



**Wilmington University**  
**School of Law**

# School of Law Assessment Plan

Wilmington University

5/8/2024

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## Overview

Faculty and staff developed WilmU Law's learning outcomes collaboratively with a focus on student success and accessibility. The process began with the Committee on Excellence in Teaching and Assessment, a group designated by the Dean to recommend initial and ongoing assessments toward measurable goal, to collect and analyze evidence of student performance, to monitor the ongoing assessment process, and to make suggestions for improvements to the academic program based on collected data. Compliance with the American Bar Association's standards on learning outcomes and assessment provides the framework for the Committee's work. The Committee works closely with all faculty and staff in this process, which is discussed at other committee meetings and at monthly faculty and staff meetings. This evaluative process will provide data at an institutional level to ensure ongoing improvement, changes to our learning program to respond to identified problem areas and compliance with the university and law school assessment requirements. During each annual cycle, one learning outcome will be assessed using a combination of direct and indirect measures. These assessments will allow WilmU Law to strengthen our program of legal education and assure student development and success. The WilmU Law faculty adopted the assessment timetable set forth below on May 15, 2024.

## Process

Faculty formed the building blocks of our assessment plan during a multi-day, all faculty and administration workshop in February 2023, as part of the overall design, delivery, and development of the J.D. program. Here our faculty discussed the goals and mission of Wilmington University's legal education program and defined the essential skills necessary to the practice of law. The student learning outcomes were adopted by the faculty February 7, 2023. At the start of the school's inaugural academic year, the law faculty Committee on Excellence in Teaching and Assessment was appointed to define details and timelines for the implementation of an assessment plan to ensure student development of achievement of these essential learning goals. Input was solicited from the Committee on Curriculum Review and Development, the Dean, and the full faculty and administration. A set of "performance indicators" was added to each learning outcome to define the evidence for our assessment of each outcome. The Committee on Excellence in Teaching and Assessment presented the performance indicators and assessment plan for feedback and revision. The faculty adopted the revised plan on May 15, 2024.

## Learning Outcomes for the J.D. Degree

The School of Law's program of instruction prepares students to effectively engage in the legal community through a well-rounded legal education. Our curriculum is designed to teach students about the law and to help them develop skills necessary to use knowledge in practice. Our students will:

1. **Know and understand** both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession;
2. **Engage** in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving skills, and present findings, analyses, and recommendations efficiently and effectively in both written and oral communication;
3. **Demonstrate** an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the legal profession and the clients and community they serve;
4. **Develop** a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.
5. **Identify and recognize** the importance of cross-cultural competency to professionally responsible representation and the obligation of lawyers to promote a legal system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.

*As adopted by the School of Law Faculty on February 7, 2023.*

## Performance Indicators for the J.D. Learning Outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES Upon conferral of the Juris Doctor degree, students will be able to:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Students demonstrate they have achieved this outcome by:
<b>1. Know and understand both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and apply foundational concepts of civil procedure, constitutional law, contracts, criminal law, criminal procedure, property, torts, corporations, agency and partnership, evidence, family law, professional responsibility, sales and leases, and trusts and estates.</li><li>• Identify and apply concepts in areas of law not otherwise required by the School of Law curriculum.</li></ul>
<b>2. Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving skills, and present findings, analyses, and recommendations efficiently and effectively in both written and oral communication.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appreciate the different roles in which a lawyer must be competent.</li><li>• Analyze client facts and identify legal issues presented by those facts.</li><li>• Research and identify the most relevant legal authorities applicable to a factual scenario.</li><li>• Read, understand, and use cases, statutes, and other enacted rules to perform objective analysis, solve legal problems, and predict likely outcomes of legal disputes.</li><li>• Draft thorough, concise, and insightful legal documents with analytic support, organization, and style consistent with the norms of professional practice.</li><li>• Recognize excellent legal writing and develop skills to edit and improve one's own writing, taking into consideration the audience for and purpose of the legal document produced.</li><li>• Understand how issues of ethics and diversity are intertwined with legal writing.</li></ul>
<b>3. Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the legal profession and the clients and community they serve.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Articulate and apply rules of professional conduct, including those outlined by the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct and state bar associations.</li><li>• Identify ethical issues in legal scenarios, analyze them from multiple perspectives, and propose reasoned solutions, consistent with ethical principles, and professional responsibilities.</li><li>• Apply ethical principles and demonstrate professional responsibility in externships, internships, public interest initiatives, and community outreach programs to address unmet legal needs, promote access to justice, and provide supervised pro bono service during law school.</li></ul>

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon conferral of the Juris Doctor degree, students will be able to:

**4. Develop a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.**

**5. Identify and recognize the importance of cross-cultural competency to professionally responsible representation and the obligation of lawyers to promote a legal system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.**

**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

Students demonstrate they have achieved this outcome by:

- Recognize one's competencies and areas for growth as they relate to the legal profession.
- Effective negotiation, interviewing, and counseling.
- Engage in experiential simulations of litigation strategies, procedures, and tactics.
- Awareness of cultural characteristics, beliefs, events, and experiences that may impact the legal profession and representation of clients.
- Understand the importance of access to justice and assistance to marginalized communities in meeting their legal needs.
- Provide supervised pro bono service to instill a commitment to and develop the skills necessary for representation of the marginalized.

## Assessment Plan

On May 15, 2024, the School of Law Faculty adopted an assessment plan for 2025-2029.

Our objective is to enhance the quality of legal education provided by WilmU Law through a systematic approach to evaluating student learning outcomes. This involves:

- **Assessment Process Development:** We aim to establish a comprehensive, faculty-driven process for assessing student learning outcomes over a five-year cycle.
- **Role Identification:** We will define the responsibilities of faculty and administrators in executing institutional assessments.
- **Compliance:** We are committed to meeting the ABA's requirement for accredited law schools to have a publicly available assessment plan.

Key elements of our approach include:

- **Annual Assessment:** Each year, we will assess one learning outcome using a combination of direct and indirect measures, as outlined in our timeline.
- **Method Selection:** In the spring, the Assessment Committee will convene to determine the measurement methods for the upcoming assessment cycle, incorporating both direct measures (e.g., tests, assignments) and indirect measures (e.g., surveys, focus groups). This process allows for flexibility in adjusting performance indicators as needed.
- **Data Collection:** Data collection will begin in the fall following the selection of assessment methods.
- **Analysis and Reporting:** The Assessment Committee will analyze the collected data and present its findings to the faculty and administration. Recommendations for curriculum adjustments based on assessment outcomes will also be provided.
- **Ongoing Evaluation:** We are committed to continuous improvement. The Assessment Committee will conduct regular evaluations of the assessment process and report on progress, recommending updates to learning outcomes or assessment methods as necessary.

### Conducting the Assessment

The Assessment Committee will create a detailed plan for the assessment of each learning outcome at the start of its evaluation cycle. This includes identifying the data to be collected, methods to collect the data, plans for analyzing the data, and timeline for data collection and evaluation process. For each learning outcome assessed, there Committee will use a minimum of two measures of review, at least one of which must be direct. All assessment data will be analyzed and reported in an aggregated fashion, with identifiable student and faculty information redacted.

The Assessment Committee will be the recordkeeper for the findings of each assessment cycle. The committee is responsible for the follow-up on recommendations made as a result of each evaluation period and review of the assessment process itself. A review of the assessment plan, recommendations and follow-up reports should be provided to the faculty and staff at least once each academic year.

### Timetable for the Assessment Plan

<i>Learning Outcome/Year</i>	<i>2024-2025</i>	<i>2025-2026</i>	<i>2026-2027</i>	<i>2027-2028</i>	<i>2028-2029</i>
<i>1. Know and understand both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession.</i>	Plan	Collect & analyze data, propose follow-up	Follow-up		
<i>2. Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving skills, and present findings, analyses, and recommendations efficiently and effectively in both written and oral communication.</i>				Plan	Collect & analyze data, propose follow-up
<i>3. Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the legal profession and the clients and community they serve.</i>		Plan	Collect & analyze data, propose follow-up	Follow-up	
<i>4. Develop a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.</i>					Plan
<i>5. Identify and recognize the importance of cross-cultural competency to professionally responsible representation and the obligation of lawyers to promote a legal system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.</i>			Plan	Collect & analyze data, propose follow-up	Follow-up



## Curriculum Map for J.D. Learning Outcomes

Curriculum Map for J.D. Learning Outcomes, see page 13-16.

Curriculum Map with Competency Levels for J.D. Learning Outcomes, see page 17-20.

## Summaries of Potential Assessment Methods of Individual J.D. Learning Outcomes

*Learning Outcome #1: Know and understand both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession;*

WilmU believes all lawyers need essential basic knowledge in both substantive and procedural law to provide proper advice and direction to their clients. Students at WilmU take a wide range of required subjects to learn and recognize legal concepts from a variety of disciplines, preparing them to question, analyze and direct those in the community with legal concerns to those most capable of providing assistance. Testing these concepts in first and second year in-class assessments will help confirm knowledge and understanding transfer from teacher to student. These questions can be tied to specific course learning objectives to ensure key concept understanding. Using common questions across course sections can determine areas of strength or weakness in the subject.

Furthermore, the development of comprehensive evaluation plan using diagnostic tools (including exams) would provide insight into student learning benchmarked against a larger student population than WilmU. Determining content areas where WilmU students struggle compared to the larger law student community, can identify lecture topics where the material may need to be presented differently by instructors to achieve student understanding. Ultimately, bar examination results will provide additional direct measures of assessment in student learning goal #1.

*Learning Outcome #2: Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving skills, and present findings, analyses, and recommendations efficiently and effectively in both written and oral communication;*

WilmU Law uses both formative and summative assessments in its curriculum as part of its commitment to measuring and improving student learning.

The first-year legal writing curriculum immediately provides students numerous opportunities for formative assessments. In class, faculty lead collaborative problem-solving, role-playing exercises, short writing assignments, and group discussions with peer feedback. Online, students are provided ungraded or low stakes quizzes, short writing exercises, and practice exams with model answers and explanations. Throughout these courses, students engage in formative assessments such as collaborative in-class drafting and editing exercises. Additionally, they submit draft legal memoranda, motions, and briefs (or excerpts thereof) for peer review and detailed feedback from professors.

These formative assessments are used in four primary ways. First, they help students and instructors identify each student's strengths and weaknesses. Second, they help guide students to adjust their respective study strategies. Third, they provide vital feedback that informs instructors about areas where their curriculum may need improvement. And fourth, they promote an active learning environment with vibrant student engagement.

Summative assessments are culminating evaluations that measure achievement at defined intervals in each course. To measure student progress, summative assessments are administered three times in each doctrinal course: during the fifth and tenth weeks; and at the course conclusion. The mid-term assessments (weeks five and ten) take two different forms: either a single, thirty-minute essay question or a fifteen-question, 30-minute multiple-choice quiz. Instructors have the flexibility to decide which format they will offer in week five, but then must use the alternative format in week ten. The final assessment, administered at the end of the course, offers a combination of formats to test student understanding. On the final exam, students complete: 30 closed-book multiple-choice questions in 60 minutes, one closed-book, bar-style essay in 30 minutes, and an additional assessment component chosen by the faculty member, totaling 90 minutes.

Legal writing courses rely on graded legal documents as summative assessments. In Legal Writing 1 (offered first year fall), students submit three written assignments throughout the course. During the semester, students gain early exposure to legal analysis and argumentation by submitting a draft legal memorandum. This graded draft submission is a very small percentage of final grade and allows students to receive detailed feedback from the instructor on organization, legal reasoning, and writing style. Students then submit a revised memorandum demonstrating their ability to incorporate feedback and enhance their writing. While still low stakes, it is of increasing value towards the final grade. At the conclusion of the course, students submit a brief in support of a motion for summary judgment which comprises the majority of the final grade. This comprehensive assignment assesses the students' ability to integrate all acquired legal writing skills within a complex legal scenario.

In Legal Writing 2 (offered first year spring), students build on the foundation laid in the fall. Following a series of drafting exercises relating to each component, students submit an appellate brief. This summative assessment is the culmination of the semester's work in honing their persuasive writing and legal analysis skills. At the conclusion of the course, students complete an oral argument based on the submitted brief. This dynamic assessment is also calculated as part of their final grade, and it pushes students to confidently present their legal arguments in a courtroom setting.

***Learning Outcome #3: Demonstrate** an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the legal profession and the clients and community they serve;*

WilmU Law will ensure that students are able to articulate and apply the rules of professional conduct, including those outlined by the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct and relevant state bar associations, as well as understanding the critical importance of the integrity of the legal profession.

Students will demonstrate the ability to identify ethical issues in legal scenarios, analyze them from multiple perspectives, and propose reasoned solutions consistent with ethical principles and professional responsibilities. Students will engage in discussions, case studies, and simulations to deepen their understanding of ethical challenges.

Students will have opportunities to apply ethical principles and professional responsibility rules in real-world contexts, through externships and internships under the supervision of practicing attorneys. WilmU Law will encourage students to participate in pro bono legal work, public interest initiatives, and community outreach programs to address, unmet legal needs and promote access to justice. Graduates will be prepared to assume leadership roles within the legal profession and uphold the highest standards of professionalism throughout their careers.

*Learning Outcome #4: Develop a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.*

To attain our fourth learning outcome, WilmU Law will develop a range of professional skills to facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession in three ways. First, the law school's comprehensive and mandatory curriculum exposes students to practical skills such as oral and written advocacy, public speaking, ethical considerations, and the interaction of law with diverse communities. Our mandatory curriculum has a mixture of standard doctrinal courses, such as civil procedure, legal ethics, and criminal law, as well as courses students need to be successful in the profession like family law, sales and leases, and scholarly writing. Each course implements skillset building activities to improve critical thinking, persuasion, and advocacy. These activities may include client counseling, mediations and negotiations, and oral advocacy.

Secondly, WilmU Law will provide opportunities for practical experience in various ways. Experiential learning is a mandatory requirement of the WilmU Law's juris doctor program. As such, the law school has fostered a relationship with the Delaware and regional legal community to connect students with externship and internship opportunities. WilmU Law intends to build robust trial advocacy and moot court programs, encouraging students to explore the varied methods of oral presentation. Scholarly writing and research will also be available to students through seminar courses or law journals. These skill-based opportunities will help students develop necessary professional skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork.

Finally, WilmU Law will develop professional skills reflective of the values and responsibilities of the legal profession by emphasizing the importance of ethical behavior, integrity, and social responsibility. In addition to providing courses on legal ethics and professional responsibility, which provide students with a foundation in ethical principles and standards of conduct, WilmU Law will promote discussions and debates on ethical dilemmas in the legal profession. Faculty are encouraged to explore ethical dilemmas in their courses. Law school events may also highlight such challenges and encourage students to critically analyze and reflect on ethical issues while engaging in an open forum. Furthermore, WilmU Law intends to offer opportunities for students to participate in pro bono work, community service, and public interest projects. These types of activities highlight the importance of social responsibility and giving back to the community. By fostering a culture of integrity and ethical behavior, WilmU Law can instill in students the values and principles necessary to uphold the highest standards of the legal profession.

*Learning Outcome #5: Identify and recognize the importance of cross-cultural competency to professionally responsible representation and the obligation of lawyers to promote a legal system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.*

Students should recognize the importance of cultural competence and diversity in legal practice, understanding how biases and stereotypes can impact decision-making and client representation.

They should be able to communicate effectively and respectfully with clients from diverse backgrounds and advocate for the interests of marginalized or underrepresented communities, and to all persons with

identity characteristics that have led to disadvantages or exclusion from effective representation on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or military status.

Students should recognize their role as advocates for social justice and engage in efforts to address systemic inequalities and barriers to legal services.

Students should demonstrate a commitment to ongoing professional development, including participation in continuing legal education programs, mentorship opportunities, and professional organizations. They should aspire to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethical conduct throughout their careers, serving as role models and leaders within the legal profession and the broader community.

<i>Course Title (Credits)</i>	<i>Required Course</i>	<i>1. Know and understand both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession.</i>	<i>2. Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving legal recommendations, analyses, and in both written and oral communication.</i>	<i>3. Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the community they serve.</i>	<i>4. Develop a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.</i>	<i>5. Identify and recognize the importance of cross-cultural competency to professional obligation of lawyers to professionally system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.</i>
"Introduction" means key ideas, concepts, or skills related to the learning outcome are introduced, but it is expected that they will be developed later in a student's course of study.						
"Competence" means students must demonstrate proficiency in the learning outcome by the end of the course.						
"Advanced" means students have advanced instruction in and/or additional practice with the knowledge, value, or skill, such that they demonstrate the learning outcome with high level of independence and a level of understanding and sophistication expected of graduates, not students. It is doubtful that a student will achieve this level of mastery of a subject or skill in a first year course.						
<b>FIRST YEAR REQUIRED</b>						
Civil Procedure (4)	X	X				
Constitutional Law I (4)	X	X	X			X
Contracts I (3)	X	X	X	X		
Contracts II (2)	X	X	X	X		
Criminal Law (3)	X	X	X	X		X
Legal Writing I (3)	X		X	X	X	X
Legal Writing II (2)	X		X		X	
Property (4)	X	X	X	X		X
Torts (4)	X	X	X	X		X

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<b>UPPER LEVEL REQUIRED</b>						
Advanced Legal Analysis (3)	X	X		X	X	
Agency & Partnership (2)	X	X	X			
Constitutional Criminal Procedure (3)	X	X		X		X
Constitutional Law II (2)	X	X	X			I
Corporations (3)	X	X	X			
Evidence (3)	X	X			X	
Externship I (3)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Family Law (3)	X	X		X		X
Professional Responsibility (3)	X	X	X	X		X
Sales and Leases (2)	X	X	X			
Trusts and Estates (3)	X	X	X			

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<b>UPPER LEVEL CHOICE - EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING</b>						
Contract Drafting Skills (3)		X	X	X	X	X
Interview & Counseling Skills (3)				X	X	X
Trial Advocacy Skills (3)					X	
<b>UPPER LEVEL CHOICE - SCHOLARLY WRITING</b>						
AI and the Law Seminar (3)		X	X			
Race and the Law Seminar(3)		X	X			

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<b>UPPER LEVEL CHOICE - ELECTIVE</b>						
Employment Law (3)		X	X	X		X
Environmental Law (3)		X				
Federal Income Tax (3)	X	X	X			
Legislation and Regulation (2)		X	X			
Practice and Performance (2)		X	X			
Prosecution & Adjudication (3)		X		X		X



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“Advanced” means students have advanced instruction in and/or additional practice with the knowledge, value, or skill, such that they demonstrate the learning outcome with high level of independence and a level of understanding and sophistication expected of graduates, not students. It is doubtful that a student will achieve this level of mastery of a subject or skill in a first year course.

<b>FIRST YEAR REQUIRED</b>						
Civil Procedure (4)	X	C				
Constitutional Law I (4)	X	C	I			I
Contracts I (3)	X	C	I	I		
Contracts II (2)	X	C	I	I	I	I
Criminal Law (3)	X	C	I	I		I
Legal Writing I (3)	X		I	I	I	I
Legal Writing II (2)	X		C		C	
Property (4)	X	C	I	I		I
Torts (4)	X	C	I	I		I

<i>Course Title (Credits)</i>	<i>Required Course</i>	<i>1. Know and understand both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession.</i>	<i>2. Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving legal recommendations, analyses, and in both written and oral communication.</i>	<i>3. Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the community they serve.</i>	<i>4. Develop a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.</i>	<i>5. Identify and recognize the importance of cross-cultural competency to professional obligation of lawyers to professionally represent and the system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.</i>
<b>UPPER LEVEL REQUIRED</b>						
Advanced Legal Analysis (3)	X	A		C	A	
Agency & Partnership (2)	X	C	I			
Constitutional Criminal Procedure (3)	X	C		C		C
Constitutional Law II (2)	X	C	I			I
Corporations (3)	X	C	I			
Evidence (3)	X	C			C	
Externship I (3)	X	C	C	C	C	C
Family Law (3)	X	C		C		I
Professional Responsibility (3)	X	C	C	C		C
Sales and Leases (2)	X	C	I			
Trusts and Estates (3)	X	C	I			

<i>Course Title (Credits)</i>	<i>Required Course</i>	<i>1. Know and understand both substantive and procedural law, necessary for entry and increasing success within the legal profession.</i>	<i>2. Engage in legal analysis and reasoning, conduct efficient and effective legal research, apply problem-solving legal recommendations, analyses, and in both written and oral communication.</i>	<i>3. Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the professional integrity and ethical responsibilities of serving the community they serve.</i>	<i>4. Develop a range of professional skills that facilitate the values and responsibilities of the legal profession, which may include written and oral advocacy, negotiation, persuasion, and mediation skills.</i>	<i>5. Identify and recognize the importance of cross-cultural competency to professional obligation of lawyers to promote a legal system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism.</i>
<b>UPPER LEVEL CHOICE - EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING</b>						
Contract Drafting Skills (3)		A	A	C	I	I
Interview & Counseling Skills (3)				A	A	A
Trial Advocacy Skills (3)					A	
<b>UPPER LEVEL CHOICE - SCHOLARLY WRITING</b>						
AI and the Law (3)		C	A			
Race and the Law (3)		C	A			

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<b>UPPER LEVEL CHOICE - ELECTIVE</b>						
Employment Law (3)		C	C	I		I
Environmental Law (3)		C				
Federal Income Tax (3)		C	I			
Legislation and Regulation (3)		C	A			
Practice and Performance (2)		A	A			
Prosecution & Adjudication (3)		A		A		A