

Excellence in Lawyering and Leadership Program

All students should advance in personal and professional growth while pursuing their legal education at Wilmington University School of Law. In addition to in-class learning, the development of interpersonal skills and greater emotional intelligence allows lawyers to communicate respectfully with, advocate for, and lead their communities. Through thoughtful comprehensive extra-curricular programming, the law school encourages and expects students to engage in opportunities provided for personal development, professional development, and continuing education outside of the academic classroom. In recognition of standards required for ABA accredited law schools and key characteristics of successful lawyers, all students must participate in defining their professional identity, developing cultural competency, strengthening lawyering skills and embracing wellness and balance in their day-to-day lives. The workshops, activities, and events will address these topics throughout the academic year, acknowledging that they are not entirely distinct and do not exist separately in life and work activities. These topics and workshops will underscore issues of importance in our society and the professionalism expected of one embarking on the highly regarded and entrusted position of attorney.

Participation in this program is akin to the future experience of continuing education units many state bar associations require of their members. A lawyer's education is never finished. Employers recognize good lawyers take advantage of the opportunities presented to improve, challenge, and network personally and professionally. Therefore, being an active attendee at WilmU Law programs and events demonstrates a desire to learn and engage with opportunities to build your professional reputation and portfolio while building legal connections for externship and career opportunities.

Four Areas of Focus

Defining Professional Identity (DPI)

Professional relationships and networking begin in law school and continue to grow through an individual's legal career. Students will have opportunities to explore various pathways in the legal profession, participate in pro bono and law related-public service activities, and reflect on those experiences. Additionally, students will engage in conversation about what it means to be a lawyer, the inherent leadership expectation that comes with this important role, and the special obligations lawyers have to their clients and society.

Strengthening Lawyering and Leadership Skills (SLLS)

Participation in workshops allow for continuing development and exploration of legal skills, writing, study methods, and leadership skills. These workshops will include deep dives into specific skills utilized in the practice of law, instilling a commitment to learning that many state bar associations require under continuing education.

Developing Cultural Competency (DCC)

Panel presentations, lectures and interactive workshops allow students to converse with each other and the legal community as they grow their cross-cultural understanding, break down barriers in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in the legal profession, and engage in challenging conversations with civility and respect for opposing sides.

Embracing Wellness and Balance (EWB)

Through engagement in a variety of physical activities, meditation exercises, and wellness workshops, students are encouraged to recognize the necessity of well-being in the life of a law student. Access to well-being resources, including but not limited to, mental health counseling, substance abuse disorders, and stress management.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Participate and engage in discussion and reflection on the activities offered through law school programming on professional identity, lawyering and leadership skills, cross-cultural education, and wellness.
2. Explore personal and professional interest in pursuing a legal career. Learn about the expected competencies and how those competencies fit into day-to-day practice in varying legal environments.
3. Explore and reflect on cultural bias and discuss the role and impact of social awareness on the ability to promote justice.
4. Explore and evaluate lifestyle choices and resources that will support healthy professional and personal growth and development. Discuss how this impacts personal functioning and ability to serve the clients and the community.

Participation, Tracking, and Recognition of Completion

Minimum Requirements: Participants must attend a minimum of twelve (12) workshops, activities, and/or events in each semester by completing three (3) activities for each of the four areas of focus (DPI, SLLS, DCC, EWB). Students will be expected to report attendance and a reflection assignment may also be required.

Tracking: Participation and accountability will be tracked through Canvas.

Students can explore topics of interest, identify skills needing additional practice, and engage with a diverse community of legal professionals. To encourage development of well-rounded legal professionals upon graduation, students who meet minimum attendance and participation requirements will be officially recognized for their engagement in the Excellence in Lawyering and Leadership Program at the end of each academic year.

Workshops

Learn and practice lawyering techniques and law school study skills, explore the law through diverse perspectives, or deep dive into a specific skill to strengthen your academic performance.

Activities

Get moving and stay healthy, de-stress from the grind, get to know your colleagues outside of the classroom.

Events

Attend and listen to guest speakers, panels, and engage in networking opportunities to explore areas of the law.

Mentoring Program

The 1L mentoring program is required for all students, and will satisfy requirements for the DPI category for the 1L year.

Students may choose to enroll in the mentoring program in upper-level years as a year or semester commitment. Once enrolled in the program, students are expected to complete the requirements. Completion of the mentoring requirements can be included in the calculation of participation requirements for the Excellence in Lawyering and Leadership Program completion certificate levels.

Students are automatically enrolled into the Excellence in Lawyering and Leadership Program when they attend new student orientation at Wilmington University School of Law.

Recognition of Completion: Completion of minimum requirements will be assessed at the end of each academic year based on the levels below.

Silver (1L)

Completion of the first-year programming through continuous and active engagement at workshops, activities and/or events. Participation in the 1L mentoring program will satisfy the DPI category for the year.

Gold (2L)

Continued engagement with programming, including required attendance and participation at upper-level student workshops, activities, events and/or the mentoring program.

Platinum (3L/4L)

Continued engagement with programming, including required attendance and participation at graduation-year student workshops, activities, events and/or the mentoring program.