and may cause delays in the processing (and, potentially, the approval) of a bar application. Therefore, students should promptly notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs as soon as problems with disclosures are identified, so that additional or corrective disclosures can be placed in a student's official law school file. See §2.4.

### **9.3.3 Felony Convictions and Other Pre-Certification Issues**

Graduating law students who have been convicted of a felony (regardless of when it occurred and whether it has been expunged) or against whom there are pending indictments, criminal information, or criminal complaints charging felonies must receive a certification of good moral character and general fitness to practice law by the Committee on Character and Fitness before they will be permitted to write the Illinois bar

examination. See [Illinois Supreme Court Rule 704\(b\)](#). Students with such prior or pending criminal matters should file their applications for admission with IBAB promptly after registration opens in order to allow adequate time for the certification process. Students with questions or concerns about disclosing criminal matters or other issues should contact an attorney for advice.

#### **9.4 Structure of Illinois Bar Examination**

As of July 2019, Illinois administers the [Uniform Bar Examination \(UBE\)](#) prepared by the [National Conference of Bar Examiners \(NCBE\)](#). The UBE is a two-day, twelve-hour test given in July and in February of each year. On the first day of the examination, applicants complete six half-hour essay questions from the [Multistate Essay Examination \(MEE\)](#) and two 90-minute [Multistate Performance Tests \(MPT\)](#), which assess practical skills. On the second day of the examination, applicants sit for the 200-question [Multistate Bar Examination \(MBE\)](#). The UBE is given nationally on the same day for all states using this three-component exam. The current cut score to pass the UBE in Illinois is 266 points. See §3.4 for guidance on taking courses that facilitate preparation for the bar examination.

#### **9.5 Bar Examination Results**

Results of the Illinois bar examination are generally distributed during the first two weeks in October for the July examination and during the first two weeks in April for the February examination. For a fee, graduates who do not pass will be sent electronic copies of their essay and performance exam answers, along with sample passing answers to the same questions. Graduates who do not pass are encouraged to request the assistance of a faculty member to review the examination results and assess how best to improve those results when re-taking the examination.

The College of Law receives notice of which graduates have passed or failed the examination, but does not receive information about exam scores except in the case of graduates who failed the Illinois bar and consented to share the results with the law school. To assist the College of Law in improving its bar support programs, all students are urged to grant that consent each time they take the bar examination.

#### **9.6 Bar Admission Ceremonies and Annual Registration**

Admission ceremonies in Illinois are usually held the first Thursday in November. Those who pass the bar will be admitted in the district from which they applied. The [Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission](#) distributes to members of the Illinois bar a form for registration at the beginning of every calendar year. [See Illinois Supreme Court Rule 756](#). To maintain active status, attorneys must [fill out the form and pay the fee](#).

## **X. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES**

### **10.1 Electronic Signatures**

Much official correspondence and many forms and agreements executed by students at the College of Law may be delivered by fax machine or email in .pdf format to the College of Law, which may rely on the receipt of such documents so executed and delivered by fax or other electronic means as if the originals had been received. In its discretion, however, the College of Law may require that a student submit an original document with the actual signature.

### **10.2 Student Lockers**

Each student at the College of Law will be assigned a locker upon filing an email request (addressed to [lhoebing@niu.edu](mailto:lhoebing@niu.edu)) and will retain the same locker during the entire time of enrollment at the College of Law. No locker exchanges will be allowed without verification of medical necessity. Students must furnish their own locks and are responsible for removing the lock and all locker contents upon departure from the law school. After the July bar exam, locks will be cut from all lockers which have not been reserved for that year and the contents will be removed and discarded if not retrieved by the end of July.

### **10.3 Posting Guidelines**

College of Law students and student organizations shall comply with College of Law guidelines concerning posting materials in Swen Parson (Appendix C).

### **10.4 College of Law and University Logos**

All students and student organizations must obtain the advance consent of the Dean's Office before using the College of Law or University names and logos on apparel, signs and other property used for fundraising and other purposes.

### **10.5 Alcohol Use Policy**

All students and student organizations must comply with the College of Law Policies and Procedures for Serving Alcoholic Beverages at Public Events (Appendix D).

### **10.6 Recording Policy**

All students must comply with the College of Law Classroom Recording and Transmission Policy (Appendix E).

### Resources for Questions About Student Issues

1. **Academic Success Program (ASP)**  
Professor Jeanna Hunter – Room 181
2. **Bar Admission and Examination**  
Greg Anderson – Room 280A1 (procedures)  
Dean Coles — Room 176A (subjects covered and course selection)
3. **Career Counseling**  
Greg Anderson – Room 280A1
4. **Clinics**  
Interim Director Paul Cain – Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic, Rockford ([pcain@niu.edu](mailto:pcain@niu.edu))
5. **Directed Research**  
Dean Falkoff – Room 199C (Faculty Suite)
6. **Exam Conflicts or Emergencies**  
Dean Coles – Room 276A
7. **ExamSoft Questions**  
Dean Falkoff – Room 199C (Faculty Suite)
8. **Externships for Credit**  
Justice Jack O’Malley (Ret.) – Room 197E (Faculty Suite)
9. **Financial Aid**  
Scholarships: Alex Chapman — Room 151  
Loans: NIU Student Financial Aid Office – Room 245 Swen Parson Hall
10. **Graduation Questions**  
Julie Mahoney-Krzyzek – Room 285
11. **IT Issues and Media/Technology Requests**  
Rahul Thatte – Room 356 ([colit@niu.edu](mailto:colit@niu.edu))  
Email your requests to [colit@niu.edu](mailto:colit@niu.edu) at least 24 hours in advance
12. **Lockers**  
Lisa Hoebing – Room 276
13. **Misconduct Reporting and Character & Fitness Disclosures**  
Dean Coles – Room 276A

- 14. Notary Public**  
 Becky Leneau – Room 280      Julie Mahoney-Krzyzek – Room 285
- 15. Posting Flyers, etc.**  
 Lisa Hoebing -- Room 276      Le Ann Baie – Room 190  
 Becky Leneau -- Room 280      Melody Mitchell – Room 350
- 16. Posting Information on COL Event Calendar, Docket, Blog, Social Media or Website**  
 Melody Mitchell -- Room 350 (Facebook, Event Calendar, Blog, LinkedIn and Website)  
 Lisa Hoebing – Room 276 (Docket)
- 17. Pro Bono Opportunities**  
 Greg Anderson – Room 280A1
- 18. Reserving Classrooms/Marshall Gallery**  
 Le Ann Baie – Room 190
- 19. Reserving Library Study Rooms and North Wing**  
 Library Circulation Desk
- 20. Summer School**  
 Professor David Taylor for Agen program – Room 192A (Faculty Suite)  
 Dean Falkoff for College of Law summer programs – Room 199C (Faculty Suite)  
 Dean Coles for summer programs at other law schools– Room 276A
- 21. Taking Graduate-Level Classes in another NIU College**  
 Dean Falkoff – Room 199C (Faculty Suite)
- 22. Taking Over 16 Credits (if under 2.4 CGPA) or Under 12 Credits (Part-Time)**  
 Dean Coles – Room 276A
- 23. Testing and Classroom Accommodations**  
 Dean Coles – Room 276A                      Dean King – Room 195A
- 24. Travel Reimbursement**  
 Julie Mahoney-Krzyzek – Room 285; purchase permission required *before* travel
- 25. Visiting at another Law School**  
 Dean Coles – Room 276A
- 26. Withdrawing from a Course**  
 Julie Mahoney-Krzyzek – Room 285  
 Dean Coles – Room 276A
- 27. 711 License Applications (for Student Practice)**  
 Greg Anderson, Director, Career Opportunities & Prof. Development – Room 280A1

### College of Law Examination Rules and Guidelines

College of Law examinations are conducted on a partial honor system, and all students must observe the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct at all times. In addition, students must comply with all of the following examination rules. ***Failure to comply with the examination rules will constitute academic misconduct. Students found to have violated the examination rules or the Rule of Professional Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the College of Law Procedures Relating to Academic or Other Professional Misconduct by a Student.***

#### A. Examination Rules

##### 1. Conduct in the exam room:

- all materials (*e.g.*, books, outlines, etc.) other than those expressly permitted by the instructor and all belongings such as backpacks, coats and purses must be placed near the side walls or in the front of the examination room, except that bottles of water, tissues and similar small items may be kept on top of the student's table or desk where they are visible to exam administrators
- unless otherwise expressly allowed, no electronic devices of *any type* (including smart watches) may be brought into or used during the examination except for computers loaded with ExamSoft software and headphones designed and used for noise cancellation only
- mobile phones should be left in student lockers; if they are brought into the examination room, they must be completely turned off (not merely put on silent or vibration mode) and put in a backpack, purse, coat or container placed near the side walls or in the front of the room
- once an exam begins until it officially ends, no conversations of any type between students taking the exam are permitted inside or outside the exam room
- writing on scratch paper or any other materials is prohibited until the instruction to begin the examination is given

##### 2. Leaving the exam room after the exam begins and before it officially ends:

- students may leave the examination room to go to the rest room, but they must sign in and out and record the times on a sheet of paper located at the front of the room; no materials or devices may be taken out of the exam room and no materials, devices or persons may be consulted while outside the exam room
- students may leave the examination room to go to the faculty assistants' office, but may only take with them a copy of the examination (if there are questions about it), their



computer (if they need assistance from the IT department) or their examination, answers and other exam materials (if they have finished the exam and are turning it in)

- students are not permitted to leave the examination room for any other destination or purpose without the permission of a hall monitor or dean

3. Completing and turning in examinations:

- when an announcement is made that time is up, students must immediately stop writing, typing or filling in Scantron sheets and may not add any other answers or responses to the examination *at any time* afterward
- students may not discuss the examination with any other person until their examination has been turned in to the exam administrators
- no examination materials handed out to students may be kept or taken away after the exam — all must be turned in to the exam administrators, including scratch paper and empty blue books

**B. Other Examination Procedures and Guidelines:**

- All exam materials (including scratch paper but not including empty blue books) that are turned in by a student after finishing the exam *must* include the student's exam number
- The official time for each examination will be based on the clock designated by the person starting the exam.
- Anyone who observes or learns of any violation of the Rule of Professional Conduct or these examination rules is strongly encouraged to report the violation to a hall monitor, faculty member or dean
- In addition to the examination requirements, students are asked to be courteous to their fellow students by keeping conversations to a minimum and in a low voice *prior to* each examination and particularly while exam administrators are giving instructions. All students are also asked to be quiet in the hallways and while using lockers adjacent to the exam rooms while examinations are in progress.

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## Appendix C

### Guidelines for Posting of Materials in the College of Law

1. **Approval and Stamping Required.** All posted materials must be approved *in advance* by Dean Coles or a faculty adviser in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 and must be stamped by one of the administrative assistants (Lisa Hoebing, Becky Leneau or Le Ann Baie) prior to posting.
2. **Approval Procedure for Pre-Printed Material.** To obtain approval for posting of pre-printed materials, please submit a hard copy of the materials to Room 276 or email a copy to Dean Coles ([kcoles@niu.edu](mailto:kcoles@niu.edu)) with a cc: to Lisa Hoebing ([lhoebing@niu.edu](mailto:lhoebing@niu.edu)); alternatively, members of NIU Law student organizations may submit materials to their faculty advisor for approval.
3. **Permissible Surfaces for Posting.** You may post materials on bulletin boards *only* — no postings on walls, wood doors, glass on doors or stairways, etc. are allowed.
4. **Stairwell Bulletin Boards.** Special permission from Dean Coles ([kcoles@niu.edu](mailto:kcoles@niu.edu)) is required to post on the bulletin boards in the staircase near the elevator.
5. **Limit on Number of Copies.** Only 5 copies of each notice or other item can be posted at one time.
6. **Copyright and Other Issues.** When including photographs or other material that may be subject to copyright or privacy restrictions, be sure that you have advance approvals or releases from the persons, companies or groups involved. Posters may not promote the use of alcohol, but may state in small print that beer and/or wine will be served at an event (provided that permission has been received in accordance with College of Law alcohol use policy). If the NIU logo or name is to be used, please contact Dean Coles after first ensuring that the logo complies with the University's Graphic Standards for Institutional Brand Identity at <http://www.niu.edu/graphicstandards/logos/index.shtml>.
7. **White Boards.** To prevent damage, notices of events may not be written on white boards unless the notices are erased within 24 hours.
8. **Rules and Restrictions on Removal and Defacing of Posted Materials.** All notices posted inappropriately will be removed by members of the administrative staff. Any student who marks or otherwise defaces law school-approved posted material (including materials posted by faculty or staff) or who removes it without the permission of the administration and/or the student or group who sponsored the posting will be subject to disciplinary action. All student organizations are urged to take down their posters promptly after the events advertised are over.

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### College of Law Policies and Procedures for Serving Alcoholic Beverages at Public Events

Alcoholic beverages may only be served or sold in facilities under the control of the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University if [prior approval](#) is obtained from the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance and only in compliance with [University policy](#) and guidelines. To comply with University policy and guidelines, the College of Law has established the following requirements for all events sponsored by student organizations at which alcoholic beverages are proposed to be served (1) at the College of Law or on University-owned property, or (2) at any other location if College of Law or University funds are being spent in connection with the event or if the name or property of the College of Law or University is being used or connected with the event.

#### Guidelines

**I. Approval Request Required.** For all events described in (1) and (2) of the preceding paragraph, a draft approval request should be prepared and submitted to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, [kcoles@niu.edu](mailto:kcoles@niu.edu), by email *at least twelve business days* before a planned event where alcohol will be served. Please copy Melody Mitchell, [mmitchell@niu.edu](mailto:mmitchell@niu.edu), and Lisa Hoebing, [lhoebing@niu.edu](mailto:lhoebing@niu.edu), on the email.

**II. Contents of Approval Request.** The draft approval request should contain the information called for on the attached form. All sections of the form must be completed. In responding to questions, the following requirements apply for events that are not held at or staffed by an establishment with a valid liquor license and licensed bartenders: (1) no alcoholic beverages may be brought to or taken away from the event; (2) IDs must be checked if a person attending the event is not a known-of-age NIU College of Law affiliate; (3) only beer, cider and wine may be served; (4) food, soft drinks and water must be available at any time when alcohol is served; (5) self-service of alcohol by guests is not permitted; and (6) any guest or participant who appears to be intoxicated or impaired must be denied service of alcohol. The same or similar requirements apply at events held at or staffed by an establishment with a valid liquor license and licensed bartenders, except that hard liquor may be made available if the sponsoring student organization does not pay for or subsidize its purchase and “shots” of liquor are not served to law students.

**III. Approval Process and Other Requirements.** After review and completion of any necessary revisions to the draft approval request, the Associate Dean or another staff member will forward the request to the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance for review and approval. Once approval of the request is received, officers of the sponsoring student organization must take the following steps at the event at which alcoholic beverages are served or sold:

A. At events held at the College of Law or on University property, post notices stating that (1) no alcoholic beverages may be served to anyone under the age of 21, and identification may be required, (2) any guest or participant who appears to be intoxicated, inebriated or impaired due to alcohol consumption may be refused service; and (3) no alcoholic beverages may be brought to the event or removed from the premises.

B. At events held at the College of Law or on University property, ensure that a member of the College of Law faculty or staff is present at all times during which alcoholic beverages are being served.

C. At events held at the College of Law or on University property, require that the student(s) overseeing compliance with University policy and guidelines are present at all times at the point of service and that such student(s) and any servers abstain from consumption of alcohol immediately before and during the event. Members of student organizations are encouraged to obtain servers licenses before serving or monitoring alcohol at approved events. For more information, contact Dean Coles at [kcoles@niu.edu](mailto:kcoles@niu.edu).

D. At all evening events, provide appropriate safety information to event participants, including designated driver instructions and how to contact the NIU Huskie Student Patrol, the Huskie Safe line or similar services offered by local businesses; the student organization sponsor must also use its best efforts to arrange for a taxi or other safe transportation home for a guest or participant who appears to be intoxicated or impaired.

E. Include among the invitees and attendees of all public events non-student individuals from at least one of the following groups: faculty, staff, professionals in the law field, international guests of the College of Law or University, alumni, friends of the College/donors, and others associated with the profession and/or the University.

F. At all events, comply with any other commitments or undertakings requested by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance.

**IV. Promotional Materials.** Promotional materials for public events may not contain any form of alcohol in the title and may not encourage the use of alcohol as a goal or dominant feature of the events, but may state that beer, cider and wine will be served (provided the statement is not in over-sized print or featured prominently in the promotional materials). Promotions of “bar crawls” and similar events that may encourage overindulgence in alcohol are *not* permitted. An organization’s use of College of Law bulletin boards, white boards, plasma television screens or social media or publications administered by the College of Law will trigger the requirement for advance approval through the procedure described in Part I.

**V. Off-Campus Events.** Events that are not held at the College of Law or on other University-owned property are not subject to these procedures unless the conditions in (1) or (2) of the introductory paragraph apply. All students are, however, urged to act responsibly and engage in protective behaviors with respect to alcohol use, whether at on-campus or off-campus events.

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## ALCOHOL SERVICE REQUEST FORM

Please complete all questions and send to Dean Coles ([kcoles@niu.edu](mailto:kcoles@niu.edu))

**Event Title:**

**Event Description (including purpose):**

**Benefit to NIU/Students:**

**Date and Time of the Event:**

**Location:**

**Event Manager (with NIU):**

**Sponsoring Department and College:**

**Attendees:**

- Any undergrads?
- Any grad students?
- Faculty/Staff?
- Alumni?
- Anyone under 21/any minors?
- Open to friends, family and/or guests?
- Open to entire University?
- Open to general public?

**Anticipated turnout (please provide an estimate or expected range):**

**Students and Minors – please explain in what capacity students and minors may be in attendance (i.e., guests, invitees, performers):**

**What type of alcohol will be available (i.e., beer, wine, liquor)?**

**Alcohol Service:**

- Will non-alcoholic drinks be available?
- Will food be available?
- Who is financing the alcohol (specify if NIU department, cash bar or donation)?
- Who is responsible for the sale/service of liquor at the event? Are they licensed servers?
- How is legal drinking age being verified/are IDs being checked?
- Who is monitoring service and ensuring no one is over served?
- Who is responsible for ensuring individuals do not leave the premises with alcohol or bring their own?

**NIU College of Law Classroom Recording and Transmission Policy**  
Effective August 2017

**Recording of Classes Generally Prohibited**

The audio- or video-recording of any class meeting, or any part thereof, by any electronic means (analog or digital) is prohibited, unless explicitly authorized by the instructor, in advance, and in accordance with the provisions of this rule. Failure to abide by this rule by any student is a violation of the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct.

**When Recording of Classes is Allowed**

Recording of classes will be allowed only under the following circumstances and in the following manner.

*1. Accommodations Recommended by the NIU Disability Resource Center*

On occasion the NIU Disability Resource Center (“DRC”) will recommend to the College of Law that a student be allowed to audio-record one or more class meetings in order to accommodate a disability. Any student who believes such an accommodation is necessary should contact the DRC as soon as possible. Such requests are treated in a confidential and anonymous manner.

If the College of Law, after consultation with the DRC and (if appropriate) the student, agrees that it is proper to record one or more classes for the benefit of the student, then arrangements for recording the class will be made *by the instructor*, who will first notify all students in the class that the session or sessions will be recorded. Under no circumstances may a student himself or herself make a recording of any class session without the explicit approval of the instructor.

*2. Instructor Discretion*

Classroom instructors may, in their discretion, audio- or video-record any or all of their class sessions, for any reason, *provided* that the instructor first notifies all students in the class that the session or sessions will be recorded. Arrangements for recording classes under this provision will be made *by the instructor*. Under no circumstances may any student himself or herself make a recording of any class session without the explicit approval of the instructor.

**Transmission or Distribution of Recordings of Classes Prohibited**

The transmission or distribution of any class recording by a student by any means is strictly prohibited. Such transmission or distribution includes, but is not limited to, sending electronic recordings via email, or linking to or posting electronic recordings to the Internet.

**Copyright and Use of Recordings**

Permission under this rule for a student to record classes or to use classroom recordings is granted for the sole purpose of assisting the student in his or her personal study of the materials presented during the class. All recordings remain the property of the instructor, who is entitled to have any recording returned or destroyed after its intended use. Permission to record classes or to use classroom recordings is not a transfer of any copyright or other interest held by the instructor, the University, or the College of Law in the class session or in the recording.

**Northern Illinois University College of Law  
Recording Agreement**

By my signature below, I acknowledge and confirm that I have either received an accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to record some or all of my classes for the below-noted course at the Northern Illinois University College of Law, or that I have otherwise been authorized by the instructor to do so. I also acknowledge that my instructor is aware that I will be recording some or all of my classes for the course and that he or she has agreed to allow me to do so. As conditions for recording, I understand and agree as follows:

1. My instructor will provide notice of the recording to the class (without revealing my identity) in accordance with College of Law and University policy;
2. Only audio, not video, recordings are authorized, and all forms of audio recording, including smartpen, are covered by the terms of this agreement;
3. At the discretion of my instructor, recording may be prohibited in some cases when the content of the class involves personal discussion or self-disclosure;
4. The recordings of any class, and any copies or transcripts made from the recordings, are *only* for use in my personal academic studies, remain the property of my instructor and may not be shared with any other person (except an authorized representative of the DRC) without the express written consent of my instructor;
5. No part of the recordings of any class or any copy or transcript made from the recordings, may be published, broadcast, quoted or otherwise disseminated in any media or format without the express written consent of my instructor, and I will not take any steps to hinder the ability of my instructor to obtain a copyright of class material I have recorded; and
6. All recordings, copies and transcripts will be stored in a secure location or manner and will either be returned to the instructor or destroyed in all formats within thirty days after the conclusion of the semester in which the recorded class was held.

I understand that any violation of this agreement may result in suspension or revocation of my accommodation for recording in all classes and may subject me to discipline under the College of Law Rule of Professional Conduct and to liability under copyright and other laws.

**I hereby certify that I have read, understand and agree to the terms of this Recording Agreement.**

Course Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_