

Penn Law Certification of Competence in Skills and Professional Values
for Applicants for Admission to the New York Bar

The addition of [Section 520.18](#) to New York’s Rules of the Court of Appeals for the Admission of Attorneys and Counselors at Law requires that all JDs applying to the New York bar who began their program of study after August 1, 2016, and all LL.M.s applying to the New York bar who began their program of study after August 1, 2018, complete a skills competency component.

Penn Law is committed to preparing effective, ethical and responsible members of the legal profession, and has developed a program of legal education, combining our rich, interdisciplinary curriculum, varied co-curricular activities, and pro bono responsibilities, to prepare our students for admission to the bar. Curricular offerings are carefully designed to support the [learning outcomes](#) Penn Law has identified.

Accordingly, Penn Law will certify graduates who have successfully completed the following as satisfying the skills competency requirement under “Pathway One”. Please note that in the case of courses, successful completion is defined as earning a passing final grade in each course.

1. A foundational legal research and writing course.
2. A regulatory elective course.
3. A general elective course.
4. A professional responsibility course.
5. Six credits of experiential learning coursework, clinic work and/or externship work.
6. A scholarly research and writing project under close faculty supervision.
7. The pro bono requirement.

Additional details about the skills and professional values Penn Law has identified as necessary for basic competence and ethical participation in the legal profession – and the opportunities for students to learn and practice them – are attached.

Professional Skill	Applicable Courses	Associated Learning Outcome
Critically read, analyze, and interpret the primary sources of law: judicial opinions, statutes, and regulations.	First-year required courses (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs)	1
Understand the structure and applicability of - and relationships among - various legal and dispute resolution systems.	First-year required and elective courses (JDs) Foundations of the US Legal System (LLMs) International and comparative law courses	1
Successfully navigate applicable regulatory and legislative frameworks.	Regulatory electives Administrative law courses	1
Demonstrate an understanding of the skills and processes related to litigation practice, including drafting court documents, oral argument, and judicial procedure.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships	1
Demonstrate an understanding of the skills and processes related to transactional legal work, including strategy, deal structure, drafting, and negotiation.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships	1
Competently break a problem or novel set of facts into its component parts, identify key facts and potential legal issues, apply relevant legal principles and theories, and propose solutions.	All courses, including experiential learning courses, clinics and externships	2
Identify and use appropriate sources to conduct efficient, accurate, and thorough legal research.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Advanced research courses Seminars Senior writing requirement	2
Express legal analyses and legal principles clearly and precisely in writing.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Seminars Senior writing requirement	2
Effectively communicate legal analyses and legal principles orally to a variety of audiences in both formal and informal professional settings.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships	2
Craft and present persuasive arguments, providing supporting facts and evidence.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Seminars Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships	2
Identify and assess the legal risks associated with a particular course of action.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships Pro bono requirement	2

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Professional Skill	Applicable Courses	Associated Learning Outcome
Work collaboratively with others.	First year Legal Practice Skills course (JDs) US Legal Research & Writing (LLMs) Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships	3
Demonstrate an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of law and the contributions and benefits to legal analysis and problem solving that other disciplines can make.	General electives	4
Exercise proper professional judgment and demonstrate an understanding of the responsibility of lawyers, as officers of the legal system, to uphold justice and maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct.	Professional Responsibility	5
Provide individualized counsel to clients by identifying the client's goals and supporting the client in achieving those goals in a way that comports with the applicable legal framework.	Experiential learning courses, clinics and externships Pro bono requirement	6