College of Law

David A. Brennen, J.D., LL.M., is Dean of the College of Law; Douglas C. Michael, J.D., Richard C. Ausness, J.D., and Susan Bybee Steele, J.D., are Associate Deans; Daniel P. Murphy, J.D., David Wright, J.D., and Jason J. Hardin, J.D., are Assistant Deans.

Since its establishment in 1908, UK Law has provided programs of legal instruction, research, and service to the Commonwealth and to the bar. The College of Law program is designed so graduates can practice their profession on a local, regional, or national level. The College is accredited by all agencies which establish standards for law schools, including the Association of American Law Schools and the American Bar Association.

The program consists of a three-year general law curriculum designed to be completed in six semesters (or in five semesters and two summer sessions). The program is designed to assist students in acquiring the skills required for the solution of modern legal problems; gaining an appreciation for and understanding of the legal, social, and political institutions on which the administration of justice rests; and preparing for the policy and ethical decisions which must be made in practicing law.

The Faculty

UK Law has a full-time faculty and staff composed of approximately 34 professors, 14 administrators, and 13 library and support personnel. They are assisted by a number of part-time and adjunct professors, as well as visiting professors.

The Library

The Law Library contains the state’s most comprehensive print collection of primary legal materials, as well as access to a growing list of premiere legal databases, including WestlawNext, Lexis Advance, Checkpoint, Making of Modern Law, and HeinOnline. In addition, there are reference services to provide students with assistance in identifying, locating, and using resources within the collection.

The Law Building

The College of Law, centrally located on UK’s main campus, is currently undergoing a renovation and expansion to deliver the most engaging legal education possible to students. The current building was constructed in 1965 and legal education has changed dramatically since it was built. The building was not constructed for the type of interaction students and faculty expect and deserve today. In the renovated building, the number of classrooms will be increased and those classrooms will be equipped with improved acoustics, seats and technology. The renovated building will also increase the number of group study rooms, an important aspect to any 21st century legal education that was not taken into account 50 years ago.

Current plans set the opening date at fall of 2019. During construction, administrative space for staff and faculty is in a portion of the former Lexington Seminary Building (across the street from the current Law Building). Three classrooms exist in that space. Other classes are held in close proximity to the former Seminary building, primarily in Gatton College of Business & Economics.

Other Facilities and Information

Since 1913 the College has published the Kentucky Law Journal (KLJ), a quarterly periodical and the tenth oldest American law review. This journal is published by a student staff, and election to the staff is based on high academic achievement and proven ability to write and conduct research. Each issue contains articles written by prominent legal scholars and notes written by KLJ members encompassing a broad range of legal topics.

The student-run Kentucky Journal of Equine, Agriculture & Natural Resources Law (KLEANRL) has been published since 1984, originally as the Journal of Mineral Law & Policy and then Journal of Natural Resources and Environmental Law, and is a multi-disciplinary journal of law, science, and policy.

Instruction in legal research and writing is available to all students, not only in required courses designed for this purpose, but also in seminars, drafting projects, and opportunities for independent study.

Practical training in trial and appellate advocacy is provided in courses like litigation skills and clinical courses, as well as the co-curricular Moot Court Board and Trial Advocacy Board. Teams representing the College compete in annual competitions.

The College operates an externship program to provide students with a variety of clinical learning experiences. In 1997, the UK Legal Clinic opened, which gives students, under the supervision of the clinic’s director, the opportunity to advise, counsel, and represent clients on a variety of civil legal matters.

APPLICATION DEADLINES FOR COLLEGE OF LAW

First-Year Students

Fall
March 31

Transfer Students

Fall
June 1
Spring
Dec. 1
Summer
May 1

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

1. The UK Law application and $50 application fee (paid by credit card) must be submitted online through the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) at www.lsac.org.

2. Applicants must obtain a bachelor’s degree from a fully accredited institution of higher learning prior to enrollment at UK Law. However, if the applicant is a student at the University of Kentucky and is enrolled in an approved Bachelor to Law Undergraduate Education (BLUE or 3+3) program, the applicant will be considered for admission without having a bachelor’s degree at the time of enrollment. Transcript(s) should be submitted to LSAC’s Credentials Assembly Service (CAS). Be sure to provide transcripts from all institutions from which you have received credits. CAS simplifies the admissions process by providing a centralized service to submit application materials. Applicants can register for CAS and the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) at the same time.

3. Applicants must take the LSAT. Registration and information for the LSAT are available from LSAC. The Admissions Committee will view all scores, but in most cases, will consider only the highest score. UK Law requires applicants to retake the LSAT if the most recent test was more than five years before expected enrollment.

4. Applicants must submit at least two (2) letters of recommendation from those with personal knowledge of the applicant’s abilities and qualifications to study law. Letters of recommendation must be submitted through LSAC’s Letter of Recommendation and Evaluation Service.
5. Applicants must submit a personal statement in accordance with the instructions on the application. Applicants must write their statement using their own words and ideas. The personal statement will be used as a sample of their writing and for insight into their background, goals, and potential for enriching UK Law’s academic environment.

The Admission Process

The admission process at UK Law involves a “full-file review” of each application taking numerical, academic, and non-academic factors into account. The goal is to admit a talented and diverse student body that enhances the educational process. UK Law offers a full-time day program for entering students in the fall semester.

In measuring your academic potential, the Admissions Committee will begin with your cumulative undergraduate grade-point average (GPA) and your highest score on the LSAT. Additional academic factors that may be considered include: writing skills, trend of college grades, letters of recommendation, time between college and law school, performance of other students from your college, and course selection patterns. Nonacademic factors that the Admissions Committee may consider include: geographic and cultural diversity; achievements and leadership positions; and perseverance and accomplishment under adverse circumstances. However, your application must show evidence of your ability to succeed academically at UK Law before non-academic factors can play a role in the admission decision.

Admission of Transfer Students

To be competitive, transfer applicants should have a 2.7 or higher GPA with at least 25 credit hours of law school work. The Admissions Committee will consider the applicant’s law school record, as well as all factors the Committee considers in a first-year application.

Procedure for Application

UK Law applications and application fees must be submitted online through LSAC at www.lsac.org.

Submission Dates and Deadlines

First-year applications are accepted beginning September 1 with an application deadline of March 31. Admissions decisions are made on a rolling basis. The Admissions Committee begins its evaluation of files in November, with the majority of decisions being made between January and April. Applicants will be notified of their application status as soon as possible after their file is reviewed by the Admissions Committee.

College of Law Withdrawal Policy

All students enrolled at UK Law are expected to complete their degree requirements without interruption other than for regularly scheduled academic holidays. It is expected that students will complete all courses or seminars in which they are enrolled. Contact UK Law for complete information about rules specific to withdrawal.

PRELEGAL STUDY

If you are already in college and are thinking about law school, do not worry if your major is not typically thought of in connection with law. Law schools accept students from practically every undergraduate major there is. Choose a major you enjoy and find interesting, since you will be more likely to succeed. In addition, if you decide not to attend law school, a background in something that you enjoy will allow for more options than a typical “law school” major might.

In college as much as in high school, taking classes that require you to write papers and have them critiqued by your teachers or peers is an invaluable experience. It is also a good idea to consider taking at least one course related to logic. Having classroom experience with logic fundamentals will likely make the logical reasoning—an infamous section of the LSAT—less difficult during your LSAT preparation.

Generally, starting to plan for the LSAT in your junior year will give you plenty of time to study, take the LSAT (in June after your junior year), and have time to retake the LSAT if desired. There is a great deal of information about the LSAT on LSAC’s website.

In addition, it is never too early to start thinking about which faculty members you would like to ask for letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation are a required part of many law school applications. The best letters of recommendation come from faculty who know you well, are familiar with your academic work, and can write about your performance as a student. Making an effort to get to know your professors early is not only a smart step toward law school, but will often lead to a greater understanding of the subjects they teach.

For additional information, students can find a variety of information on LSAC’s website as well as the LSAC Official Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools. UK undergraduate students can also visit www.as.uky.edu/pre-law for additional information on pre-professional advising.

THE DEGREE OF JURIS DOCTOR

Students admitted to UK Law are eligible for the degree of Juris Doctor (J.D.) upon completion of a minimum of three academic years (six full-time semesters or the equivalent) and 90 credit hours of courses with at least a cumulative GPA of 2.0. All courses in the first year of law study are required, as well as a course in professional responsibility and an upper division writing course.

Because the study of law at UK is a full-time pursuit, all law students are expected to carry a full academic program (14-16 credit hours each semester). Second and third year students may work up to 20 hours per week.

To view the UK Law Viewbook, please visit: http://law.uky.edu/admissions/viewbook. For specific information about UK Law’s academics and curriculum, please visit: http://law.uky.edu/academics/academic-resources. Prospective applicants can contact UK Law Admissions at 859-218-1699, or at uklawadmissions@uky.edu.