

SCHOOL OF LAW

In 1912, the Trustees of Gonzaga University established the Gonzaga University School of Law with the active support of many prominent members of the bench and bar in Washington State. In its first century, the School of Law produced many exceptional lawyers, and it is committed to an equally exceptional second century. Gonzaga Law is fully accredited by the American Bar Association, which entitles graduates to take the bar exam in any state. Gonzaga Law is also a member of the Association of American Law Schools.

Objectives of Gonzaga University School of Law

Gonzaga Law belongs to a long and distinguished tradition of law schools which deliver a humanistic, Jesuit education rooted in the principles of intellectual inquiry, fairness, justice, and respect for human dignity. The school is committed to preserving this tradition which informs each aspect of the student experience.

Just as the school challenges its students to understand the knowledge of the past, we understand that a firm grasp of the innovations of the present is also necessary in order to better serve society. Gonzaga emphasizes the education and development of the whole person and works to instill in its students a strong commitment to social justice as it encourages students to take individual initiative and personal responsibility for the betterment of their communities.

The school also recognizes its responsibility to the public and to the legal profession. As a result, Gonzaga Law works to prepare graduates to be analytical thinkers, accomplished writers, and creative problem-solvers. Gonzaga graduates will be able to translate their thoughts into effective, productive action on behalf of clients.

For those students who may not want to follow a traditional career path, the school's J.D. curriculum provides students with the tools to succeed in a wide range of other career fields.

One of the school's greatest strengths is the dedication and commitment of the faculty and staff who provide students with personal, individual attention. Each student's educational journey will be guided by distinguished and dedicated faculty and shaped by the paths of the many justices, judges, advocates, and leaders who are proud Gonzaga Law alumni.

Gonzaga Law believes that the courtroom can be a powerful classroom and that practical skills should accompany intellectual inquiry. This is why Gonzaga takes pride in providing students with a quality legal education including practical, hands-on experience that will ease students' transition from the academic world to the world of legal practice. Gonzaga Law graduates are known for being zealous advocates and community leaders.

Full-time Programs

Gonzaga Law offers a full-time, three-year, 90-credit degree (85 credits for students matriculating in 2024). In some circumstances, students can take advantage of flexible scheduling to complete their degrees in four or five years. All degree credits must be completed within five years of matriculation.

Gonzaga Law also offers an Executive Two-Year J.D. program that allows students to earn their degree in two years rather than three. The program

is distinct from the three-year program not just for its speed. Executive Two-Year J.D. students must take required coursework in the fields of business and leadership. Also, because the program requires students to carry a full course load for six consecutive semesters, students are required to apply eight of their credits toward experiential learning. This enhancement provides students with the chance to learn outside the classroom in a legal setting while taking their accelerated schedule into consideration.

Curriculum

Gonzaga's legal education program is deliberately focused on educating the whole person. The rigorous, well-rounded curriculum focuses on legal analysis, problem-solving, values, and ethics. Equally important is the emphasis on practical experience, enabling students to develop real-world lawyering skills.

Gonzaga Law requires students to complete a rigorous legal research and writing program that helps students develop the writing and analytical skills so valued by employers and so necessary to the practice. The school offers upper-division electives in many different areas of the law, including: trial and appellate advocacy; education law; intellectual property law; family law; employment law; immigration law; environmental/natural resource law; business and commercial law; and international law. The classes are taught by nationally and internationally recognized faculty whose scholarship adds an important dimension to their teaching.

To complete their education, all students are required to engage in experiential learning through working in a professional externship, designated simulation course, or in one or more of Gonzaga's clinical legal programs during their second or third year of studies. Gonzaga Law students have externed with courts, law firms, as well as prosecutor and public defender offices at the local, state, and federal levels, including the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, the Washington Supreme Court, the Federal Trade Commission, the Executive Office of Immigration Review, and other state and federal agencies. Recent placements in non-profit entities include the Northwest Justice Project, the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, and the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project.

Gonzaga Law boasts two academic Centers that serve as platforms for our social justice education and action. The Center for Civil & Human Rights provides students, scholars, and community leaders with opportunities to explore and address issues relating to civil and human rights through research, education, and community engagement. The Center for Law, Ethics, & Commerce imparts legal and theoretical knowledge and teaches the lawyering skills needed to represent businesses and consumers in all manner of commercial transactions, with a particular sensitivity toward corporate behavior on the public good. Both Centers complement students' classroom work and allow students to dive deeply into legal and community issues.

Clinical Legal Programs

Another choice that Gonzaga Law students have for experiential learning is Gonzaga Law School's Clinical Legal Programs (GLS-CLP).. GLS-CLP is an on-campus clinic that provides legal services to clients, including low-income persons, and is a major provider of pro bono legal services in the Spokane area. It also engages in amicus advocacy on behalf of certain entities. Clinical positions are available to students in good standing and students are encouraged to take an active role in performing real legal work.

In GLS-CLP, students work on real cases with real clients under the supervision of clinical instructors who are licensed attorneys. Students can appear in court on behalf of clients under Rule 9 of the Washington State Bar Association's Court Rules after they have completed two years of course work and been approved by the WSBA.

Students in GLS-CLP have argued appeals before the Washington Supreme Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. They have testified before Congressional committees in Washington, D.C. about the impact of pending legislation. They have appeared in Kalispel Tribal Court as advocates and argued on behalf of their clients. They have helped clients who needed health care services, housing assistance, estate planning services, and parenting plans. They helped clients who dreamed of starting their own businesses and clients who did not want to face the IRS alone. In GLS-CLP, every student makes a difference.

On-campus clinical offerings include business law, elder law, Indian law, immigration law, LGBTQ+ rights, and tax law.

Co-Curricular Activities

Gonzaga's educational philosophy is based on the centuries-old Ignatian model of educating the whole person: mind, body, and spirit. Gonzaga's student organizations are diverse in nature. Whatever students' interests or career goals, there are activities available that will enhance their knowledge and abilities while also contributing to the community.

Gonzaga is a major player in national moot court competitions and fields a variety of moot court teams. Students also have an opportunity to participate in the Linden Cup, Gonzaga's prestigious intra-school moot court competition. The student-run Gonzaga Law Review is circulated throughout the country, and the Gonzaga Journal of International Law, the online international law journal, receives submissions from around the world.

The Student Bar Association encourages student involvement, and there are abundant opportunities to participate in student organizations, legal fraternities, public service projects, and other activities. Programs such as the Juvenile Records Sealing Project and the Moderate Means Program allow even first-year law students to spend time helping members of the Spokane community access legal services.

Gonzaga Law sponsors a summer study of law program in Florence, Italy where students can take classes with an international and comparative law focus.

Physical Facilities and Chastek Law Library

Set on the banks of the beautiful Spokane River, the Gonzaga Law building is a stunning environment for research and learning. The facilities offer a variety of classroom and library environments to support interactive teaching and learning methods. Features throughout the building encourage students to linger and discuss ideas in beautiful outdoor spaces, roof plazas and balconies, and comfortable lounges, all with new furnishings that have been upgraded or installed within the past two years.

The mix of classrooms, study spaces, seminar rooms, and clinical settings provide flexibility to integrate the best of traditional law teaching and collaborative and innovative learning. Gonzaga's tradition of excellence in advocacy training and moot court competitions is promoted in the beautiful, two-story Barbieri Courtroom.

The Chastek Library is a warm and inviting legal learning and research environment filled with natural light and designed to be conducive to individual and group study. The library's rich collection of print and electronic resources supports the research and scholarly needs of students, faculty, and the wider legal community.

Admissions

Gonzaga Law endeavors to attract students with ambitious minds, professional motivation, and commitment to the highest ethics and values of the legal profession. A faculty committee reviews all applications and does not restrict its consideration of applicants to impersonal statistics. Also considered are an applicant's unique qualities, such as work and life experiences, personal accomplishments, and the opinions of others as reflected in letters of recommendation.

Gonzaga Law seeks to enroll a diverse student body to ensure that the school and the legal profession are enriched through the participation of people from different cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Those individuals who want the admission review committee to consider diversity factors in their application process are encouraged to provide information about their experiences, identity, and background in their applications. More information about Gonzaga Law's commitment to diversity can be found at <https://www.gonzaga.edu/school-of-law/about/mission-vision/>. (<https://www.gonzaga.edu/school-of-law/about/mission-vision/>)

Students who are in good standing at another ABA-accredited law school may apply for admission to Gonzaga Law with advanced standing as a transfer student.

For admission information, write or call:

Admissions Office
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